



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission
“*Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893*”
Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA • Executive Director

P.O. Box 12966 • Austin, Texas 78711 • (800) 550-8242 <http://www.tahc.texas.gov>

For more information contact the Communications Dept. at 1-512-719-0710 or at bonnie.ramirez@tahc.texas.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cameron County Temporary Cattle Fever Tick Preventative Quarantine Area Update

AUSTIN – Recently, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) confirmed the presence of cattle fever ticks on Cameron County premises located outside the permanent quarantine zone. In order to protect the land, premises, and animals from exposure to cattle fever ticks, the TAHC created a temporary preventative quarantine area (TPQA) in Cameron County. The TPQA, commonly referred to as the “blanket area,” and its requirements, became effective October 7, 2014.

Surveillance efforts have been ongoing since the TPQA went into effect. Currently, 95% of premises inside the TPQA have been identified, and 94% of cattle and 93% of equine on those premises have been inspected or “scratched”.

The TPQA originally started with six new premises located outside the permanent quarantine zone. To date, there are six new premises that have been identified in the TPQA, which makes a total of 12 infested premises.

In an effort to facilitate the Cameron County Fever Tick response operations, an office has been set up. The location of the TAHC/USDA Cameron County Fever Tick Response Office is 105 West Ocean Boulevard, Los Fresnos, TX 78566.

As part of establishing the quarantine, livestock must be inspected and treated prior to movement. The schedule for spraying equine (horses) or cattle that need a 14 day movement permit to move has been modified. Spraying is now available every other week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Saturdays or by appointment. To schedule an appointment, call 512-800-2521. The schedule may be found on the TAHC website at http://www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/fevertick/fevertick.html. The spraying location is currently at the Los Fresnos Rodeo Arena. On January 15, 2015, this location will be moved to 30934 FM 1561, San Benito, TX 78586. (On FM 1561, three tenths of a mile west of FM 803.)

A new cattle public dipping vat location is now open for the treatment of livestock. The vat is located at 30934 FM 1561, San Benito, TX 78586. (On FM 1561, three tenths of a mile west of FM 803.)

Hunters that harvest wildlife such as white-tailed deer, nilgai and other free-ranging wildlife and exotic hoofstock in the TPQA must call 956-254-3507 to have their animal inspected and treated for cattle fever ticks. To view a short informational video regarding hunting in a cattle fever tick quarantine area visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOLzGUKYwHE>

“Our primary goal is to protect the health of Texas livestock and maintain marketability,” said Dr. Hank Hayes, Incident Commander for the event. “We are here to help and work with local ranchers and producers.”

The TPQA consists of approximately 223,000 acres. The TPQA will remain in effect until all premises within it are released from fever tick quarantines and the area is determined to no longer be at risk of infestation. Within this area, all livestock (cattle & equine) and live or hunted wildlife (such as nilgai antelope and white-tailed deer) that are capable of hosting fever ticks, are subject to movement restrictions, inspections and treatment as prescribed by TAHC fever tick regulations.

The Temporary Preventative Quarantined Area is defined as that portion of the state within the boundaries of a line beginning at a point in Cameron County where Farm to Market Road (FM) 511 and Captain Donald L. Foust Road intersect (25.950997; -97.412259); thence, northwest along FM 511 for 9.43 miles to FM 803 (26.028682; -97.530968); thence, north along FM 803 for 21.3 miles to FM 2925 (26.335137; -97.491350); thence, east along FM 2925 for 7.28 miles to the east side of the Adolph Thomae Jr. County Park eastern-most parking lot (26.349462; -97.390468) (parking lot); thence, north along the east side of the parking lot for 61.3 yards to the Arroyo Colorado (26.349960; -97.390577); thence, east along the Arroyo Colorado shoreline for 4.45 miles to Laguna Madre (26.353917; -97.325179); thence, southeast along the Laguna Madre shoreline for 55.33 miles to the Brownsville Navigation District Ship Channel (26.064276; -97.775511) (Brownsville Ship Channel); thence, southwest along the Brownsville Ship Channel for 16.4 miles to the point on Windhaus Road that is a straight line southwest of the Brownsville Ship Channel (25.952057; -97.403765); thence, north along Windhaus Road for .1 mile to Captain Donald L. Foust Road (25.952738; -97.404135); thence, west along Captain Donald L. Foust Road for .52 miles to FM 511 (25.950997; -97.412259), the beginning.

Fever ticks, known scientifically as *Rhipicephalus* (formerly *Boophilus*) *annulatus* and *R. microplus*, are capable of carrying the protozoa, or microscopic parasites, *Babesia bovis* or *B. bigemina*. Infected fever ticks inject the protozoan into the bloodstream of cattle as they feed. The *Babesia* organism attacks and destroys red blood cells, causing acute anemia, high fever, and enlargement of the spleen and liver, ultimately resulting in death for up to 90 percent of susceptible naive cattle.

A permanent cattle fever tick quarantine zone (PQZ) ranging from 200 yards to 10 miles wide along the Rio Grande River was established in 1942. The PQZ extends 500 miles, through eight South Texas counties from Devils River to the Gulf of Mexico. It was created as a buffer zone to Mexico, where fever ticks are common. This zone allows tick incursions from Mexico to be detected and eliminated quickly, so that cattle in the zone do not potentially spread fever ticks into the interior of the state.

For more information about the temporary preventative quarantine area and movement requirements, call 956-546-6004 or 512-937-8843. For additional information about the Cattle Fever Tick visit,

- http://www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/fevertick/fevertick.html
- http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/tick/downloads/pest_alert.pdf

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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