



Spring 2002

LIVESTOCK & PASTURE NEWS

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Value Added Calves

By John W. McNeill, Extension Animal Science, Texas A&M University

Value is created when you produce a product that meets or exceeds the expectations of the customer. Meets or exceeds their expectations **every time**, not just on the average. Value based marketing has been a buzz word in the cattle industry in recent years. Producers complain that they get average prices in the market place for superior genetics and that they don't receive a premium for delivering a product to the market that has been managed to perform above the average of the industry. In order to justify and establish relative values, you first have to identify that it exists and determine the cost: benefit ratio of creating the relative value. Once it has been established that relative value exists, you have to market that product to a customer that appreciates the product you have to offer who in turn can benefit financially so he will be a repeat customer.

The cattle industry is a segmented business in which most calves lose their identity in the market channels. There is little feedback of information to cow-calf producers on how their calves fit the needs of the beef industry and the type of end-product -- beef -- they produce. The Texas A&M Ranch to Rail program is an information feedback system that allows producers to learn more about their calf crop and the factors that determine value beyond the weaned calf phase of beef production. It provides an opportunity to determine how their calf crop fits the needs of the industry and provides the information needed to determine if changes in genetics and/or management factors are warranted in order to be competitive in beef production. It helps them establish the relative value of their calves compared to the industry norm.

In Ranch to Rail the average net return over a five year period has been \$37.54 per head. This sounds good, but when you get to examining the variability you discover that there is tremendous room for



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST IN THIS ISSUE.

- Ranch Management
- Cattle Marketing
- CEU Opportunities
- Underground Water

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Value Added Calf (VAC)

* John McNeill, Associate Department Head-Extension,
Department of Animal Science, Texas A&M University, College
Station, TX September, 2001.

Vaccination Management Program

Feedback of adequate information to most commercial cow-calf producers on how their calves fit the needs of the beef industry has been difficult due to the loss of identity of the ranch of origin as calves move through various marketing channels. Most calves are healthy when they leave the ranch, but stress caused by weaning, transportation, changes in environment, etc. lowers the level of resistance at the same time exposure to disease challenge is increased. The purpose of a vaccination program is to raise the level of resistance to viruses and other pathogens before a disease challenge occurs.

It is critical that the proper vaccines be administered and that adequate time be allowed to develop immunity in an environment where stress is reduced for optimal response. The following vaccination regimes to produce protection against the major viral pathogens are based upon results observed in the Texas A&M Ranch to Rail program. These regimes resulted in calves with more consistent, predictable, favorable health results.

These programs are designed to get the calves ready to enter the various marketing and production channels after they leave the ranch. Other problems that exist at the ranch level are unique to each operation. Consult with your local veterinarian to assess what other health assurance measures are indicated.

The four programs are:

Value Added Calf-45 (VAC-45)
Value Added Calf PreWean Plus (VAC-Prewean Plus)
Value Added Calf-PreWean (VAC Prewean) Value
Added Calf-PreCon (VAC PreCon)

Value Added Calf-45 (VAC-45)

This program is designed for producers who have the resources to be able to background calves for at least 45 days prior to shipment. This program has been shown to maximize the calf's preparedness to enter various marketing and production channels.

There are two vaccination options in this program. One is based upon a pre-weaning vaccination followed by re-vaccination at weaning. The other is based upon vaccination at weaning followed by re-vaccination 14-21 days later. The type of vaccines used depends upon whether or not the calves are nursing or weaned at vaccination. In both options, the cattle are backgrounded at least 45 days after weaning.

Pre-Weaning Option:

Administer CattleMaster 4 vaccine 4-6 weeks prior to weaning. When the calves are weaned, re-vaccinate with one of the Modified Live Virus (MLV) vaccines listed in Table A. Do not re-vaccinate with CattleMaster 4.

Weaning Option:

If the calves did not receive a pre-weaning vaccination, administer one of the MLV vaccines in Table A at weaning and booster it 14-21 days later.

