



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 20, 2015

TAHC Passes Rules, Including those that Affect Texas Racetrack Facilities and the El Paso Tuberculosis Restriction Zone

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) held a regularly scheduled Commission meeting on January 27, 2015, at its headquarters in Austin.

The following rules were adopted during the meeting and were effective on February 19, 2015.

Chapter 43, Tuberculosis, Movement Restriction Zone

Based upon the recommendations of the 2014 "Bovine Tuberculosis Risk Assessment for El Paso and Hudspeth Counties," the TAHC proposed amendments that redefine the Bovine Tuberculosis Movement Restriction Zone (MRZ). The amendment does away with the high risk zone on the desert side of I-10 and applies to cattle only (dairy goats are exempt). The revisions will also do away with the previous annual and bi-annual Tuberculosis (TB) test requirements. Future TB testing of susceptible species in the MRZ will be required if determined to be epidemiologically necessary by the TAHC.

Chapter 49, Equine, Piroplasmiasis Testing Racetrack Facilities

The new rule broadens the existing definition of a "racetrack facility" to include facilities that are not licensed by the Texas Racing Commission. This requirement is intended to ensure that horses entering unsanctioned racetracks are tested negative for Piroplasmiasis prior to entry into the facility, just as is required for horses competing at sanctioned tracks.

The commission also voted in support of an executive waiver temporarily suspending Piroplasmiasis testing requirements for thoroughbred horses entering sanctioned racetracks. The waiver does not extend to quarter horses or other breeds of race horses competing at Texas' sanctioned tracks, or thoroughbreds competing at unsanctioned tracks.

Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, Swine

To be consistent with USDA animal disease traceability and interstate movement requirements, the commission now accepts ear notches and registration tattoos as official identification for swine entering Texas.

Chapter 40, Chronic Wasting Disease, Movement Restriction Zone

The amendment combines the existing High Risk Zone and Containment Zone into a single new zone defined as the "Containment Zone." There is no change in zone requirements or boundaries, simply a name change. The High Risk Zone concept continues to be valid and is subject to possible application elsewhere as a buffer in the state.

Chapter 57, Poultry, Laryngotracheitis Vaccine Virus

For poultry entering Texas, the TAHC now requires accredited veterinarians to certify on the health certificate that the poultry listed on it have not originated from an area that has had "active chicken embryo origin Laryngotracheitis vaccine virus" circulating within it in the last 30 days.

To view the details of the rules passed visit <http://www.tahc.texas.gov/regs/code.html>

The following rules were proposed:

Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, Equine Health Certificates

The TAHC proposed to change the validity of a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) for equine entering the state from 45 days to 30 days.

Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel, Chronic Wasting Disease

The proposal will create requirements for persons authorized to collect diagnostic samples for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing.

Chapter 55, Feral Swine, Holding Facility and Movement Requirements

The purpose of the amendments is to change the fence and movement requirements for authorized feral swine holding facilities. It will change the fencing requirement from two fences with four feet of separation, to one fence that is capable of preventing any feral swine from escaping.

The TAHC will accept public comments beginning Friday, February 20, 2015, on the rule proposals, with the exception of Chapter 51. The proposals have a 30-day comment period and the deadline for comment submissions is Monday, March 23, 2015, at 5 p.m. Complete details of the rule proposals are available on the TAHC website at <http://www.tahc.texas.gov/regs/proposals.html>

The TAHC encourages and appreciates all comments. Comments on the proposed regulations must be submitted in writing to Amanda Bernhard, Texas Animal Health Commission, 2105 Kramer Lane, Austin, Texas 78758, by fax at (512) 719-0719, or by email to comments@tahc.texas.gov.

For more information, visit www.tahc.texas.gov or call 1-800-550-8242.

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