



TAD News

March 2008

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

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Executive Director

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Next TAD Board Meeting:
1 p.m., April 23
Grapevine, Texas

Saying 'Howdy!' to your neighbor can pay off

Remember when you could leave your door unlocked? Borrow your neighbor's tractor when yours was broken, or get help to bring in a crop when the weather turned bad? Neighbors helped, sometimes without you having to ask, because that's what neighbors did back then.

When was that time, "back then"? For some, it was yesterday; for others, it may have been years ago. Some may never have experienced unsolicited help because our society has migrated away from being neighborly.

Rural communities and citizens who span several generations understand exactly what being neighborly is about – giving of themselves without question or worrying if like-giving will come back. Fast forwarding to today, may rural families just like yours understand what being neighborly is, because you practice the rural values engrained in you by your parents and grandparents. The Golden Rule was never considered optional.

Today, rural America is changing. People who don't care about your values or understand your business are leaving the city and becoming your neighbors. If a springtime storm blew in tonight, would they be there to help you in the middle of the night? Probably not and, worse, they probably would file a complaint against you for mistreating your animals!

Ridiculous? In reality today, there are groups in your neighborhood, including animal activists and environmental extremists, who don't care about you, your family or your business. Thankfully, this is not the norm. However, the situation does exist, and it is up to you to get involved with these neighbors and practice being neighborly.

One example of the importance of knowing and understanding your neighbors is facing public comment when trying to obtain your CAFO permit. Know who surrounds you and get to know them well. Help them understand you and your operation, and seek to resolve their concerns.

As the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." ■

Manager's Update
John Cowan

TAHC member explains importance of animal ID requirement

As the dairy industry representative on the Texas Animal Health Commission, I have participated in several producer meetings regarding the tagging of Texas dairy cattle prior to movement. Because there have been some questions, I'd like to offer a brief review of the requirements effective after March 31.

Due to their close confinement, dairy cattle are at great risk for cattle tuberculosis (TB) exposure if an infected animal is in the herd. To help prevent the introduction of TB from other states, last fall identification and testing requirements were enhanced for dairy cattle entering Texas.

The next step – identifying Texas dairy cattle moved from their herd of origin – will help trace cattle TB if an infected animal slips through. This identification regulation affects all dairy cattle and also applies to beef producers who own only one or two dairy calves.

Message from the Board
Reta Dyess, Rocking F Ranch

All dairy animals, regardless of their sex or age, must be identified prior to being moved from its premises of origin, and the identification is not to be removed

by subsequent owners. A variety of identification devices are acceptable, including USDA alphanumeric silver ear tags (known as brucellosis test tags), which are being distributed through TAHC area offices at no charge. Other choices that will "fill the bill" are USDA calfhood vaccination (or orange ear tags), Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) ear tags or even official breed registry tattoos or firebrands.

If producers choose to purchase radio frequency identification devices (RFID), three types are available: manufacturer code "900" series RFID ear tags, available from many feed or supply stores; USA prefix RFID ear tags; or country code "840" series RFID ear tags (producers who use
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TAD Board Action

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

- Ratified new co-op board seat allocations: Select (2), Lone Star (2), DFA SEC (3) and DFA SWC (6)
- Recognized retiring directors Gordon McCool and Bryant Fisher
- Seated new board directors Reta Dyess and Ken Miller
- Elected new board officers (see list on Page 1)
- Approved funding requests from the Texas Department of Agriculture's Texas Land Heritage program, the Texas A&M Dairy Challenge Team, the Southern Great Plains Dairy Consortium scholarship program and the Tri-County Agri Business Association.

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the "840" series must have their premises registered).

Also acceptable is a commercially produced cattle-style clip, flap or button tag that identifies the dairy or owner and provides a unique number for the animal within the herd.

Cattle owners or managers are responsible for ensuring that dairy animals are identified prior to movement and for keeping a record of the animals identified.

Remember – cattle TB has not been eradicated. In February, a large TB-infected dairy was detected in California. Since July 2005, Minnesota has detected TB in 11 herds, and Michigan has had an ongoing battle with the disease in both cattle and free-ranging deer since 1998.

In October 2006, Texas regained TB-free status, but only after testing 342,937 cattle in the state's 818 dairies, and 128,489 head in 2,014 beef purebred and seed stock herds, and greatly enhancing slaughter surveillance.

Please do your part to help keep Texas TB-free! To arrange a local meeting to discuss cattle TB requirements or for an update on livestock health, please contact your TAHC area office or the TAHC headquarters at (800) 550-8242, ext 710. ▪

Capitol Report:

TAD-supported race goes to runoff

By Shayne Woordard

TAD Lobbyist

Texans voted in record numbers during the March primary election. While many were drawn by hotly contested elections at the top of the ballot, a number of important races were to fill seats in the Texas Legislature.

Some results, however, are yet to be determined. One race that TAD is interested in is House District 52, which represents part of Williamson County, just north of Austin. Four candidates were vying for the open seat.

The race will be settled April 8 in a runoff election between Bryan Daniel (supported by TAD), an insurance executive, and Dee Hobbs, an assistant county attorney. The winner will have an opponent in the November general election.

TAD also played a role in successful primary races of Reps. Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Betty Brown (R-Terrell). Both face a Democratic challenger in the November general election. Also of note, Sen. Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls), chair of the Ag Subcommittee, also won his primary race and was re-elected, as he has no November opponent. ▪

Producers can sign up for disaster aid

Dairy producers who suffered production losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 may apply until May 5 to receive benefits under the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program III. Producers can sign up at their local U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency.

The program will provide \$16 million in benefits to dairy producers for dairy production losses that occurred between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 31, 2007, because of natural disasters.

To be eligible, a producer's operation must be in a county designated a major disaster or emergency area by the president or declared a natural disaster area by the secretary of agriculture between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 31, 2007. Producers in contiguous counties are also eligible. Producers in counties declared disaster areas by the president may be eligible, even though the agricultural loss was not covered by the declaration, if an FSA Administrator's Physical Loss Notice covered such losses. ▪



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