



# TAD News

## October 2006

3500 William D. Tate Ave.  
Suite 100  
Grapevine, TX 76051  
(817) 410-4576  
(817) 410-4541 (fax)  
[www.milk4texas.org](http://www.milk4texas.org)

John Cowan  
Executive Director

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## TAD shares industry concerns with Extension

The TAD Board was host to several leaders with the Texas Cooperative Extension System at the October board meeting. By invitation, Dr. Ed Smith, Dr. Roland Smith, Dr. Larry Boleman and Dr. Pete Gibbs joined the board in very beneficial discussion.

Smith reviewed the Extension System organizational chart, outlining the various departments and listing staff we should work with directly. Our objective was to reaffirm a line of communication between dairy industry leadership and extension service leadership, from the top down to ensure dairymen's needs statewide are being addressed.

Another issue raised with Extension was the lack of economic data available for Texas dairymen. Following our discussion, Smith assured us that we would get the same economic data provided to the Legislature every two years. The economic data will be provided on a statewide/regional basis and can be broken down into smaller units as needed.

From our discussions, the group identified the need to develop improved methods of communication at "regional" research facilities to assist producers in local areas where that research data would be applicable. It was apparent that timely, accurate information between Extension and producers is critical to the rapidly changing dairy industry in Texas. We must be responsive to the needs today, and, in fact, we must be sufficiently forward thinking to plan for dairymen's future needs.

We encouraged Smith to work with TAD and other dairy organizations and promotion groups to educate citizens who do not understand agriculture or dairy farming.

**(Continued, "Update," page 2)**

### **Manager's Update**

John Cowan

## EQUIP applications due in December

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas has set a Dec. 15, 2006, sign-up deadline for the 2007 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

The program provides cost-share and incentives payments to producers applying approved conservation measures that help solve natural resource problems. In addition to natural resource concerns established within each county by local work groups, the Texas State Technical Committee also has designated special statewide concerns. The 2007 statewide concerns are animal waste, invasive species, plant condition, water quality, water quantity and wildlife emphasis areas.

Immediately following the end of the sign-up period, applications will be ranked. Producers with an approved application will work with an NRCS conservation planner to develop a contract and a plan and will begin implementing conservation practices next spring.

Local NRCS field offices have complete details for their county and the applicable state concerns. Additional information can also be found on the Texas NRCS Web Site at [www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/](http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/).

## TAD Board Action

The Texas Association of Dairymen Board of Directors took the following action during its October meeting in Grapevine:

- Adopted TAD's 2007 budget.
- Adopted a resolution in support of the Tarleton State University Dairy Center.
- Decided to have TAD Board members meet with state legislators during the upcoming legislative session when bills are filed that impact agriculture and the dairy industry.

The next Board meeting will be at 1 p.m. Nov. 28 at TAD's Grapevine headquarters.

The meeting originally had been planned to be held in Amarillo.

Following adjournment of the TAD Board meeting, the Texas Dairymen PAC met and approved a \$300 contribution to the re-election campaign of State Rep. David Farabee, D-Wichita Falls. ■

## **“Update,” continued from page 1**

As the meeting ended, Smith alerted us that a change in their name is being considered. He did not know what it will be, but don't be surprised if the “Texas Cooperative Extension” becomes the “College of Agri Life Sciences.” The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents will make the final decision, but it appears to be on the horizon. ▪

## **New dairy center underway at TSU; planners looking for industry input**

Plans for the new \$11.1M Tarleton State University Dairy Center under way, and stakeholders are being asked for their input as part of the planning process.

A public meeting will be held at 2 p.m., Nov. 9, to highlight the mission and goals for the dairy center and receive input and comments from the dairy industry and other stakeholders.

The meeting will be held at the TAMUS Agricultural Research and Extension Center located at the intersection of Hwy 281 N and Hwy 8 in Stephenville. ▪

## **Drought grant applications available**

County Texas Cooperative Extension offices have available packets for the recently announced Livestock Assistance Grant Program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Deadline for applications is Nov. 13.

About \$16.1 million in block grant funds have been allocated by the USDA to eligible livestock producers in 216 drought-stressed Texas counties. To be eligible for the program, producers must have suffered livestock or forage production losses from drought March 7-Aug. 31.

Application packets can be printed from the TDA's Web site at [www.agr.state.tx.us](http://www.agr.state.tx.us) or picked up at Farm Service Agency offices or TDA area offices.

Compensation will not be determined until all applications are received and processed by TDA. Applicants will be notified by Dec. 31.

For information, call (800) 835-5832. ▪

## **Cattle Now on the Move . . .**

### **Texas regains TB free status**

Texas ranchers achieved a four-year-old objective in October when the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the state has regained cattle tuberculosis-free (TB) status, which was lost in 2002.

Since September 2003, more than 335,000 cows in Texas' 818 dairies, and nearly 129,000 beef cattle have been tested for cattle TB.

Achieving free status enables Texas-origin cattle to be transported to events in the state without a TB test. USDA regulations also allow breeding and dairy cattle moved from Texas to other states each year to be shipped without a TB test. The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) suggests checking with states of destination prior to shipping cattle, as it will take time for animal health officials to update regulations recognizing Texas' TB-free status.

Keeping herds free of cattle TB by reducing risk and disease exposure is now the key. ▪

### **Mexico opens border to dairy heifers**

Mexico will resume trade in U.S. dairy heifers under 24 months of age, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced in early October.

Under the agreement, U.S. producers will be able to export dairy heifers to Mexico that are under 24 months of age and registered with a purebred dairy breed association or the Dairy Herd Improvement Association. Shipments to Mexico could begin Oct. 4.

The dairy heifers will be individually identified as they depart the United States. Their identification information will be entered into the Mexican animal identification system for purposes of maintaining these animals under bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) surveillance.

Mexico closed its market to U.S. dairy heifers in December 2003. That year, the United States exported \$103 million worth of dairy heifers to Mexico. ▪



Texas Association of Dairymen  
3500 William D. Tate Ave., Suite 100  
Grapevine, TX 76051-8734