Value Added Calf-PreWean Plus (VAC-PreWean Plus)

Some producers have the resources to be able to gather their calves prior to weaning, vaccinate them and place them back with the cows for a period of time prior to weaning. This allows time to develop immunity in an environment that is generally less stressful and where exposure to pathogens is minimal. Better immunity is generally established in older calves due to less maternal antibody interference and a more functional immune system.

VAC-PreWean Plus is based upon administration of CattleMaster 4 and one of the intranasal vaccines in Table B at 4-6 weeks prior to weaning with the calves being shipped at weaning.

Value Added Calf-PreWean (VAC-PreWean)

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improvement in consistency and quality since the average net returns per head for the 1,197 participating ranches ranged from +\$307.03 to -\$310.01.

Performance factors such as average daily gain and feed efficiency are important since they impact feed cost of gain. However, one of the main things demonstrated in the Ranch to Rail program was the impact of health on the ability of steers to express their genetic potential and the costs associated with sick cattle beyond the cost of medicine. Shown below is a five year summary of the impact of health on performance, profits and quality grade.

The Impact of Health on Performance, Profits and Carcass Quality

	Sick	Healthy
Head	3,202	9,393
Death Loss	3.4%	0.5%
Average Daily Gain, Lb.	2.78	2.96
Total Cost of Gain, \$/Cwt.	\$65.96	\$56.68
Medicine Cost/Head	\$31.33	\$ 0.00
Net Return/Head	-\$31.97	+\$61.23
Quality Grade		
Choice	29%	39%
Select	63%	56%
Standard	8%	5%

Difference in Value

Healthy +\$61.23

Sick - \$31.97

Difference \$93.20

Average In Weight of Sick Steers = 571 Lbs.

$\$93.20 \div 5.71 = \$16.32/\text{Cwt. Less as Feeders}$



Healthy steers had an average of \$93.20 more favorable return. Steers that got sick averaged 571 pounds upon arrival at the feed yard. To recoup the difference in net return, they should have been priced at \$16.32 less per cwt. when placed on feed. Medicine costs averaged \$31.97 for the sick steers. This is a significant factor since 26% of the calves required treatment for respiratory disease.

The remaining difference of \$61.87 (\$93.20 - \$31.33) was due to reduced performance, increased feed cost of gain, higher interest expense and lower quality grades. The fact that healthy steers cost of gain was 14% lower resulted in them making substantial profit while the steers that got sick lost money and produced lower quality carcasses. This vividly points out the need to adhere to a sound health management plan. By implementing a sound vaccination program at the ranch of origin, you are adding value to your product, helping increase the consistency and predictability of your calves, and you are providing them the opportunity to express their genetic potential.

This variability in health is built into the calf market. Buyers factor this into what they are willing to

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Southeast Texas

Beef 706

Cattle Marketing & Beef Quality Educational Series

A program of beef quality
excellence

Monday May 6th 5:30 PM Texas
Cooperative Extension Office,
Montgomery County, Conroe, Texas–
Video Auction/Cattle Selection for
performance: Goals & Objectives of the
Beef 706 program, Data from previous
706's & Criteria for Determining
Ultimate Value, Considerations for
Buying & Selling Feeder Cattle, Group
Review of Feeder Calves, Feeder Calf
Video Auction to Select Calves. (9:00
PM adjourn)

Tuesday July 2nd – *Live Cattle
Performance Evaluation*- Tour of
McGregor Feed Yards, McGregor,
Texas. (Travel by bus)

Monday/Tuesday July 8-9th – *Cattle
Performance on the Rail and Meat
Safety*. Day and a half program format
with a limit of 40 people per session.
College Station, Texas.

Wednesday/Thursday July 10-11th –
*Topics: Slaughter procedures, Food
Safety, Carcass Grading, Fabrication,
Value Added, Pricing Grid, New Beef
Products.*

To register or obtain information contact:
Montgomery Co. Extension office at
936-539-7822. Sponsored by: Texas
Cooperative Extension, Texas Beef
Council, & the Montgomery Co. Beef
Improvement Association.

