



TAD News

July 2005

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Education – a job that never ends for our industry

I recently was fortunate to assist on a dairy farm tour for EPA Region 6 Regional Administrator Richard Greene and some of his staff.

It is important for us in the dairy industry not to assume that leaders in regulatory agencies fully understand what we do or go through while managing a dairy farm. We can argue our position, plead our case, participate in stakeholder meetings, provide written comments and still, until they see what we do, their understanding remains uncertain. We cannot turn our back on our responsibility to help them understand your business.

Following the tour, Greene stated he has a better understanding of what dairymen do and how they protect the environment.

Our industry is under the microscope of public scrutiny, like it or not. We must accept the fact that times-are-a-changing. What must we do? How do we go about it? Can we be assured of our future? All these questions are valid, real and sobering.

Almost every day, I get calls from dairy producers with questions about proactive environmental management concepts. We know and accept that we must educate our elected officials while they are in session. But we also have to do a better job of educating our neighbors (both rural and urban) and be good citizens and neighbors.

The concerns we have in agriculture are not isolated in one area of Texas or, for that fact, in the United States as a whole.

TAD is working with other organizations to evaluate resources, personnel and ideas that best achieve our goals, and this fall will be holding information meetings in areas where our farmers are located to discuss these ideas. ■

Manager's Update

John Cowan



Photo courtesy of TIAER

Digester begins operating on Broumley farm

Industry representatives, state officials, regulators and others gathered in June at the Hico dairy farm of Keith Broumley to cut the ribbon on Texas' first anaerobic digester.

Both solid and liquid dairy waste will be sent through the digester in a multi-step process to convert it to both electricity and compost, significantly reducing the amount of phosphorous in the waste stream. The digester is the first in the nation to perform this dual role.

The digester also is an example of how Texas' dairy producers are embracing new technologies and practices that will help them serve Texas dairy consumers with less of an impact on the environment.

Participating in the ribbon cutting ceremony (pictured from left) were Steel Maloney, CES Engineering; TCEQ Chairman Kathleen White; Keith Broumley; State Sen. Kip Averitt. EPA Region 6 Administrator Richard Greene; Texas Farm Bureau Vice President Lloyd Arthur; and Brazos River Authority GM/CEO Phil Ford. ■

NM institutes new entry requirements

The state of New Mexico on July 1 began enforcing rules and regulations that require all dairy calves entering the state to be individually identified with approved ear tags indicating "state and premise of origin."

Dairy calves without approved ear tags will not be allowed to enter the state of New Mexico.

For more information, contact the New Mexico Livestock Board, 300 San Mateo, NE Suite 1000, Albuquerque, NM 87108, or (505) 841-6161. ■

FSA committee nominations due Aug. 1

Dairy producers are encouraged to consider running for election to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee.(COC). The nomination period ends Aug. 1, and elections will be held on the first Monday of December.

In Texas, FSA has a presence in 206 county offices, each of which is holding its COC elections.

County Committees and their members serve as a direct link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of Local Administrative Area conditions.
- Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee.

Nomination forms and fact sheets are available at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections.

UPDATE: NRCS

For dairymen who have applied for EQIP funds and have been approved, you need to do a few things to insure your payments under the contract are received in a timely manner, and that work is performed in accordance with the EQIP requirements.

- Producers should contact your local NRCS office prior to beginning any work.
- Producers are responsible for notifying NRCS prior to and upon completion of practices to allow NRCS to make necessary field checks.
- Producers are responsible for securing contractor services and any payments for those services.
- All bills and proof of expense for applying the practice must be submitted to the NRCS before the practice payment can be made.
- Producers are responsible for providing and keeping current direct deposit banking information on file with NRCS.
- Producers who are installing new waste storage facilities must have their CNMP completed and certified by the NRCS and TSSWCB prior to starting construction. ▪

Texas Dairies . . . Cool!
July is National Ice Cream Month

Staying Safe and Secure on the Farm

With discovery of BSE in a Texas cow, confirmation of anthrax on two West Texas ranches and reports in the media of theoretical bioterrorism scenarios involving the dairy industry, it's a good time for dairy producers to make sure they are taking steps to ensure the safety and security of their herd and facilities.

- Maintain fences and lock gates
- Monitor visitors
- Control access to feed and water
- Disinfect vehicles and equipment
- Use protective gear
- Monitor herd for signs of illness
- Maintain inventory of chemicals and medicines



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