



# TAD News

## June 2010 – National Dairy Month

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**Next TAD Board Meeting:**  
**1 p.m., Aug. 12**  
Grapevine, Texas

## EPA muddies the water on dairy requirement

There is an indication that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) *might* have a change of mind on a proposal, previously reported here, that will require farms to comply with the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule which requires a farm that meets the minimum storage requirements to have a “SPCC Plan” in place by November.

**TAD Update**  
John Cowan

The plan is intended to prevent oil spills into the waters of the United States and adjoining shorelines. The SPCC plan is required for farms with an aggregate storage capacity of oil products of 1,320 gallons or more or for every storage container larger than 55 gallons. This storage does not include vehicle storage capacity, but previously it was reported bulk milk tanks would be included because milk fat is defined by the EPA as a form of “oil.”

On June 19, the EPA published notice that it would extend the compliance date for all facilities until Nov. 10. Both farms and facilities must amend or prepare, and implement SPCC Plans by that date.

As you read this, you may wonder, “Where is any common sense in this?” That question also was asked by a lot of folks, including U.S. Reps. Candice Miller of Michigan and Frank Lucas of Oklahoma. In May, Miller filed a bill that directs the EPA to finalize a proposed rule to exempt milk from the SPCC program. In addition, Jamie Jonker with the National Milk Producers Federation worked diligently to ask the EPA to exempt milk from the rule’s requirements.

It is through these combined efforts that on June 9, Jonker received a letter from the EPA stating, “We are in the process of taking two actions that relate directly to the issues you raised. First, as was indicated in the final SPCC rulemaking, we will be proposing in the near future an extension to the compliance date for specific facilities. That extension will include provisions that extend the compliance date for facilities with **(Continued, “Update,” page 2)**

### Capitol Report

## Summer is a good time to make district contact with state, federal lawmakers

By Darren Turley

During the hot months of summer, the action shifts from Austin and Washington Capitols to the districts.

State Rep. Joe Heflin (D-Crosbyton) recently hosted the first West Texas Ag Summit in Plainview. An impressive list of speakers addressed local agriculture issues, including Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples, Sen. Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock) and State Reps. Rick Hardcastle (R-Vernon), David Swinford (R-Dumas) and Joe Pickett (D-El Paso).

Topics ranged from ground water to transportation, but the Gulf oil spill made energy the most prevalent issue. The expected cost increase and the move to renewable sources is largely impacting the Panhandle. From vast windmill farms in the area to the new transmission lines expected to be installed this year, the area is full of potential for renewable energy.

The other big topic of discussion was the upcoming legislative redistricting debate. According to Duncan, the

region is certain to lose at least one representative from the area because of population changes.

The Ag Summit was a success and hopefully will become an annual event for the area.

TAD also participated in a recent Comanche town hall meeting by U.S. Rep. Mike Conaway of Texas as part of the House GOP’s “America Speaking Out” tour. The dairy industry was well represented at the stop by Ted Simpson, Brownwood; Kerry DiCiccio, Dublin; Jonathon Haralson, Texas Farm Bureau; and myself from TAD.

After the meeting, Conaway continued his discussion with producers. The ability for the producer to present concerns to his political leader has never been more important than in these excruciating economic conditions. The message was heard by Conaway, who will carry it back to the Agriculture Committee on which he serves. ▪



Texas Association of Dairymen  
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milk storage containers at least until a second action is taken on the January 15, 2009, proposed rule in which the Agency proposed to exempt milk storage containers and associated piping and appurtenances from the SPCC requirements provided certain conditions were met.”

What does all this mean? For now, it seems dairy producers need to be sure all petroleum (oil/fuel) storage containers under the requirements have a SPCC plan in place. I remain hopeful that “milk storage” containers will be exempt; however, at this juncture, we just can’t be sure of that. Check with your environmental compliance advisor for more details. ▪



*TAD Board of Directors working hard at its June meeting.*

## TAD Board Action

The Texas Association of Dairymen Board of Directors approved the following during its June meeting:

- \$2,000 to sponsor TAD assistant manager Darren Turley in the Texas Agriculture Lifetime Leadership program.
- \$500 to the Texas FFA Foundation to help sponsor its annual convention.
- Development of recognition awards for former TAD Board members.

The next Board meeting will be Aug. 12 in Grapevine. ▪

## Study looks at summer pregnancy rates

*By Todd Bilby*

Texas AgriLife Research and Extension scientists recently conducted a study to determine whether transfer of fresh or frozen embryos could improve pregnancy rates during summer in lactating dairy cows compared to artificial insemination (AI).

All embryos were produced in the laboratory (in-vitro) using sex-sorted semen and cultured for seven days until transferred.

A total of 722 lactating dairy cows were enrolled last summer at two commercial dairies in Central Texas. Cows were randomly assigned to one of three treatments. Conventional AI (n = 227) was used as the control compared to either embryo transfer of frozen (n = 279) or fresh (n = 216) embryos seven days after a synchronized estrus.

All cows were submitted to the farms current estrous synchronization protocol. The control group was bred either time – AI or or AI following detected estrus. The other two groups had embryos transferred seven days after the synchronization protocol was completed.

At initial pregnancy diagnosis (40 ± 7 d), percent of cows pregnant was greater for fresh embryos (42.1%) versus both frozen embryos (29.3%) and AI (18.3%) for all cows. Also, percent of cows pregnant was greater for frozen embryos (29.3%) than AI (18.3%).

At second pregnancy diagnosis (97 ± 7 d), percent of cows pregnant was greater for fresh (36.4%) and frozen (25.7%) versus AI (17.0%). In addition percent pregnant was greater in the fresh (36.4%) than frozen (17.0%) treatment group.

There was no difference on embryo loss between treatments. Transfer of both frozen and fresh embryos produced in-vitro using sex-sorted semen improved fertility and number of heifer pregnancies in lactating dairy cows during summer. In addition, fresh embryos restored fertility to levels normally seen during cool months.

For more information contact me at [trbilby@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:trbilby@ag.tamu.edu) or (254) 968-4144. ▪

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**REMINDER: July 20** – Small Grain Forage Conference, Stephenville. Contact: Todd Vineyard, (254) 965-1460.