Underground Water District Issues & Awareness Meeting:

May 9th, 2002
Walker County Justice Center
(FM 2821)
Huntsville, Texas
7:00 PM

Join us for this meeting and learn more about
the Bluebonnet Groundwater District.

Extension Water Specialists will be on hand to help explain why
this district and others have been developed throughout the state.
Representative Lois Kolkhorst from Brenham, Texas is
scheduled to appear at the program to explain the Legislative side
of the issue.

The 77th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 3655, allowing for
the creation of the Bluebonnet Groundwater Conservation
District, which is to be made up of Austin, Grimes, Walker,
Waller and Washington Counties. This local district is only one
of many to be formed around the state. Voters in each county in
the district will now have to decide if a Conservation District is
essential for the protection of the counties future water supply.
The formation of the district comes on the heels of a state wide
study on future population trends in Texas which indicate that by
the year 2050, Texas will double in population from over 21
million to over 40 million, with the major metropolitan areas
expected to assume the largest growth.

A board of directors has been appointed by the Commissioners
Court, consisting of one representative from agriculture, one
representative from rural water supply interests, one from the
municipal water supply interests and one from the industrial
interests in the county. They will serve as the official county
representatives to the Bluebonnet G.W.C.D. board of directors.

The board of directors may impose a reasonable fee on each well
for which a permit is issued as means of funding the district. The
fee will be based on the size of pipe in the well or the actual
amount of water to be withdrawn from the well. Exemptions to
the fee requirements include: domestic wells with production
capacity of 25,000 gallons of water per day or less, livestock
watering, other pre-existing wells.



ORGANIC FORAGE PROGRAM HELPS RESTORE NUTRIENTS TO DEPLETED PASTURES

Writer: Blair Fannin, (979) 845-2259, b-fannin@tamu.edu

IOLA - The case for many ranchers across Texas striving to improve pastureland is this: What do I do with land that's been farmed and grazed for generations and is virtually depleted of its nutrients?

The solution? Build nutrients through grazing and legume forages.

"This land had been farmed, then had cattle on it and goats run on it for 75 to 100 years," said Gene Sollock, scanning across his 54-acre ranch in Iola. "We had a lot of erosion that had washed away the top soil. We had a very limited amount to begin with. Simply put, this land was worn out."

Today, Sollock's pastures are what any rancher would work toward--dark green Ball clover, thick clumps of Coastal bermudagrass, as well as common bermudagrass and crab grass that thrive in the sandy loam soil.

This is a result of establishing forages, such as clover, that release nitrogen back into the soil year-in and year-out, reducing the need for costly fertilizer. It's worked so well that Sollock hasn't applied a commercial fertilizer in the past five years.

Utilizing an intensive grazing management system, Sollock grazes 100 head of cattle on just 54 acres without having to provide any hay or supplemental feed.

Born and raised just a few miles from his Iola farm, the 75-year-old Sollock retired in 1982 after 22 years of teaching agriculture in Pasadena and Conroe. He and his wife, Ruth, used the farm as a weekend endeavor, but made it their permanent home after he retired. His rangeland revitalization project was put into motion shortly thereafter.

"I had taught school for those years and had a close association with the Extension Service, so I knew all I had to do was contact them."

Sollock said it didn't take much thinking to figure out the problem with his pastures.

"The big thing is that we forget we've not cooperated with nature for 75 to 100 years," he said. "The ground is very depleted. You've got to make a selection (of grasses and legumes) that will perform on that particular soil. Extension has worked with us closely in getting our soil pH in the right balance and our fertilizer ratios (correct)."

Sollock experimented with several clover varieties, recalled Dr. David Bade, an Extension Forage Specialist. Working with varieties recommended by Extension, Sollock found that Ball clover gave him the best results, and it has been an annual staple in his pasture for the past 15 years.

"It has a very hard seed content and has just done a wonderful job for him," Bade said.

