



E-Newsletter

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Texas Brangus

Letter from the TBBA President

Dear TBBA Members,

Due to this being a very large email, I'll keep my part very short. The by-law amendments have been passed by the membership and they will be posted on the Web Page shortly.

A Donation heifer with the proceeds of its sale going to the Texas Junior Brangus Association will be selling at our Miss America Sale during our convention at Salado this year. It will be a pick lot from about 3 or 4 nominations. This heifer will be of show quality and will be a spring born calf. The heifers not picked will be sold with the proceeds from those calves divided between those nominating for this pick lot.

Please contact Joe Dillard at joe.dillard@weatherford.com if you would like to nominate a calf.

The show results for the National Junior Brangus Show and Futurity are as follows:

Black Brangus

[Futurity Results](#)

[Owned Show Results](#)

[Bred & Owned, Champions Challenge, Cow/Calf Pairs](#)

Red Brangus

[Futurity Results](#)

[Owned and Bred & Owned Results](#)

Sincerely,

Russ Williamson President

Anthrax Confirmed in Texas Sheep

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has confirmed the first case of anthrax in livestock in Texas this year after a yearling female sheep in West Texas

Breeders Association

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was diagnosed with the bacteria on a ranch near Mertzson, Texas, located about 25 southwest of San Angelo.

TAHC State Veterinarian Dr. Dee Ellis reports the animal is the second in Texas this year to succumb to anthrax, but the first in a domestic animal. The first case of the year was reported in a white-tail deer in Uvalde County in mid-June.

Irion County Extension agent Ross Benson says the sheep was a free range animal and so far no other livestock are suspect for contamination.

"I've been here (in Irion County) for several years now and this is the first case of anthrax in livestock that I know about," Benson said.

When asked about local reactions to the confirmed case, Benson said it is "business as usual" for livestock producers.

"We are in the early stages of investigation right now so most producers in the county probably haven't even heard the news yet. But I don't expect any panic over it. We'll be advising producers to keep their eyes out for livestock developing any symptoms related to the bacteria."

TAHC officials say anthrax is a bacterial disease caused by *Bacillus anthracis*. Anthrax is an endemic cause of human and animal illness in practically all countries. The disease is still endemic in many developing countries, especially where livestock is subject to limited veterinary control.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, anthrax cases among animals have been recorded in 27 European countries, more than 20 Asian countries, more than 20 African countries, and Australia. In the New World, anthrax has been reported in the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Venezuela and many others countries. Cases of animal anthrax in the United States occur in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

It is not uncommon for anthrax to be diagnosed in livestock or wildlife in the southwestern part of the state. Basic sanitation precautions such as hand washing, wearing long sleeves and gloves can prevent accidental spread of the bacteria to people if handling affected livestock or carcasses.

Acute fever followed by rapid death with bleeding from body openings are all common signs of anthrax in livestock. Carcasses may also appear bloated and

appear to decompose quickly. Livestock or animals displaying symptoms consistent with anthrax should be reported to a private practitioner or TAHC official.

When anthrax is suspected in livestock, treatment should begin immediately. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends when the first incident of anthrax in a herd is confirmed, the remaining animals should be moved immediately from the field or area where the index case died and regularly checked at least three times a day for two weeks for signs of illness (rapid breathing, elevated body temperature). Any animal showing these signs should be separated from the herd and given immediate antibiotic treatment. Clinical experience has frequently demonstrated that animals, especially cattle, will respond favorably to treatment even though apparently in the terminal stages of anthrax.

Even if they go on to die (death in anthrax results from the effect of the toxin), the infecting load of *B. anthracis* will have been greatly reduced, if not entirely eliminated, significantly reducing the chance of subsequent transmission from the carcass to other animals.

"The TAHC will continue to closely monitor the situation for possible new cases across the state. Producers are encouraged to consult with their veterinary practitioner or local TAHC office about the disease and about preventive measures such as vaccination of livestock," Dr. Ellis said.

TAHC regulations require vaccinations of exposed livestock and proper disposal of carcasses before a quarantine can be released.

For more information regarding anthrax, contact your local TAHC region or 1-800-550-8242 or visit www.tahc.state.tx.us.

-Release by Southwest Farm Press

EPA Withdraws CAFO Rule

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has withdrawn its proposed concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) reporting rule.

