

Livestock & Natural Resources Newsletter

DECEMBER 2008

Texas AgriLife Extension Service– Bexar County Office
3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 212
San Antonio, Texas 78230
(210) 467-6575
<http://bexar-tx.tamu.edu>



“Livestock Producers May Need A Permit For Their Cattle To Poop.”

By Martha Hollida Garrett

Did you know, EPA wants to charge for livestock emissions. Taxing cattle producers on the amount of gas their cattle emit is one part of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal on the table. This news and the resulting reactions has lit up the internet ag sites for the past two weeks and shows the depth of regulatory procedures agriculture is facing.

The proposal was an advance announcement of what will most likely be actual regulation brought before the Congress in 2009.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, “globally, livestock are the biggest source of methane from human related activities.” However, the EPA says people need to slow down and that they’re early in the discussion stage and that no action toward rule-making has been taken.

What we’re doing is gathering info to determine the best measures to address greenhouse gas emissions,” said Kris Lancaster with the EPA.

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), as well as beef and dairy cattle associations, strenuously oppose the greenhouse gas proposal. AFB says it doesn’t even pass the smell test, let alone the straight face test. But EPA is considering steep fees based on animal emissions that Farm Bureau says would force many livestock producers out of business. American Farm Bureau lobbyist Rick Krause says it’s no laughing matter.

As we get ready to celebrate Christmas, the Bexar Beef Cattle Committee and Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Bexar County want to take this opportunity to wish you Peace and God’s Blessing as we celebrate Christmas and the coming of 2009. May we have the opportunity to serve you during the next year.



2009 Annual South Texas Beef Cattle Shortcourse

Palo Alto College Performing Arts Building
Registration 6:00 pm
Programs Begin Promptly at 6:30 pm

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

Trichomoniasis, Fever Tick and Bio Security
Speaker: Dr. Buddy Faries, Extension Program Leader for Veterinary Medicine, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, College Station

Matching Your Cow Herd to your Dollar

Speaker: Dr. Rick Machen, Extension Livestock Specialist, Uvalde

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

Do It Yourself – Weed and Brush Control

Speaker: Dr. Bob Lyons, Extension Range Specialist, Uvalde

Forage Legumes to Replace Some of Your Fertilizer Needs

Speaker: Dr. Larry Redmon, Extension Forage Specialist

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

Organic Forage Production

Speaker: Ken Graff, Hondo, TX

Texas Agricultural Technical Assistance Program

Speaker: Bertha Venegas, Alamo RC& D

Eminent Domain, Liability Issues for Hunting and Insurance Needs

Speakers: Seth Terry & Tom Darling, Farm Bureau Representatives

Two (2) CEU’s Offered Per Session
RSVP to Annette at (210) 467-6575
for Session 1, 2 and/or 3

[South Texas Irrigation](#)
[Conference and Trade Show](#)
Medina County Fair Hall, Hondo, TX
Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Conference Agenda

Registration will be from 8:00 to 8:30 am. An early registration fee of \$15 (\$20 after Jan. 15th) will be charged to cover meal and handout materials during the conference.

3 CEUs (2 General and 1 IPM) will be given. An additional 1 CEU in Laws and Regulations will also be offered in an optional final session.

8:30 a – 9:45 am Session I

Crop Water Usage, Fertilizer Uptake and Crop Physiology.

Improved Irrigation Technologies – Selection, Benefits and Costs

10:15 – 11:30 am Session II

Pumping Plant Efficiency – Matching Pumps to Irrigation Systems to Reduce Fuel Costs
Irrigation Economics and Water Markets

11:30 – 12:10 pm Organizational Updates
EQIP, Ground Water Districts, Edwards Aquifer Authority, TWDB Water Conservation Projects

12:10 - 1:15 pm Lunch

1:15 – 2:45 pm Session III

Drip Irrigation Design and Management Considerations
The California Perspective
The South Texas Perspective

Center Pivot Irrigation

Ten Frequently Asked Questions about Pivots
Center Pivot Successes and Challenges
New Development in Water Applicators and Pivot Technology

2:45 - 3:00 pm Break/Conclusion

3:00- 4:00 pm Optional Session
Pesticide Laws and Regulations

For more Information: Medina County Office
Call Jason Ott at (830) 741-6180
E-Mail: j-ott@tamu.edu

[Two Texas Horses Test Positive for](#)
[EEE; Horses Need Protection Against](#)
[Mosquito-Borne Diseases](#)

By Carla Everett, Texas Animal Commission

Texas has joined at least five other states this year in reporting cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis infection in horses. In Houston County, in the southeast corner of the state, a horse with clinical illness has tested positive for the disease, and in the north central Texas, in Denton County, a vaccinated horse also tested positive and exhibited clinical signs of disease. EEE, which can be transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes, also has been reported this year in horses in Georgia, Florida, Maine, Tennessee, and New Hampshire and in Ontario, Canada.

“Infected horses are a ‘sentinel’ or warning that infected mosquitoes are in the area, and measures should be taken to protect humans against exposure to the dangerous pests,” said Dr. Andy Schwartz, state epidemiologist for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), the state’s livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. “Protect yourself and your horses with a mosquito spray containing DEET, get rid of stagnant water, and avoid being outside at night, when mosquitoes are more active.”