Sollock divides his 54 acres into two-acre paddocks that cattle graze in rotation. The paddocks include troughs supplied with fresh water.

"Where a lot of people using native pastures get about a 25 percent utilization, Gene is getting about 90 percent, which means 90 percent of the grass and clover he grows goes into the cow itself," Bade said. Animal wastes recycle the nitrogen found in the clover back into the soil. The high-quality clover eliminates hay feeding and provides a herd of heifers with approximately three pounds of gain per head per day. All of Sollock's daily rotational work is done on a four-wheeler.

"I'll come out here about 7:30 a.m. with a cup of coffee and check things out," Sollock said. "I'll make a visual check of the cattle and also make sure the water is functioning."

Sollock said some could conceive his system as being a complicated one, but he said that's not the case.

"Most everyone thinks when you walk out on this pasture and see it has good sod, lots of grass and clover, that you've been highly fertilizing it, that this is a highly technical (system)," Sollock said.

"This is just the opposite. This is a very nontechnical way of grazing your cattle. If you make a mistake in this paddock and graze it too close, you can correct it. If they graze this area down, they can come back in three to four weeks and can graze it again."

For more information, check the Web at: <http://soil-testing.tamu.edu/topics/Forages> .

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pay since they buy calves as a commodity. There are cattle feeding operations that are willing to pay relatively more for properly immunized, properly backgrounded cattle of good quality. The amount they can justify is dictated by the increase in value it benefits them and the volume of similar cattle available to be able to manage them as a unit.

The Ranch to Rail database provided the information that led to the development of the Value Added Calf Vaccination Management Programs (VAC). There are various options and each of the options have relatively different values and benefits. Producers need to determine the option that best fits their operation **and is of value to their customer**. Remember, value is created when you produce a product that meets or exceeds the expectations of the customer. You can't manage what you can't measure And you must compare your measurement against some relevant standard to determine where you are and where you need to be.

injectable vaccines shown in Table A. Booster the days later.

Table A: Injectable vaccines that meet the criteria for post-weaning vaccinations.

*None are cleared for use in calves nursing pregnant cows.

<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Manufacturer</u>
BoviShield 4	Pfizer
Express 5	Boehringer Ingelheim
Frontier	Intervet
IBR Plus 4-Way	Merial
Jencine 4	Schering-Plough
Pyramid MLV 4	Fort Dodge
Titanium 5	Agri Labs

Table B: Intranasal Vaccines

<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Manufacturer</u>
Nasalgen IP	Schering-Plough
TSV-2	Pfizer

In addition to the specific recommendations for each program, producers need to implement the following:

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Some producers do not have the resources to be able to background calves or vaccinate their calves 4-6 weeks prior to weaning. VAC-PreWean is a vaccination management program designed to increase the level of resistance prior to weaning so that calves have more immunity as they enter various market channels. This program is based upon a pre-weaning vaccination at branding with the calves being shipped at weaning.

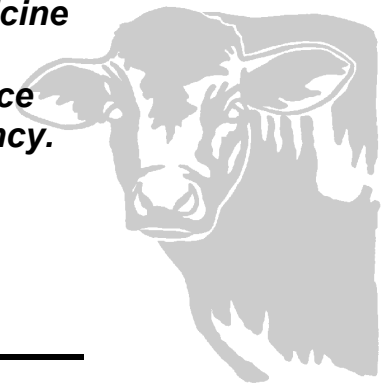
Vaccinate with CattleMaster 4 when the calves are worked at 2-4 months of age. Also, administer one of the intranasal vaccines shown in Table B.

Value Added Calf-PreCon (VAC-PreCon)

Producers that purchase weaned calves and background them on pasture or in a drylot situation are a major source of stocker/feeder cattle. VAC-PreCon is a vaccination management program designed to help ensure healthy stocker/feeders. This program is based upon cattle “put together” from various sources that are preconditioned or backgrounded for at least 45 days. VAC-PreCon is exactly like the VAC-45 Weaning Option except it denotes “put together” cattle versus calves of a common ranch origin after they are processed.

