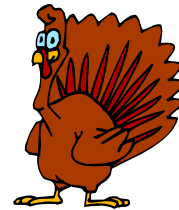




TAD News

November 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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Next TAD Board Meeting:
1 p.m., Dec. 17
Grapevine, Texas

'Tis the season to reflect and give thanks

This time of year is one of my favorites. If you are like me, however, we find ourselves too busy to really stop and reflect on why this is the time for Thanksgiving.

Yes, it is a national holiday, but do we really understand and appreciate what we should be thankful for and the freedoms that we have in our country?

We can be thankful that you and I can worship freely. We should be thankful for the women and men of our armed forces, stationed all over the globe, protecting our rights as Americans to be free and to pursue a life as you and I do.

I hope that as millions of Americans sit down this Thanksgiving holiday around their kitchen or dining room tables loaded with an abundance of food, that they give thanks for the farmers and ranchers who grew that food. Without the American farmer, they would face empty grocer shelves.

My fear is that many of these millions do not have an appreciation for you, the farmer, nor understand where or how food is produced.

It is the job of the Texas Association of Dairymen to tell your story and work for your right to farm.

The TAD Board of Directors recognizes that across this vast state, we must work for our dairy farming families in all areas. We must act as an advocate to ensure that your choice to be a dairy farmer remains your choice and not the choice of someone else.

As we prepare for 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature will convene Jan. 13 in Austin, and a new direction in Washington, D.C., begins Jan. 20 with the swearing in of a new president. These two events will bring new challenges that TAD is preparing for on your behalf.

As I sit down this holiday season with my family, I know that I'll be giving thanks for the opportunity to work for folks like you. ▪

Manager's Update

John Cowan

APHIS plans visit to Texas about TB

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will be in Austin on Dec. 11 as part of a national series of meetings to allow the public to offer comments regarding current challenges and new approaches for future tuberculosis control methods and eradication in view of budgetary constraints.

The Austin meeting – the only one to be held by APHIS in Texas – will be 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn Downtown at 500 North IH 35. Registration will be 7-8 a.m.

Tentative topics for discussion include: regulatory framework; wildlife issues; biosecurity issues; budget concerns; future of indemnities; import issues; and eradication vs. control.

For more information, contact Dr. Alecia L. Naugle, program manager, APHIS' National Tuberculosis Program, (301) 734-6954. ▪

Free online help with manure issues

Dairymen looking for help with manure management issues can now take advantage of the CLEANmp Program. The program gives livestock producers the opportunity to have trained professionals conduct environmental assessments of their operation, develop or revise Nutrient Management Plans or implement both types of projects.

Both types of project will help a producer reduce potential manure runoff and subsequent impacts on sensitive watersheds. All work is confidential and free.

The Environmental Resources Coalition (ERC) is using federal grant money from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to provide producers west of the Mississippi River NMPs and EAs. ERC is a non-profit group dedicated to water quality protection and improvement efforts.

For more information, or to apply, visit www.cleanmp-west.org. ▪

Dairymen hear outlook on industry

The outlook for the dairy industry is a mixed one, according to several presenters at a recent member-industry update held by the Dairy Farmers of America in Glen Rose. About 200 people attended the meeting, which was open to all DFA members and their invited guests.

The purpose was to provide some insight into the current dairy industry and the future direction of DFA. Five notable speakers presented information touching on various areas of the industry.

Among their messages – economic indicators suggest the trend of low prices paid to producers would continue at least for the time being.

Speculation was that a national abundance of dairy cattle will continue to push domestic milk supplies above demand, resulting in a supply/demand imbalance depressing farm prices.

World market opportunities are a bright spot, however, especially for the United States to supply Central and South American markets.

Speakers included Jay Waldvogel, senior vice-president, strategy and international development for DFA; Terry Barr, chief economist for National Council of Farmer Cooperatives; John Wilson, senior vice-president, marketing and industry affairs for DFA; Joel Clark, senior vice-president, accounting for DFA; and Rick Smith, president and chief executive officer for DFA. ▪

Still time to get wind turbine tax credit

Dairymen still have the opportunity to take advantage of the 30 percent investment tax credit for wind turbines in 2008. To do so, you must sign a contract of sale to purchase a turbine before Dec. 31, 2008.

One of the biggest distributors for the Netherlands-produced WES turbine, designed for dairy and feed lot operations, is Wind Inc., based in Fort Worth. The two unites can produce \$5,000 per month or up to \$20,000 per month in electric power production, depending on the winds.

For more information, contact: Ben Boothe of Wind Inc. at (817) 738 9595 or visit: www.wind-inc.com. ▪



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

Capitol Report:

New faces elected, bill filings begin and a battle for Speaker heating up

By Shayne Woodard

The general elections are over, and the pre-filing of bills has begun for the 81st Texas legislative session, which begins Jan. 13, 2009. So far, 350 bills have been filed in the Texas House of Representatives (www.house.state.tx.us) and about 300 in the Texas Senate (www.senate.state.tx.us). Many address immigration issues.

In the House, the balance now is 76 Republicans and 74 Democrats with several new faces.

The big question is who will be elected Speaker; three-term Speaker Tom Craddick is being challenged, so far, by five Democrats and four Republicans.

The Senate now includes 18 Republicans and 12 Democrats, with the Democrats winning one seat in the election.

One seat is still up for grabs. A special election on Dec. 16 will determine the winner of District 17, which runs along the coast in Southeast Texas. ▪

TAHC issues reminder about Cattle brucellosis testing rules

If you are selling or buying cattle, the Texas Animal Health Commission reminds producers that a cattle brucellosis, or “Bang’s” test, is still required for changing ownership of adult cattle in Texas.

Even though Texas has enjoyed Class ‘Free’ status for cattle brucellosis since February 2008, testing is still required at livestock markets, special sales and private treaty sales, for at least two years.

The testing requirement is part of the national brucellosis program standard. Slaughter testing surveillance will continue across the country for an indefinite period, to ensure that the disease is completely eradicated from cattle herds in Texas and other states. ▪