



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

“Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 5, 2010

Texas Animal Health Commission Modifies Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area in Maverick and Dimmit Counties

Deer Hunters Reminded of South Texas Fever Tick Quarantines

AUSTIN - The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) issued a Temporary Preventative Quarantine for portions of Maverick, Dimmit and Webb Counties on August 2, 2007. The TAHC is now modifying that boundary as the areas currently within the zone have met the requirements for quarantine release. “The modification to the Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area (TPQA) in Maverick and Dimmit Counties is good news,” TAHC State Veterinarian and Executive Director, Dee Ellis, said. “This just goes to show that the efforts of the cattle industry, USDA, and TAHC to eradicate the cattle fever tick are effective. We must continue fighting the battle against this pest, however, so that the tick can be completely eradicated from the “tick free” area of Texas as quickly as possible.”

Therefore, the TAHC is modifying the boundary description of the Temporary Preventative Quarantined area to be the following:

The areas released from the previous Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area is all properties which lie North of FM 2644 in Maverick and Dimmit counties- an area of approximately 138,400 acres, and all properties within the previous Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area that lie South and East of FM 186 in Dimmit county-an area of approximately 200 acres.

The area which remains in the revised TPQA includes all properties in the previous Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area which lie East of FM 1021 (Mines Road) in Maverick county, South of FM 2644 in Maverick and Dimmit counties, and North or West of FM 186 in Dimmit county- an area of approximately 179,400 acres.

“Fever ticks are capable of carrying “babesia,” a blood parasite that can cause “cattle tick fever,” a deadly cattle disease that does not affect humans,” Dr. Ellis, stated. “The tick was eradicated from the U.S. in 1943, but is still present in Mexico, and sporadically in the permanent quarantine zone on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande.”

Three separate temporary quarantine zones continue to exist in South Texas which includes parts of Maverick, Dimmitt, Zapata, Starr, Jim Hogg, and Hidalgo counties. Animals should not be intentionally or accidentally allowed to move from any Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area until they have been inspected and treated by USDA/TAHC personnel. Movement restrictions on hides and carcasses, and parts thereof of any animal capable of serving as a host for fever ticks must be inspected and undergo any treatment deemed necessary by a USDA or TAHC representative prior to removal from the Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area.

A written permit or certificate from an authorized USDA/TAHC representative is required for movement within or from the Temporary Preventative Quarantine area until this quarantine is released.

“For more information regarding the new modification of the Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area in Maverick and Dimmit Counties, individuals may contact the Carrizo Springs tick office at 830-876-9782,” Dr. Ellis said. A map of the released and currently quarantined area is available on the TAHC website at www.tahc.state.tx.us

Deer Hunters Reminded of South Texas Fever Tick Quarantines

The general deer hunting season in South Texas will open on November 6, and TAHC officials wish to remind hunters and meat processors in the South Texas region that additional precautions are required when handling deer carcasses from temporary or permanent quarantine areas. Fever ticks can affect the condition and general well-being of deer, but are unlikely to cause death. It is safe to eat venison from fever tick-infested deer.

Portions of Zapata, Starr, Jim Hogg, Maverick, Dimmit and Webb counties are under preventive quarantine for livestock by the TAHC due to heightened levels of fever ticks outside the permanent quarantine zone along the Rio Grande border.

“It’s that time of year again and hunters are encouraged to contact the land owner or manager where they are hunting to determine the current fever tick status, if they are hunting in any of these counties,” Dr. Ellis, commented. “Hunters are asked to take all necessary precautions when handling and transporting deer taken on ranches within the quarantine zone.”

Deer harvested on infested, exposed, adjacent and check premises must be inspected, treated and permitted prior to being removed from the premises. If a deer is killed on other properties within the temporary quarantine areas, one of three options must be practiced:

1. Remove the hide completely and leave it on the ranch. If the skull is needed for proof of sex, seal it in a bag, then dispose of the skull away from livestock or wildlife after the carcass is processed.
2. Freeze the hide for 24 hours.
3. Have the hide/cape inspected and treated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Fever Tick Force before removing it from the ranch.

A permit for movement issued by a TAHC/USDA representative must accompany the shipment of the hide and cape. “If deer hunters have questions or concerns about any of the South Texas fever tick quarantine zones or practicing any of the three aforementioned options, they should contact their local county USDA Cooperative Fever Tick Program Office or the TAHC Region 5 office located in Beeville at 800-658-6570,” Dr. Ellis, said.

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock.

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