Upon arrival, administer one of the intranasal vaccines listed in _____ Table B and one of the injectable vaccine 10-14

“A properly designed vaccination program helps reduce medicine costs, lower death losses, and enhance production efficiency. Stocker/feeder producers are recognizing this value.”



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Herbicide Products Update:

Dr. Larry Redmon, Extension Agronomist,
Overton, Texas

1) The imazapic that was offered last year will be offered this year without 2,4-D as Plateau. The product does not require a license to purchase/apply and will be approximately \$2/oz compared to \$3/oz for the Oasis.

2) DuPont has changed the name of Ally to Cimarron. The label for Cimarron allows for higher use rates in pastures, up to 1 oz per acre depending on the weed species and even allows up to 3 oz in 100 gallons of water for spot treatment of brush species. Another product, Cimarron Max will offer a container of a generic Weedmaster (Banvel + 2,4-D) plus a small container of Cimarron attached for tank mixing.

3) Dow will be offering a product called Remedy RTU (ready to use) that contains Remedy plus a synthesized crop oil (instead of diesel) for basal treatment of woody species. All you need is a pump-up sprayer and you can apply directly to the base of woody species as an individual plant treatment (IPT).

Federal Import Requirements for Mexican Feeder Cattle in Effect April 1, 2002 *Texas Animal Health Commission News Release*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has raised health standards for importing Mexican feeder cattle in order to protect U.S. animals from tuberculosis (TB), a bacterial infection that can cause internal lesions in the lungs, lymph nodes, or other internal organs. On April 1, 2002, feeder cattle (steers and spayed heifers) from Mexico will enter the U.S. under health regulations published more than a year ago in the Federal Code of Regulations by the USDA's Veterinary Services. By 2003, the USDA will tighten regulations again, when international rules will require exporting countries to fully meet US-equivalent standards for cattle TB eradication.

SELLING OPEN HEIFERS AND AGE AT

PUBERTY. Dr. Steven Hammack, Professor &
Extension Beef Cattle Specialist,
February 22, 2002 *Beef Cattle Browsing*

Montana workers studied the effect of age at puberty under two systems, selling yearling heifers that palpated open or saving them and breeding again. As expected, selling opens was more profitable. They then looked at effects of age at puberty if opens are sold. There was no difference in weaning weight per cow exposed or profit when heifers reached puberty at either 12, 13, or 14 mos. Compared to a herd where heifers reached puberty at 14 mos., if puberty was at 16 mos. it was necessary to save about 2/3 more heifers to maintain cow numbers. But there was no difference in herd profit. The distinction was that 23% of income came from yearlings if puberty was at 16 mos., compared to only 2% of income for a 14- mo.-puberty herd. Yearling heifers that don't breed are not automatic money-losers. They're unintended stockers.

ANNUAL BRAZOS VALLEY CATTLEMAN'S CLINIC & TRADE SHOW

The 16th Annual Brazos Valley Cattleman's Clinic and Trade Show, will be held on Friday, May 3, 2002 at the Brazos Valley Livestock Commission Company on Highway 21 East in Bryan. Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. followed by the program at 9:00 a.m. The program will conclude at 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$10.00 per person which includes printed materials and lunch. Commercial exhibitors will be on hand to display the latest in agriculture products and services.

This years program theme is "Area Beef Cattle Feeding Program". Topics will include "Tools & Technologies For Meeting Today's Beef Cattle Market", "Producing Cattle To Meet U.S. Beef Quality Standards", "Running Cattle Through The Giant Beef Packers System" and "Determining Feeder Cattle Value / Value Today vs. Value At Harvest & Consumer" For more information, contact the Brazos County Extension Office at 979/823-0129.

