



TAD News

August 2009

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Next TAD Board Meeting:
5 p.m., Sept. 28
Round Rock, Texas

Texas heat taking its toll on livestock

The drought in Texas and throughout the southwest is leading a lot of farmers and ranchers to sell off their livestock simply because they are unable to continue to feed and water their animals, both stocker and feeder, like they normally would.

Many dairymen are facing similar concerns as well with their operations.

I am getting reports that some livestock markets across the state are reporting more cattle are going to market than normally would at this time due to the effects of the drought.

The fact is, with more farmers and ranchers forced to take their livestock to local markets due to the lack of feed and water, that increase in activity is directly related to the price reductions felt at those markets.

Dairy cattle activity at some of these markets is part of the total market activity, but certainly not the primary cause of negative market impact.

I also am getting reports that some want to blame the dairy industry for the drop in livestock market prices due to the Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) herd retirement program. The program's third retirement in nine months now is underway and is said to be the second largest retirement in the program's history.

You should remember that those folks are probably less informed about CWT and how the program works. Please take the opportunity when you can to properly educate them.

Our responsibility is to make sure your message is communicated clearly and correctly to those who are uninformed and not knowledgeable about the dairy industry.

Let your messages be based on sound facts and not driven by emotions. If you are unsure about your facts, please call on your dairy promotion organization staff or contact TAD and we will be happy to assist you with your message. You also can find out more about CWT at its Web site, www.cwt.coop. ▪

Manager's Update
John Cowan

Are you in compliance?

Watch your mail – TAD has sent letters to Texas dairies that have not filed for renewal of their General Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Permit with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), according to TCEQ records.

TAD urges dairies that receive such a letter to take immediate action in order for your dairy to remain in compliance and avoid possible unnecessary payment of fees.

Deadline for renewal – or to file a notice of termination if the dairy is not in operation – is Aug. 31, 2009. Filings can be made electronically or by mail.

State and federal regulations require a dairy operating in Texas to carry a General CAFO Permit that shows the dairy has met requirements for nutrient-management and water quality protection plans.

Dairies with questions should call their TCEQ regional office. ▪

Conference to highlight manure issues

As dairy producers now are under scrutiny more than ever, TAD encourages its members to attend the Texas Animal Manure Management Issues Conference, to be held Sept. 29-30 in Round Rock by Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

The TAD Board of Directors will be attending the conference and, in conjunction, hold its monthly board meeting on Sept. 28. TAD also will host Central Texas legislators at a reception and dinner on the evening of Sept. 29.

In the 10 years since the last manure management conference, there have been major advances in technology to help manage animal manure and process generated wastewater. There also have been considerable changes in state and federal regulations governing concentrated animal feeding operations and the manure they produce.

Registration for the two-day event is \$125. Registration, conference programming and other information can be found at <http://grovesite.com/tamu/tammi>. ▪



TAD opposing federal Clean Water Act

TAD was among the agriculture groups, elected officials, farmers and others who met in San Angelo recently with U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, to discuss shared opposition to the Clean Water Restoration Act. This legislation, which awaits consideration by the full Senate, would overturn two Supreme Court rulings to greatly extend federal government oversight to all bodies of water – imposing new costs and bureaucratic burdens directly on Texas landowners.

Two rulings by the Supreme Court limited federal oversight under the Clean Water Act to “navigable” waters. The Clean Water Restoration Act would replace “navigable” with “all waters of the United States.” This legislation would usurp state regulation of intermittent streams, mudflats, isolated wetlands, sloughs and other surface water by extending federal regulation to all waters. This would affect state and local permitting, economic development, farming and private property. ▪

Dairy farmer caucus revived

As dairy farmers across the country continue to face financial difficulties, U.S. House of Representatives members have reactivated the Congressional Dairy Farmer Caucus, initially started in 2006.

The caucus will help facilitate better interaction between elected officials and dairy producers from across the country. The bipartisan caucus will work with dairy industry leaders to reach common sense solutions to address both the current dairy crisis, as well as other issues of concern to the dairy industry. ▪

TAD to attend animal health conference

TAD Manager John Cowan will attend a joint conference of the United States Animal Health Association and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians in San Diego in October. Cowan will participate in group discussions on animal health and welfare issues which can affect dairy producers. The TAD Board of Directors recognizes it is important to have the dairy industry represented during discussions that may result in additional or revised regulations.

TAD will be at the conference to make sure interest are represented. ▪

TDA announces new farm finance programs

Farming is often a difficult and challenging business, but the Texas Department of Agriculture can help make things easier, especially for young farmers, with four new programs created in the 81st Legislative Session.

Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples has announced the new Agricultural Loan Guarantee Program and expanded Interest Rate Reduction Program to provide farmers with financing tools.

Two new programs are exclusively for young farmers – the Young Farmer Interest Rate Reduction Program and the Young Farmer Grant Program.

To learn more about these programs, contact the Texas Department of Agriculture at (800) TELL-TDA. ▪

DOPA meeting set for East Texas

A Dairy Outreach Program Area (DOPA) Fall Meeting will be held Oct. 27 in at the Southwest Dairy Center in Sulphur Springs. Producers who attend the meeting, sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, can earn five CEUs.

Presentation topics will include animal feeding operation inspections, proper mortality disposal, new CAFO permit federal regulations, lagoon sludge management, cooling pond management and new soil sampling requirements.

For more information, visit www.texasdairymatters.org or contact Hopkins County Extension Office at (903) 885-3443. ▪

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