



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 26, 2011

TAHC Releases the Remainder of the Olmal Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area in Starr and Hidalgo counties

AUSTIN - The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has released all remaining portions of Starr and Hidalgo counties from the temporary preventative quarantine zone, effective July 26. The Olmal Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area, consisting of 152,716 acres (239 square miles), was established on July 2, 2009 after a cluster of infested premises were identified in an area north of Sullivan City, on the border of Starr and Hidalgo counties. Prior to an official blanket being placed, a five mile area, and then a 10 mile surveillance/movement control area, had been established around the first identified infestations. Eventually, a cluster of 22 infested premises were identified. On May 20, 2011 blanket restrictions were officially released from a western section of the blanket consisting of 59,100 acres after all release requirements had been met.

Cattle fever ticks are capable of carrying and transmitting '*babesia*', a blood parasite deadly to cattle. The fever ticks are common in Mexico, but are not normally found in Texas.

"The TAHC has now determined that all areas currently within the quarantine zone have met the requirements for release and therefore the remaining Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area may be released. The release of the quarantine zone rescinds all movement restrictions placed on the livestock and wildlife within the Temporary Preventative Quarantine Area," Dr. Dee Ellis, State Veterinarian, said.

"This shows that the collaborative efforts between the USDA-Veterinary Services Tick Force, TAHC, the Texas cattle industry and local land owners, are working successfully," said Dr. Ellis. "TAHC and USDA will continue to work with local land owners to maintain effective surveillance efforts to help ensure this pest does not reoccur in the area."

For more information about the cattle fever tick, visit the TAHC web site at http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/animal_health/fevertick/fevertick.html.

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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