Small Farm and Ranch Management Short Course

Carden-Waller Cooperative Extension Building
Prairie View A&M University
June 1, 2002

- 8:30 a.m. **Registration** (\$5/person, spouses and children under 18 free) 2 Pesticide Applicator CEUs will be offered.
- 9:00 a.m. **Welcome**
- 9:10 a.m. **Breeding and Managing Calves for Premium Markets**
- Specifications for Calves - Beef Quality Assurance, Dr. Larry Boleman, Professor and Extension Beef Cattle Specialist
- 9:45 a.m. **Cost, Returns, and Value Added by Backgrounding and Marketing Calves Through Premium Sales** Dr. Ernie Davis Professor and Extension Economist - Livestock Marketing
- 10:15 a.m. **Break**
- 10:45 a.m. **Interpretation and Explanation of Soil Analysis Reports/Sources of Nutrients for Forage Production**, Dr. Richard Griffin, Assistant Professor and Research Scientist - Prairie View A&M University

- Nelson Daniels, Program Specialist - Ag
David McGregor, Waller County Extension Agent - Ag
Matt Bochat, Technical Advisor, Synagro
Joe Taylor, Cherokee County Forage Producer
- 12:00 p.m. **Lunch** (Farm Equipment Barn)
Catered and Sponsored by Merial and Hi-Pro Animal Health
- 1:00 p.m. **Evaluating Hay Quality Using By-Products to Reduce Cattle Feeding Costs**, Dr. Dennis Herd Professor and Extension Beef Cattle Specialist - Nutrition
- 1:45 p.m. **Managing for High Quality Calves - Method Demonstrations for Increased Income**
- Proper Vaccination Techniques - Castration Methods - Use of Growth Implants - Palpation
- Dehorning Methods - Weaning

CEU Opportunities: at the Walker County Extension Office

June 13 (2 hours CEU credit)

1:00 PM-5:00 PM

Topic – **Turfgrasses:**

Varieties & Species

Management Issues

Fertilization

Disease ID & Management

Speaker: Roger Havlak, Extension Assistant-Turf

June 20 (3 hours CEU credit)

1:00 PM-5:00 PM

Topic – **Basic Entomology & Insect Diagnosis & Management:**

Overview

Pest I.D.

Control Options – Cultural etc..

Speaker: Dr. Carlos Bogran, Extension Plant Pathologist & Entomologist

June 27 (3 hours CEU credit)

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Topic – **Pesticide Safety:**

Chemical usage, Laws & Regulations
Safety

Product Selection

Application Method

Speaker: Dr. Don Renchie, Extension Communications Specialist & Pesticide Applicator Training Coordinator

**\$5.00 Registration Fee
per Pesticide Applicator**



Texas Suspends Importation of Elk and Several Species of Deer to Protect Against Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

*Texas Animal Health Commission
NEWS RELEASE*

To prevent the potential introduction of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) have issued separate orders that suspend the importation of live white-tailed and black-tailed deer, mule deer, and elk into Texas from any states until further notice. Recently, CWD, a fatal brain-wasting disease, has been detected in eight states in either captive elk herds and/or free-ranging or farm-raised white-tailed deer, black-tailed deer and mule deer.

"The TAHC has been concerned about CWD for several years and, after working with representatives from the deer and elk industry, we implemented entry requirements and a voluntary herd monitoring program in 1999," explained Dr. Linda Logan, Texas' state veterinarian and executive director of the TAHC, the state's livestock health regulatory agency.

"In late 2001, the TAHC quarantined the movement of live white-tailed and black-tailed deer, mule deer, and elk from Colorado, when nearly 1,500 captive elk were depopulated because of infection or exposure to the disease," Dr. Logan said. "By February 2002, the commission followed with an identical movement quarantine on Nebraska, because CWD had been detected on a private hunting preserve and in nearby free-ranging white-tailed deer. By mid-March CWD was detected in free-

ranging white-tailed deer in Wisconsin. This was the first time the disease was detected east of the Mississippi River. CWD also has been detected in several mule deer in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan."

