



Texas Association of Dairymen

For Immediate Release

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TAD APPLAUDS END TO WACO LAWSUIT AGAINST DAIRIES

Litigation was a waste of resources for both sides

A settlement has been reached between the City of Waco and the six Central Texas dairies that remained as defendants in a lawsuit filed by the City in April 2004. The lawsuit originally targeted 13 dairies in the North Bosque watershed.

John Cowan, executive director of the Texas Association of Dairymen, which provided legal assistance to the defendant dairies, issued the following statement regarding the end to the lawsuit:

“The Texas Association of Dairymen is glad to see an end to this lawsuit, and we are very appreciative of the manner and professionalism which the federal magistrate worked to bring about this settlement.

“But TAD doesn’t believe this lawsuit ever should have been filed in the first place. The City of Waco and dairies were making progress toward solving their differences. Instead, what should have been a positive partnership turned into an adversarial situation. The lawsuit cost both sides time and money, hurt an industry that is a major contributor to the Central Texas economy and didn’t make Lake Waco’s water any cleaner.

“For the past year, the region’s dairymen – even those not named in the lawsuit – have found it difficult, and in some cases impossible, to renew or obtain insurance, borrow money from banks, sell farmland or otherwise conduct their business because of the lawsuit and the fear of further litigation.

“They also have not been able to obtain or renew their state operating permits because of opposition from the City of Waco. Ironically, those new permits would have required them to operate under even more stringent rules, some of the most restrictive in the country.

“Dairymen have a vested interest in maintaining the environment – after all, they and their families drink the water and live on the land. They’ve been willing to operate under tougher, new rules governing their industry, and they’ve embraced new technology that lets them do their job to provide food for Texas with less of an environmental impact.

“Water quality has improved substantially in the Bosque watershed over the last decade. With the end of this lawsuit, both parties hopefully can move forward and work together toward a common goal – a clean, safe environment, including drinking water, for all Central Texans.”

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.