



Texas Association of Dairymen

For Immediate Release

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TAD STATEMENT ON SIERRA CLUB STUDY

The Texas Association of Dairymen issued the following statement today about the Sierra Club's water quality study of the Bosque River and Leon River watersheds.

The statement should be attributed to John Cowan, executive director of TAD:

“Positive steps have been taken in recent years to improve water quality in the Bosque and Leon watersheds, and dairy producers have been at the forefront. Dairies continue to embrace new practices and technologies – many of them voluntary – designed to reduce the dairies' impact on the environment.

Is the water quality where it should be? Not yet. Many efforts are new, and it will take some time to see significant improvements. A recent Texas Commission on Environmental Quality report stated that the agency needs at least five years of water quality data to determine the effectiveness of the Total Maximum Daily Load implementation plan and other programs.

The bottom line is that Lake Waco's water is safe to drink and is not a threat to public health. Taste and odor problems associated with algal blooms have been an issue since the late 1960s, long before the expansion of upstream dairies.

Scientific studies have found that a number of sources, including the City of Waco itself, contribute to the growth of aquatic vegetation in Lake Waco.”

TAD does question the Sierra Club report's data stating that the watersheds are home to more than 170 CAFOs and 130,000 head of cattle. A recent TCEQ report stated that the North and Upper Bosque watershed includes 50 CAFOs, 25 unpermitted AFOs and 38,343 actual number of cattle (well below the 56,198 allowable number of cattle).

The Texas Association of Dairymen (www.milk4texas.org) is a non-profit corporation comprised of dairy cooperatives whose members are individual milk producers in Texas.

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