The move comes after harsh criticism from the nation's livestock industry groups. National Cattlemen's Beef Association President J.D. Alexander said the withdrawal is a victory for cattlemen and women and illustrates the importance of the beef cattle community working together to educate government officials.

"Early on, we called for EPA to pull this rule. It turns out

they listened. This really showcases the importance of cattlemen and women becoming engaged in the regulatory process and making sure their concerns are heard," said Alexander said in an organizational news release. "We encourage the agency to redirect its focus to working with states and other partners to attain already publicly available information that would allow them to work toward their goal of improved water quality. This can be done in a way that does not put our food system at increased risk."

The proposed rule required all cattle operations meeting the regulatory definition of a CAFO to report a long list of information about their operations to EPA, including latitude and longitude (or street address) of the production area, acres available for land application of manure, type and number of head and contact information for the owner or authorized representative.

-Release by Texas Farm Bureau

Land Values Continue Surge

Farmland values that increased by as much as 20-30%, and the factors that may eventually slow those growing ag land values, headline an updated land values analysis issued last week by the Rabobank Food & Agribusiness Research and Advisory (FAR) group.

"The six-year surge in U.S. ag land values continues to be top of mind for many in agriculture," says report author Sterling Liddell, vice president of food and agribusiness research & advisory. "We expected land values to grow significantly in late 2011 and early 2012 and the growth was even stronger than we predicted; in excess of 30% in some cases."

In the report, "U.S. Farm Land Continues to Dazzle," Liddell draws a strong correlation between the rate of growth and higher corn, soybean and wheat prices, which resulted from persistently tight global grain stocks and low interest rates.

"Strong fundamentals, including elevated commodity prices, low interest rates, increasing rental rates and strong relative returns to agriculture, will continue to make U.S. farmland an attractive investment," says Liddell.

The U.S. Corn Belt region continued to lead land value growth in 2011 and 2012. States including Iowa, South Dakota and Nebraska were estimated by the USDA to have doubled their 2005 values. An expanded group of states, which adds the Northern Plains and Minnesota, saw year-over-year growth in the range of 15%-30% in

2012. Other states, particularly the Delta states along the Mississippi River, also increased at a faster rate in 2011/12.

The report considers interest rate increases to be the key medium-term threat to maintaining current levels of ag land values.

Looking ahead to the first half of 2013, U.S. farmland values are likely to increase at a slower rate than in 2011 and 2012, assuming steady commodity prices and interest rates. The slowdown is a result of the dramatic 2012 jump in values, as well as looming macroeconomic worries. This slowdown will help to keep values in line with underlying fundamentals. As a result, such a slowing would be beneficial for the long-term financial health of the U.S. crop production industry, the Rabobank report says.

"The prospect of strongly higher interest rates post-2014 and softening commodity prices from current highs present the key long-term risks for U.S. farmland values," Liddell notes.

The report points out that agricultural land rental rates have surged over the past year, and additional growth is likely in 2012/13, providing support for higher mortgage payments. "While this has more long-term implications, in the short term, increased rental values reflect positive economic returns from land investments," the report says.

Rabobank believes the 3- to 5-year outlook for corn prices will average in the \$5-\$6/bu. range, with soybean prices between \$12 and \$14.50/bu., and wheat ranging from \$7-\$8.50/bu. "A sustained downward trend in commodity prices would be required before land values would shift lower. Based on current fundamentals, such a shift isn't expected."

The report says that a 2011 Iowa State University land values survey reported the continuation of a six-year trend where existing farmers increased their proportion of land purchase from near 70% to 74% year over year. Since the trend began in 2005, the survey has recorded an increase in the proportion of existing farmers' share of purchases, from 56% in 2005 to 74% in 2011.

"Increased farmer ownership is likely to stabilize values in the long term as the land is being purchased for business operations rather than for investment opportunities," the Rabobank report says.

"Additionally, U.S. farmers continue to maintain historically strong balance sheets, with a USDA-

estimated, debt-to-equity ratio of 11.68% in 2011 compared to over 22% in the 1980s."

-Release by Rabobank Food & Agribusiness Research and Advisory Group for BEEF Magazine

August/September Calendar of Event

August

6th-8th:

Texas A&M University Beef Cattle Short Course-
College Station, TX

September:

22nd: Western National Brangus Show- Oklahoma City,
OK

Sincerely,

Texas Brangus Breeders Association

Serving and promoting the interest of its members specific to the breeding, raising, and marketing of Brangus cattle.