Dr. Logan explained that the TPWD regulates the importation of white-tailed, black-tailed and mule deer under the provisions of the Scientific Breeder Permit regulations. The TAHC, sets standards for health requirements and also issues entry permits for elk and other deer considered to be exotic to Texas. From September 2001 through February 2002, the TAHC permitted 72 elk to enter the state from Colorado, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, and Oklahoma. The TPWD reports that more than 2,100 deer were imported by scientific breeders since 1998, most coming from Louisiana, Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Illinois.

"Our concerns about the possible introduction of CWD into Texas by imported elk and deer rose further when Wisconsin animal health officials reported infection in their free-ranging white-tailed deer. At the same time, we also were receiving inquiries from deer and elk producers in states that had no CWD surveillance programs. After consulting with industry, our agencies agreed that we should exercise extreme caution now and stop the importation of these susceptible species of deer and elk from all states, rather than regret it later," said Dr. Logan.

"As of March 20, the TAHC quarantined all states, prohibiting the entry of elk, mule deer, and white-tailed and black-tailed deer to give us adequate time to readdress our entry and surveillance regulations. Before admitting additional animals into the state, we must ensure that our regulations are reasonable, yet effective, to protect our multi-billion dollar domestic wildlife and exotic hoof stock against CWD."

"At this time, there is no evidence that CWD is transmissible to other hoof stock, such as antelope, axis or fallow deer, which will still be allowed to enter Texas, if they meet our requirements for tuberculosis and brucellosis testing and veterinary examination," said Dr. Logan.

CWD was first seen in captive mule deer in 1967 at the Colorado Division of Wildlife's research facilities in Fort Collins. Since then, it has been detected in free-ranging deer in Colorado, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Wyoming and South Dakota. The disease has also been found in captive elk or deer facilities in Oklahoma, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska and South Dakota. Both free-ranging deer and captive elk herds in Saskatchewan, Canada, also have been affected.

CWD, triggered by abnormal prions in the brain, is confirmed through microscopic examination of brain tissue. Dr. Logan said infected

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animals may incubate the disease for three years or longer before they exhibit clinical signs that include drooling, excessive thirst, dramatic loss of weight and body condition, poor hair coat, staggering, and finally death.

Dr. Logan said researchers do not completely understand how the disease is spread but suspect that the infectious agent may be shed in urine, saliva or fluids associated with calving. Because there is no live animal test, and because CWD is a chronic disease that develops slowly over months or years, herds must be monitored for at least five years before they are considered "free" for CWD. Herd monitoring involves collecting and examining brain tissue from every deer or elk in the herd that dies, either from slaughter, natural death, or hunter harvest to determine if the animal had the disease.

The TAHC offers a voluntary CWD monitoring program in Texas, encompassing all deer and elk, including fallow and white-tailed deer. However, only about 20 herds in Texas are enrolled, Dr. Logan pointed out. She said TAHC staff would like to see increase surveillance on Texas white-tailed deer raised under permit by scientific breeders.

"Ideally, deer or elk herds in Texas should be a part of a comprehensive monitoring program, so that we can protect our valuable wildlife resource in Texas," she said. "With a multi-billion dollar hunting and ranching industry, I believe that CWD monitoring is extremely important."

A number of states are taking action to protect their

elk and domestic and exotic deer herds from CWD. Connecticut prohibits the entry of any elk or deer, while North Carolina animal health officials prohibit the entry of deer or elk from counties (and contiguous counties) where CWD has been diagnosed. Missouri prohibits the entry of deer and elk that have been in any CWD endemic area within the previous five years.

In Colorado, animal health officials require mandatory surveillance of all elk mortalities, whether they are natural deaths, slaughter, or hunt park kills. Likewise, in 2000, Utah initiated mandatory testing for CWD, at the request of the Utah Elk Breeders, prohibits the importation of any elk from herds known to be exposed to or positive for CWD. No cases of CWD have been detected in Utah.