“Horses with mosquito-borne encephalitic viruses, such as EEE, Western Equine Encephalitis (WEE) or West Nile Virus (WNV), may stagger, appear confused, and act erratically. Owners should contact their veterinarian immediately, if their equine animals exhibit clinical signs of these diseases. About half of infected animals may be saved, with the appropriate supportive care,” said Dr. Schwartz. Although EEE, WEE and WNV are not regulatory diseases, they are reportable to the TAHC and to the Texas Department of State Health Services, due to their potential to cause human disease.

“Vaccines are readily available to protect equine animals against mosquito-borne encephalitic diseases, but they must be given according to the manufacturer’s directions, and it takes at least a week to 10 days after vaccination for protective antibodies to develop. Booster shots also must be given as needed. Heed your veterinarian’s advice, he said. As good as vaccines are at protecting against infection, there are rare times when a vaccinated animal will still contract disease. That is no reason to avoid vaccinating your animals.”

Dr. Schwartz noted that, in 2002, when West Nile Virus was first detected in Texas, 1,699 equine animals were stricken with infection. West Nile vaccine has helped cut those case numbers from 716 in 2003 to only two cases in 2008. “Vaccinating against mosquito-borne diseases has to be a part of routine equine health care,” he said. “Don’t stop, just because case numbers drop.”



Brad Wildeman: Cost Of COOL On The Canadian Cattle Industry

Chuck Jolley: In a recent news story, you were quoted as saying, "The return of Minister Ritz and several new appointments indicates the federal government's plans to renew focus on improving the long-term health of Canada's agriculture sector." The statement was seen in most circles as a comment on the damage to the Canadian Ag industry done by the U.S. C.O.O.L. law.

You underlined that statement in a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper that said, "The industry is now being directly attacked by the new, onerous mandatory country of origin labelling law."

Travis Toews, C.C.A.'s foreign trade committee chair, quite specifically said he hopes Ritz's return will expedite a challenge at the World Trade Organization against the U.S. Country-of-Origin Labeling law.

Ritz had already bluntly informed the U.S. government that Canada will initiate a World Trade Organization panel when the law came into effect. The gauntlet has definitely been tossed and the issue has just been taken to the W.T.O. Let's start with an overview of the effects of the law which was part of the complaint. Can you put some numbers to the losses it has caused?

Wildeman: The long anticipated concerns about the impact of COOL as a trade barrier are certainly living up to expectations and each week there seems to be a new impact come to light, making the law more restrictive and costly for the Canadian cattle industry.

To sum this up, most US packing companies that previously accepted Canadian-born cattle have had to implement coping strategies that have either restricted Canadian cattle to certain facilities or restricting processing to certain days of the week, or in some cases - both, and some have directly discounted Canadian cattle. Their rationale is that they prefer to deal with only one origin label at each facility, but in some cases they are willing to deal with a second label at certain facilities as long as they recoup the associated costs by paying less for the Canadian-born cattle.

I am not aware of any packing facility in the United States that is currently accepting cattle that would cause them to have to manage 3 origin labels. On average, the combined impact of lower revenue and increased cost is about \$90 per head. Canadian packers have factored this into their domestic bids

as well, so we must experience the roughly \$90 loss on all cattle regardless of whether they are exported or not.

Jolley: Five Minutes With Brad Wildeman, CCA, & The Mandatory COOL Issue

COOL is definitely not cool with Brad Wildeman or anyone else in the cattle business north of the border. Ranchers from B.C. to P.E.I. and all points in between are up in arms over what they see as a serious violation of a satchel full of trade agreements. W.T.O.? Absolutely. NAFTA? No doubt. And this week, they've brought out the big gun, going to the W.T.O. and filing a formal complaint.

The complaint alleged that COOL will impose a financial burden on U.S. meatpackers that slaughter Canadian animals imported into the United States the law could lead to more extensive and restrictive labeling requirements in other countries.

In an official statement, Stockwell Day, Canadian trade minister, went directly to the heart of the complaint. "We believe that the country-of-origin legislation is creating undue trade restrictions to the detriment of Canadian exporters," he said.

The WTO filing requires negotiations between the United States and Canada in an attempt to resolve the dispute. If negotiations fail, a WTO dispute-settlement panel will rule on the matter. It's a long, overly-drawn out process that won't be finished until well after any permanent damage might be done.

Wildeman doesn't want to wait. He's worked too long and too hard to help insure the health of the Canadian Cattle industry to wait politely in the wings while the diplomats on both sides of the border chatter away. There are things that must be done immediately to open export markets for what has become excess supply and things that must be put in motion to support the future of the Canadian cattle industry, whether or not COOL remains the law or is eventually rescinded.





The Bexar Beef Cattle Committee
3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite # 212
San Antonio, TX 78230
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2008 Officers

David Janszen – Chairman
LeRoy Moczygemba – Vice Chairman
Dr. Fidel del Barrio, Secretary / Treasurer

Editorial Staff

Jerry Warren, CEA-AG jw-warren@ag.tamu.edu
Annette Pawelek, Office Asst. apawelek@ag.tamu.edu



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