



TAD News

March 2007

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

John Cowan
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Gordon McCool, President
David DeJong, 1st Vice Pres.
Greg Mitchell, 2nd Vice Pres.
Richard DeVuyst, Secretary
Frans Beukeboom, Treasurer
Harry DeWit
Bryant Fisher
Larry Hancock
Neil Hoff
Brad Johnson
Michael Mund
Jerry Spencer
Pete Schouten

Proactivity critical, on the farm and at the Capitol

Let's hope we never have to put into place the state's emergency action plan dealing with an outbreak of a disease like foot and mouth in our livestock herds.

On Feb. 21-23 in Amarillo, three dairymen – Reta Dyess from Jacksonville, Mike Schouten from Hereford and Harry DeWit from Friona – provided input into an exercise called Operation Palo Duro. The trial exercise was attended by more than 250 people interested in addressing an outbreak of a foreign animal disease in this country, including Dr. John Clifford, deputy administrator of veterinary services USDA Aphis in Washington.

As the exercise played out over the 2 ½ days, experts in all phases of emergency management from the various industries represented, academicians and research professionals, and regulatory representatives from local, state and federal agencies worked through the exercise guided by The CNA Corp., a non-profit research and analysis corporation in Alexandria, Va.

As in previous exercises, the lessons learned remind us that a real foreign animal disease outbreak can and would disrupt business as usual. What was learned from earlier exercises, in fact, prepared the group with knowledge rather than speculation. Once the final exercise report is published and evaluated, the knowledge gained will be incorporated into guidance documents useful to producers in the event something like this does happen.

Protecting your facility and future is paramount, and making some investment now on your facility emergency management plan is good sense. A day does not go by that **(Continued, "Update," page 2)**

Manager's Update

John Cowan

Congress to consider dairy bills

The action on the legislative front isn't confined to Austin. In Washington, D.C., Congress will be considering two bills of special interest to dairymen:

- U.S. Rep. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) has introduced H.R. 1217, a bill that would provide tax incentives to owners of concentrated-animal-feeding operations for complying with new environmental regulations aimed at controlling runoff. Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.) has introduced similar legislation (S. 285) in the Senate.
- Sens. Blance Lincoln (D-Ark.) and Pete Domenici (R-NM) and Reps. Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) and Ralph Hall (R-Texas) have introduced legislation that would not classify livestock manure as hazardous waste regulated under the federal superfund law. Without clarification, requirements under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) could unfairly be applied to ranchers and farmers. For more on the bills, visit www.congress.org. ■

Capitol Report:

Bills flood in at filing deadline

By Shayne Woodard

Friday, March 9, was the deadline to file bills for the 80th legislative session. A total of 5,910 bills were filed. In 2005, 5,484 bills were filed and 1,389 became law.

Among the bills filed that would impact dairy products were HB 2959 by Rep. John Smithee (R-Amarillo) and SB 1714 by Sen. Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) that would raise and/or change the fee structure for milk permits. Permit fees would be raised to \$200 every two years for a dairy farm producer or a milk transport tanker and \$800 every two years for a processing or bottling plant or for a receiving and transfer station. Fees would be raised to 4.5 cents for each 100 pounds of milk or milk products processed and distributed in Texas by a processing or bottling plant in Texas, or processed by an out-of-state processing or bottling plant and sold in Texas. A fee of 1.5 cents would be set for each 100 pounds of dairy products processed by a processing or bottling plant in Texas.

Another bill of interest, SB 1373 by Sen. John Carona (R-Dallas), would increase fees for all overweight trucking permits. For more on the bills, visit www.legis.state.tx.us. ■



TAD Board members visit with State Rep. Sid Miller (R-Stephenville) (center, in hat). Board members are (from left) Neil Hoff, Bryant Fisher, David DeJong, Pete Schouten and Jerry Spencer.

Dairymen visit lawmakers in Austin

Texas legislators got an update on dairy issues and concerns from TAD members during the organization's biannual meeting and legislative day in February at the Texas Capitol in Austin.

The two-day event started Feb. 19 with TAD's annual membership meeting and monthly Board of Directors meeting. *(See separate article on actions taken at the Board meeting).*

Tuesday, Feb. 20, started early as TAD Board members met to plan which House and Senate members they would visit in teams. Lawmakers targeted included members of several legislative committees that oversee dairy-related legislation.

While visits to some offices resulted in meetings with legislative staff, several lawmakers took time out of their schedules to personally visit with the dairymen. At each office, dairymen left behind packets that included Texas dairy fact sheets and other information.

The dairymen also watched the Texas House of Representatives in action. ■

"Update," continued from page 1

you don't see or hear in the media a story raising issue with food safety or, in case of the recent bacteria-tainted spinach, blaming livestock operations as the cause.

TAD is working with our promotion organizations, various universities and the extension service to develop dairy fact sheets, talking points and key messages to use with elected officials. Recently the TAD board met in Austin, where members visited with Texas House and Senate members to tell their story about dairy issues. Lawmakers listen to voters, and dairymen and women know the issues. I encourage you to get involved by calling or emailing your state and federal representatives.

You can make a difference. Now is the time to call your U.S. congressman and ask them to support HB 1398 sponsored by Reps. Colin Peterson and Ralph Hall. HB 1398 clarifies livestock manure is not a hazardous substance and therefore should not be regulated under CERCLA.

If you have any question regarding this or other legislation, please let me know. ■

TAD Board Action

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

- Approved a report from TAD Manager John Cowan that member allocated board seats, based on member production and member numbers, would remain the same: Lone Star and Select (2 each); DFA SEC (3) and DFA SWC (6).
 - Elected new Board officers: Gordon McCool, president; David DeJong, first vice president; Greg Mitchell, second vice president; Richard DeVuyst, secretary; and Frans Beukeboom, treasurer.
 - Elected Brad Johnson to the Board representing associate members.
 - Heard an update from Leonard Dougal of Jackson Walker regarding permitting issues at the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality.
- The Board will next meet March 29 in Grapevine. ■



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