Other states, like Minnesota are testing deer within the state, developing plans for expanded monitoring for the disease and organizing contingency plans for handling CWD. In Nebraska, where infected wild deer were detected, Game and Parks Commission officials are preparing to reduce the wild deer population in the affected area. Last year, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officials expanded CWD testing to include locker checks of some meat processors that handled wild game. To date, all samples tested from Washington deer and elk have been negative for CWD.

Indiana officials issue entry permits for deer and elk on a case-by-case basis, after reviewing a full medical history on the herd and evaluating the herd's CWD monitoring program. Indiana animal health officials also have fashioned entry requirements based on each state's level of risk for having CWD in free-ranging or captive herds.

"A variety of approaches are being tried to prevent the introduction of CWD into states, but inevitably, the disease is appearing in elk herds around the country and on several occasions, in the free-ranging deer within close proximity to confined herds. Texas must take a more active role in assuring the health of our deer and elk," said Dr. Logan.

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"Without a live animal test, we have no way to screen animals before they come into our state. We need to establish hunter-kill surveillance and step up the participation in herd monitoring programs. This would allow us to detect CWD in Texas early and stop its potential spread," said Dr. Logan.
"Implementations for a widespread Texas effort

New Regulation Intended to Protect Horses
Texas Animal Health Commission News Release

Horse enthusiasts with limited area on which to keep their animals can now be assured that nearby horses have tested negative for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). EIA, also referred to as "Coggins" or "Swamp Fever," is an incurable disease that can be carried by biting flies from infected equids (horses, mules, donkeys or asses) to "clean" animals. While most infected animals appear healthy, some may die from the virus. Other equids will develop chronic, recurring health problems, such as debilitating weight loss, fever, depression, weakness and swelling of the legs. There is no cure or approved vaccine for EIA, and treatment is limited to providing comfort to the sick animal.

Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) enacted a new regulation April 1, 2002, that requires equids to have had a negative blood test for EIA within the previous 12 months, if the animals are boarded, stabled or pastured within 200 yards of equids owned by another person.

"Owners may call the TAHC headquarters or their TAHC area office, to request assistance

with this regulation," said Dr. Logan. "A TAHC representative will first ensure that the complainant's animals have up-to-date EIA test documents. Then, TAHC staff will canvass neighboring premises to gain compliance with the testing requirements."

Texas has had a decline in the viral infection since 1997, when more than 730 equids tested positive in Texas. Of the 250,000 equids tested in Texas in 2001, only 124 were infected. Current TAHC regulations require equids to be test-negative for EIA within the previous 12 months, if they are hauled to assemblies, such as fairs, shows, exhibitions, rodeos or trail rides. The 12-month EIA test rule also applies to equidae undergoing a change of ownership or entering the state. EIA-positive equine are permanently identified with a "74A" on their left shoulder and must either be euthanized, sold to slaughter or provided to an approved research facility, or remain quarantined for life, at least 200 yards from other equidae.

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- Provide adequate nutrition (including minerals and trace minerals) to facilitate adequate growth and enhance the immune process.
- Vaccinate against the Clostridial organisms (Blackleg, etc.) when the calves are worked at 2-4 months of age and booster at weaning. Vaccinate calves in the VAC-PreCon option upon arrival if no known history of recent Clostridial vaccination.
- When possible, use vaccines and antibiotics with label clearance for subcutaneous injection to reduce muscle tissue injection site blemishes. Use the "tented" technique and proper needle size and length.
- Include other vaccines and management practices that are unique to your operation or are of value to the purchaser of your cattle.
- If products must be given intramuscularly, use low dose products with evidence of minimal tissue irritation.
- Do not administer over 10 cc. of product in a single site.
- Administer all shots in front of the shoulder.
- Only clean needles should enter the vaccine/ medicine bottle.
- Change needles frequently (after 10-20 uses).
- Use a disinfectant to clean needles between

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We hope you enjoy this issue of Walker County Livestock & Pasture News. If you have questions or would like more information call us at (936) 435-2426.

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Sincerely,

**Reggie Lepley
County Extension Agent – Agriculture**