

Livestock & Natural Resources Newsletter

DECEMBER 2007



Texas Cooperative Extension – Bexar County Office
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This newsletter is sponsored by the Texas/Mexico Border Coalition and Risk Management Agency

USDA APPROVES TWO ADDITIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION DEVICES FOR USE IN NAIS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service today announced the approval of two new animal identification devices: a visual tag with radio frequency identification (RFID) from Leader Products and the first approved injectable transponder from Digital Angel. The devices carry an official animal identification number (AIN), which is used to identify individual animals as part of USDA's National Animal Identification System (NAIS). USDA is technology neutral and supports a range of NAIS-compliant identification methods. All NAIS-compliant RFID devices are ISO-compliant and therefore, an ISO-compliant reader would read any of them.

"The ability to successfully trace an animal disease to its source is critical to the health and viability of the livestock and poultry industry in the United States," said Bruce Knight, undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "With efforts to register premises under the NAIS continuing to build momentum, we are looking ahead

to the next phases of the program. The approval of additional identification devices provides producers with important options for participating in the voluntary NAIS and increasing animal disease traceability in the United States.

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM (LCP)

They are currently taking applications under the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) for benefits for livestock producers who suffered feed losses as a result of natural disaster that occurred between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006. Producers may file either 2005 or 2006; however, only earn payments for one year. Payments will be based on the number of animals that were on hand on the applicable disaster declaration date(s) or the carrying capacity of the grazing acres, whichever is less. If a payment was received in 2006 for the Livestock Assistant Grant Program, that amount will be reduced from the 2006 benefits. There will be no reduction from the 2005 payment.

Eligible Producers

To be eligible for LCP, producers must have:

- Either owned or cash-leased eligible livestock (but not both for the same livestock) on the beginning date of the applicable disaster period(s)
- Suffered an eligible feed loss from produced or purchased forage or feedstuffs, or incurred additional feed costs as a result of an eligible disaster event(s) during the applicable disaster period(s) and the feed lost or additional-incurred feed costs were intended for use with eligible livestock

Eligible Livestock

To be eligible under LCP, livestock must:

- Be dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine or deer that:
- Have been physically located in an eligible county on the beginning date of the applicable disaster period
- Have been maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation on the beginning date of the disaster period
- Not have been produced and maintained for reasons other than commercial use as part of a farming operation. Such excluded uses include, but are not limited to, wild free roaming animals or animals used for recreational purposes such as pleasure, hunting, pets, roping or for show.

MAKING YOUR INFORMATION COUNT

By Agriculture Commissioner,
Todd Staples

For many people, counting sheep is a sure-fire way of getting to sleep.

However, for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, sheep – as well as cattle, horses, ostriches and acres of cotton, rice, grapes and citrus – are just some of the many items the agency will count for a complete look of Texas for the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

We can be proud Texas has one of the most diverse agricultural industries in the world, and the Census of Agriculture is an excellent opportunity for us to showcase the incredible array of commodities coming from our fields, pastures, orchards, vineyards and rangelands.

That's why it's important for everyone who receives a Census questionnaire to complete it and mail it in by the Feb. 4, 2008, deadline. Taking time to complete the questionnaire not only gives you the opportunity to provide a complete picture of Texas agriculture, but also to help shape the way agricultural policies can meet your changing needs. The Census is your voice in Texas, and you need to be heard.

Federal lawmakers use Census data when developing agricultural and rural programs, and community planners rely on the information to determine local programs and services. Private companies also use Census data to decide where to locate operations.



The Texas Field Office of the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service conducts the Census in the Lone Star State every five years. Questionnaires will be mailed the last week in December and should be returned in the envelope provided. You also will be able to complete the questionnaire online through a secure Website.

U.S. law requires a response from all producers who receive a Census questionnaire, even if you did not operate a farm or ranch in 2007. This same law also guarantees strict confidentiality of your information, which is not shared with any other state or federal agency.

For more information on the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the Texas Field Office at (800) 626-3142, or go to www.agcensus.usda.gov.

Be sure to make your information count.

USDA Rural Development Energy Efficiency or Renewable Energy Grant & Loan

Texas USDA Rural Development wants you to be aware of this program for your agriculture producers whose majority of their income is from agriculture and rural businesses in towns of 50,000 or less.

This is a grant, loan or combination to purchase and install buildings and equipment for Energy Efficiency projects or Renewable Energy projects.

The grant is 25% of the project and/or the loan is 25% of the project.

Some Energy Efficiency are chicken / turkey house renovations, irrigation pivot motor replacement, grain / peanut elevator dryer motor

replacement, and cotton gin renovation.

Some Renewable Energy is solar, wind, anaerobic digester, and thermal.

The deadline will be in the spring of 2008, but now is the time to start preparing the application paperwork.

If you have questions or need assistance in the processing of the application, give me a call or email me: **Billy Curb** USDA Rural Development Business & Cooperative Specialist State Office, Temple billy.curb@tx.usda.gov (254) 742-9775

BEEF ALERT: Poll Show More Americans Checking COOL Labels

More Americans are checking product and food labels after the proliferation of scares associated with Chinese imports, according to a survey conducted by the Sacred Heart University Polling Institute.

Nearly 69 percent of the 1,000 Americans polled indicated they check labels for nation of origin, up from 53 percent a year ago, the institute said.

Furthermore, 86 percent agreed with a statement calling for suspension of Chinese imports until China meets U.S. product and food-safety standards.

Meantime, 87 percent indicated they have confidence in American-made and distributed products and food.

But fewer than half of Americans surveyed (47 percent) and agreed that the United States is doing a good job ensuring imports meet set safety and quality standards.



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BEEF 706

*A Hands-On Seminar About
Beef Quality Excellence in Texas*

*January 8 - 9, 2008 and January 10 - 11, 2008
Texas A&M University - College Station*

*Register to Attend Beef 706 by December 18, 2007
Call 800-846-4113 or Email loris@texasbeef.org*

*Livestock Risk Protection - Lamb:
New Insurance Program to Help Ranchers
Manage Lamb Price Risk*

*Contact: Jose G. Pena,
Professor & Extension Economist - Management
(830) 278-9151*

The Bexar Beef Cattle Committee

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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