



# TAD News

December 2008 – Happy Holidays!



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**Next TAD Board Meeting:**  
**1 p.m., Jan. 15**  
Grapevine, Texas

## TAD working with EPA on CAFO rules

I recently attended a meeting in Dallas to discuss CAFO rules with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 staff along with five other agriculture organization representatives and environmental consultants.

**Manager's Update**  
John Cowan

As you know, the final rules have been published with an effective date of Feb. 27, 2009. What does this mean for dairy producers in the Southwest?

Texas dairies that are an AFO/CAFO are already operating under the rules of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) CAFO permit, and those rules generally are more stringent than the federal CAFO rule. For dairy owners and operators in New Mexico and Oklahoma, confined animal feeding operators now will have to bring their operations into compliance with federal rules.

EPA Region 6 staff stated their general permit should be published by mid January followed by a 30-day comment period. Some general comments EPA staff indicated they are focusing on will be agriculture operations located in areas where stream segments are listed on the federal 303d list. There is a strong focus and requirement that all farms must have a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) and that the plan is being implemented consistent with the NRCS 590 Standard.

We will continue to monitor how EPA intends to implement the public notice requirement NMPs. We will continue to work on some outstanding issues with the EPA Region 6 staff, particularly with the Fish and Wildlife and endangered species. In the interim, as these issues continue to be worked through, dairymen must be sure they are not discharging animal waste or effluent into the "waters of the State," and that use of best management practices and technologies are incorporated into your operations.

TAD will continue to be an advocate and work on your behalf with the Texas Legislature, EPA, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, federal Natural Resources Conservation Service and the TCEQ. ▪

### Capitol Report

## In the weeks before session, action underway at the Texas Capitol

By Shayne Woodard

"Uncertainty" seems to be the theme of the weeks and months preceding the opening of the 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature on Jan. 13, 2009.

First, there was the uncertainty of the November elections.

While most political contests were settled on Election Day, one Senate District – District 17 along the Gulf Coast from Freeport to Port Arthur – required a runoff, and several House races took several days to settle because of close vote totals.

The District 17 runoff in December sent Joan Huffman, a Republican, to the Texas Senate, bringing the final partisan breakdown to 19 Republicans and 12 Democrats.

Second, there is the uncertainty over who will lead the Texas House.

Three-term House Speaker Tom Craddick, R-Midland, now

is being challenged by five Democrat and six Republican House members for the speakership. Other possible candidates are rumored.

Because the Speaker appoints committee chairman and makes committee assignments, there is also uncertainty over the filing of legislation – who should carry a bill, who will oversee the committee where it could be assigned, etc. Many who wish to promote legislation at the Capitol are playing a "wait and see" strategy before asking a legislator to carry a bill.

Legislators began filing bills on Nov. 11. So far, approximately 400 bills have been filed in the Texas House and approximately 350 have been filed in the Texas Senate.

All bills are read to see whether they will impact the dairy industry. ▪

## Calendars mailed and ready for use on Jan. 1

Just in time for the new year, the 2009 Dairy Environmental Calendar, jointly produced by TAD and Texas Agri Life Sciences and Extension, has been mailed to Texas dairy producers.

The calendar, which helps producers with required record keeping, has been enlarged slightly, compared to the 2008 calendar. The 2009 version includes additional space to allow the recording of information.

If you did not receive your calendar, please contact TAD.▪

### Mark your calendar for these events

Dairy producers are invited to attend the annual **High Plains Irrigation Conference and Trade Show** on Jan. 14 at the Amarillo Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St., to get the latest information needed to help them maximize the irrigation water they pump.

The meeting and trade show will begin with registration at 8 a.m. and close at 4 p.m. The trade show, sponsored by Texas Agriculture Irrigation Association and featuring the latest technology will stay open until 4:30 p.m.

A \$15 registration fee will be charged at the door and will cover lunch. For more information, contact Nich Kenny or Ronda Fisher at (806) 677-5600.

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The Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC) will hold a one-day **Regional Emergency Preparedness Conference**, also on Jan. 14 at the Amarillo Civic Center. For details, contact John Kiehl at (806) 372-3381 or [jkiehl@theprpc.org](mailto:jkiehl@theprpc.org).

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Save the date of April 15-16, 2009, as the Western States Dairy Producers Trade Association will sponsor the **Western Dairy Air Quality Symposium** in Albuquerque, NM. Details of this meeting will be coming soon. ▪

## Summit generates workforce training

The need for an educated, trained workforce – one of the main issues identified in 2007 by the dairy industry and others at the High Plains Livestock 2007 Conference – soon will be addressed by the Agricultural Workforce and Community Development Program, newly created by Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

“Employers are concerned with finding and retaining qualified workers,” said Robert Devin, AgriLife Extension program coordinator, Agricultural Workforce and Community Development. “Among the barriers are language, technical skills and education. Our project’s goal is to address not only the employee and job-related issues, but also the family and life-related issues.”

AgriLife Extension is working with TAD and other major agricultural industry groups to deliver programs that address the needs of these complex production-agriculture systems.

The pilot program will be aimed at the labor force in six feed yards in Deaf Smith, Dallam, Hartley, Hansford and Sherman counties and a dairy in Lamb County. The pilot will continue through August, at which time it will be evaluated for widespread application.

The pilot program has five basic components: an executive management program, on-site workforce training programs, a longer-term vocational workforce program, a family and youth educational program, and analysis and support related to community impacts.▪

## TAHC looking for “Trich” comments

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is taking comments on proposed regulations to control Trichomoniasis until Jan. 30. As proposed, the program could be rolled out in two stages, starting in March and would place entry requirements on bulls entering Texas from other states. For more information on the proposed program, or to submit comments, visit the TAHC Web site at [www.tahc.state.tx.us](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us). ▪



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