



TAD News

February 2007

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TAD aims to make 2007 a better year for dairies

2006 was a difficult year for dairy farmers. Low milk prices competing with escalating costs of feed, energy and regulatory compliance has placed you in a troublesome situation. When net margins are slim to none, it is hard for you to commit to capital expenditures, such as new land application areas or manure management equipment, and the list can go on and on.

Many people not close to your business don't understand your situation, that keeping your cattle fed, meeting your family's needs and just staying in business during these times are almost impossible. The playing field across Texas is not level when it relates to environmental compliance, both from the standpoint of state and federal requirements, but also from the standpoint that any individual or group of individuals can disrupt or prevent you from gaining authorization to run and manage your farm.

With all the difficulty, delays and confusion with environmental regulations over the past 2- ½ years, dairymen in Central Texas continue to face a very difficult permitting process with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Those dairymen are doing everything they have been asked to do, and yet they still face outside forces such as the Sierra Club filing late-hour comments and seeking TCEQ's intervention to not issue permits in that area.

The irony of all this is the dairymen are required to have a CAFO permit from TCEQ in order to implement management and operational changes on their farm that only lessens that farm's liability to any possible discharge of pollutants from their farm.

It is time the State of Texas issue these permits and let the farmers move ahead.
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Manager's Update
John Cowan

Texas legislative session underway

By Shayne Woodard

The Texas Legislature opened its 2007, 140-day session on Jan. 9, but business was diverted by icy weather and a hot Speaker's race. House Speaker Tom Craddick warded off a challenge to his position.

Both Craddick and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst have now appointed legislative committees. TAD is already tracking legislation of interest to dairymen and will continue to represent your best interests at the Capitol.

The key Senate Natural Resources Committee includes returning Chairman Kip Averitt, R-Waco; Vice Chair Craig Estes, R-Wichita Falls; Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock; Juan Hinojosa, D-McAllen; Mike Jackson, R-La Porte, Kel Seliger, R-Amarillo; and committee newcomers Kim Brimer, R-Arlington; Bob Deuell, R-Greenville; Kevin Eltife, R-Tyler; Glenn Hegar, R-Katy; and Carlos Uresti, D-San Antonio.

The House Agriculture & Livestock Committee includes Chairman. Sid Miller, R-Stephenville; Vice Chair Charles "Doc" Anderson, R-Waco; Betty Brown, R-Athens; Jimmie Don Aycock, R-Killeen; Pete Gallego, D-Alpine; Juan Garcia, D-Corpus Christi; and Joe Heflin, D-Crosbyton. ■



Cows at the Capitol – Feb. 19-20

The Texas Association of Dairymen will hold its annual Membership Meeting and monthly Board of Directors meeting on Feb. 19 in Austin.

On Feb. 20, TAD members will host a milk reception for invited state lawmakers.

This is an opportunity for dairymen to visit with lawmakers from around the state about dairy issues and hear about legislation that has been introduced.

Join us to make your voice heard and take an active role in our state's legislative process.

Details for both events are still being finalized.

For more information, visit the TAD Web site at www.milk4texas.org or contact TAD at (817) 410-4576.



Todd Staples (center) – shown visiting with TAD members at a meeting in Amarillo last summer – was sworn in Jan. 4 as Texas' Commissioner of Agriculture.



Dairy Producers Meet With Elected Officials

TAD Manager John Cowan and lobbyist Shayne Woodard helped three Texas dairy producers (pictured) – Jewell Alt, Nova Schouten and Willie DeJong – call on Texas Senate and House members from their areas to discuss issues of importance to dairy farming. ■

Garcia gains appointment to TCEQ

H.S. Buddy Garcia of Austin has been appointed by Gov. Rick Perry to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for a term to expire Aug. 31, 2011.

The commission establishes, oversees and implements clean air, clean water and other environmental policies for the State of Texas.

As Texas Deputy Secretary of State, Garcia works with the TCEQ and other agencies on environmental concerns. Garcia also serves as the border commerce coordinator, a position he has held since 2004.

He formerly served as deputy legislative director for the governor and special assistant to the governor for Texas/Mexico border affairs.

Garcia also served as a special assistant to then-Lt. Gov. Perry for South Texas, Gulf Coast and environmental issues.

From 1991 to 2000, Garcia served in various capacities for Sen. Eddie Lucio, including chief legislative director and policy advisor.

During his service for Sen. Lucio, Garcia was responsible for drafting legislation related to natural resources, agriculture and other issues, and also served as committee clerk for the Senate Committee on Agriculture.

Garcia graduated from St. Joseph Academy in Brownsville and received his bachelor's degree in political science from Southwest Texas State University, now Texas State University.

This appointment is subject to Texas Senate confirmation. ■

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What more can you ask dairy farm families to do than what they are doing?

TAD will continue to work with and on behalf of all Texas dairy producers in 2007. Our efforts are focused on unplugging the process, encouraging the leadership to do what is right and continuing to work with all Texans to help them better understand how we must all work together to level that playing field. ■



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