



TAD News

December 2005



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New Years hopes for Texas dairymen

As 2005 winds down, we should be looking forward to celebrating the Christmas season with our families and then ringing in the New Year with a renewed hope for 2006 and what it will bring to our dairy farmer families across this land.

The Christmas season is a time to reflect on the goodness of giving and the feeling of happiness when a small child wakes up on Christmas day, eyes wide open and full of hope and joy. It is at this moment when your heart speaks how wonderful it is to have family – then there are those who have lost a loved one this past year and we are saddened – knowing they are suffering terribly.

Our prayer at this time is to grant comfort for those hurting and to strengthen us all, to face new challenges that will come.

TAD is working on many issues dairymen will face in the coming year. From environmental regulations to animal health issues, TAD is out there working for you.

I am hopeful 2006 will bring an end to the dispute with the City of Waco. We will continue working with agricultural organizations across America to get the U.S. Congress to clarify that regulating farms under CERCLA/EPCRA was not its intent. Bio-security issues with the U.S. food supply are a major concern TAD is working on.

We are a member of a taskforce in Texas charged to review and develop emergency management response plans, which farmers can incorporate into their operations. Premises identification, foreign animal disease control and abatement plans and BSE are just part of the work we are engaged in. A significant amount of time is spent at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality working on the CAFO Rules and problems that
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Manager's Update

John Cowan

Time now to apply for 2006 Farm Bill conservation program funding

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas has announced that farmers and ranchers wishing to be considered for 2006 funding in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the EQIP Ground and Surface Water Conservation Program (EQIP-GSWC), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) have until the close of business Friday, Feb. 17 to sign applications.

The 2002 Farm Bill authorized the EQIP, EQIP-GSWC, and WHIP as tools to implement voluntary conservation. Each program offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and/or management practices on eligible land.

Applications will be ranked immediately following the end of the signup period. For those approved, a NRCS conservation planner will develop a contract and conservation plan. Producers with approved contracts can begin implementing the approved conservation practices in the spring.

Local NRCS field offices have complete details.



Information, including ranking criteria, eligible practices and cost share rates for all NRCS Farm Bill programs is also on the Texas NRCS Web Site at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/.

DFA names new CEO

Rick Smith, president of Dairy Farmers of America Inc. is taking over for CEO Gary Hanman, who is retiring at the end of the year.

The DFA controls roughly a third of the nation's milk supply.

Smith has also served as the cooperative's chief operating officer. He started his dairy career in 1982 when he joined Dairylea Cooperative Inc.

Manager's Update (continued)

are cropping up from interpretation of the rules and available assistance the dairyman can access to reconcile these problems.

The TAD board will be looking at ways to improve the working knowledge of dairymen by holding a training program that we are developing in conjunction with TCEQ. One of my goals for 2006 – and I know the board supports my concerns – is to ensure that TAD is serving the needs of dairymen across the state.

I encourage you to contact us with your comments, concerns and ideas how we can better serve your needs. My family and I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year!

CA cheese plant comes to Texas with financial help from state

Hilmar Cheese Co. of California will be opening a facility in Dalhart after securing from Gov. Rick Perry a \$7.5 million incentive package from the Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF) and additional funding for transportation improvements and workforce training.

The company will make a capital investment of \$190 million to build a new processing plant in Dalhart that will create new jobs for more than 350 area families, according to the governor's office. As part of its contract with the state, Hilmar has committed that new independent milk producers and new dairies across the region will create an additional 1,600 jobs over the next 10 years.

Once complete, the facility will have the capacity to process up to 5 million pounds of locally produced milk into cheese and whey products each day, with the potential to double that capacity in the future.

Perry made the announcement in November in Dalhart, where he was joined by State Rep. David Swinford, Dalhart Mayor Kevin Caddell, Amarillo Mayor Debra McCartt, Amarillo Economic Development Corporation President Buzz David, and members of the High Plains Dairy Council.

Capitol Update

By Shayne Woodard

Many legislators won't seek re-election

Candidates for several state offices began filing on Friday, Dec. 2, and opening day saw one big surprise that made the headlines across the state – cotton farmer and former Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives Pete Laney announced he would not seek re-election to his rural west Texas district.

Other big announcements are possible as folks have until Jan. 2 to submit their filings for political office.

So far, the following legislators have announced they will not be running for re-election:

House: Allen, Baxter, Denny, Griggs, Hamric, Hupp, Hunter, Keel, Laney, Nixon, Solis and Uresti.

Senate: Staples, Barrientos and Lindsay.

The special election to fill the House District 48 seat vacated by Republican Todd Baxter (Austin area) has been set for Jan. 17. This is a district that is about 50 percent Republican and 50 percent Democrat. Both parties expect to spend lots of money to win this western Travis County district.

House to the Senate?

Rep. Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) surprised some Austin insiders with his recent announcement not seek re-election in the House, but to take on veteran Democratic Sen. Frank Madla (D-San Antonio) in the March Democratic primary. This massive senate district runs from San Antonio to El Paso.

Reps. Joe Nixon and Peggy Hamric, both Houston Republicans, also announced their intention to switch chambers. Both will run to replace Sen. Jon Lindsay (R-Houston), who announced last summer he would not seek re-election.

Stay tuned! Austin insiders expect more announcements in the next couple of weeks.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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