



# Beef Business

► A look at current issues affecting the cattle industry. Compiled by *Shauna Rose Hermel*

## VS detected in two head of cattle in South Texas

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) has been detected in two head of cattle in South Texas, 5 miles northwest of Mathis. The cattle were tested after the owner observed blistering and swelling on the animals' muzzles and contacted the local veterinary practitioner. Testing at the USDA Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at Plum Island, N.Y., confirmed the virus as the New Jersey serotype, which is the same serotype found in previously reported cases in Texas horses.

VS can cause blisters and sores in the mouth and on the tongue, muzzle, teats or hooves of horses, cattle, swine, sheep, goats, llamas and a number of other animals. Lesions usually will heal in two or three weeks. Because of the contagious nature of VS and its resemblance to other diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), animal health officials urge livestock owners and caretakers to report these symptoms to their veterinarian immediately.

The newly identified infected herd of cattle is currently under quarantine by the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Regulatory veterinarians will monitor affected and exposed cattle until all lesions have healed and a decision is made to release the quarantine (a minimum of 21 days). There is no known exposure to other horses or cattle. This is the first case of VS in cattle in the United States since 2006.

"Livestock owners should try to limit exposure of their animals to biting flies," said Dee Ellis, the Texas state veterinarian. "Sand flies and black flies play a role in the virus transmission, so controlling insects is important."

Texas currently has a total of seven quarantined herds located in Nueces (2), San Patricio (2), Hidalgo (2), and Jim Wells (1) counties. The first quarantined herd in Texas involving horses in Kinney County has now been released. The TAHC will continue to monitor the situation for possible new cases across the state.

"If you suspect your animal may have VS, you should notify your veterinarian immediately," said Andy Schwartz, TAHC state epidemiologist. "VS is not highly contagious to people, but it can cause flu-like illness if infected saliva gets into an open

wound, eyes or mouth. People handling potentially infected animals should wear gloves for protection, and talk with their physician if they have questions."

For more information about VS, visit the TAHC's VS brochure at [www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure\\_VS.pdf](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_VS.pdf).

A USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-VS fact sheet about VS is available at [www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/content/printable\\_version/fs\\_vesicular\\_stomatitis\\_2012.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/fs_vesicular_stomatitis_2012.pdf)

Source: TAHC.

## AVMA applauds U.S. House for passing bill that allows veterinarians to provide complete care beyond their clinics

Veterinarians can soon breathe a sigh of relief that they will be able to carry and use controlled substances to provide complete care to their animal patients beyond their clinics and across state lines due to the U.S. House's passage July 8 of the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) thanks Congress for recognizing the important service that veterinarians provide to their animal patients wherever they may be by passing this commonsense piece of legislation.

"The AVMA was established more than 150 years ago by veterinarians who cared for the animals that provided food and transportation for Americans," said Clark Fobian, president of the AVMA. "Although times have changed since 1865, veterinarians' need to travel to their patients has not. Today, Congress made it clear that veterinarians are responsible public servants who must be able to use vital medications to treat their patients — no matter the location — so that they receive the best quality care."

Sponsored by Kurt Schrader (D-Ore.) and Ted Yoho (R-Fla.), both veterinarians, in the House, and Jerry Moran (R-Kansas) and Angus King (I-Maine) in the Senate, this legislation makes it legal for veterinarians to transport and use controlled substances beyond their registered places of business. It also allows licensed veterinarians to register in multiple states, regardless of where their principal place of business is located. The Senate unanimously passed its version of the bill on Jan. 8.

"As a large-animal veterinarian, my operating room wasn't always in an office. Most times, it was in the field," said Rep. Yoho. "Expecting ranchers to transport their livestock to a veterinary clinic every time medication is needed is an example of overly burdensome policy created by bureaucrats rather than the folks who know the issue. This bill will correct that problem and allow veterinarians to practice their profession without fear of unnecessary government intrusion."

Veterinarians have previously been told by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) that the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) barred registrants from taking controlled substances beyond their registered locations, such as their clinics or homes. This narrow interpretation of the law has been problematic for veterinarians who provide care in a variety of settings.

The DEA had also maintained that veterinarians must have a physical address within each state where they want to be registered; this interpretation has restricted veterinarians who live along state borders, but need to provide care in both states.

Source: AVMA.

## Houses passes bonus depreciation bill

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 258 to 160 July 11 to pass H.R. 4718, legislation that will make permanent the 50% bonus depreciation of new capital purchases that was created in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012. This bill addresses a section of the tax code that expired at the end of 2013 and is one of the provisions that has traditionally been addressed in tax-extendors packages. It was also considered as part of the tax-reform proposals in the House and Senate.

"NCBA (National Cattlemen's Beef Association) strongly supports the permanent extension of 50% bonus depreciation because it will help provide farmers and ranchers with [a] predictable pro-growth tax code that allows us to make long-term investments in our businesses," said Bob McCan, NCBA president and Victoria, Texas, cattleman. "Bonus depreciation coupled with Section 179 expensing are effective tools allowing farmers and ranchers to make the necessary investments needed to remain competitive

in the global marketplace and create jobs in America.”

Bonus depreciation allows businesses that purchase new equipment to depreciate 50% of the cost in the first year, plus the percentage of the remaining basis in the equipment that would ordinarily be depreciable under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System.

The House Ways and Means Committee approved the measure in May as part of the piece-meal approach to approving individual parts of the tax-extenders package that expired at the end of 2013.

Earlier this spring, the Senate Finance Committee passed a bill extending nearly all of the extenders for two years. Previous action on the Senate floor was suspended, and it is likely that the Senate will not take up the tax-extenders package until after the elections in November.

Source: NCBA.

### Leadership program donation targets improving level of living in rural Texas

Hard work and keen observation that steered a career from a schoolroom in Hutto, Texas, through several other nations has led a Texas A&M University alumnus to endow a program for developing rural leaders.

“In any situation, you need to go see what is happening, ask why it happened and then ask what can be done,” said Frank Sheppard of College Station. “Who knows what can be done if there is motivation?”

Sheppard, who graduated from Texas A&M in 1947 with a degree in ag education, has given \$100,000 to the Texas Rural Leadership Program. The funds will help the program involve county-based Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agents with a wide range of people in their communities to benefit those who live there, according to Ronnie McDonald, director of the leadership program.

“We want to have a deliberate dialogue with the people in these communities,” said McDonald, former Bastrop County judge. “We want to train the agents who will then train people in the communities. That will expand the dialogue to include people from schools with the elected officials and the churches and others so that it is not always the same people at the table.

“We already have pilot projects going in two counties, and we are seeking collaborations to expand the program. This gift will help us achieve that.”

Sheppard is energized by this notion. He recently recalled early experiences in his career, beginning with his first job in the late 1940s as agriculture teacher in the Hutto schools, and how his willingness to work hard and observe others’ situations with an

eye for solutions led him to opportunities in other countries.

In 1958, after serving with the U.S. Department of State as a rural development leader in India, Sheppard became leader for what was then AgriLife Extension’s new program — community development. Three East Texas counties were piloting the program, and his visits to those counties revealed some key elements for success.

He says providing information and a forum for discussion are vital for development.

“You have to have a way for ideas to be generated and circulated so that people become interested in the notion that they’re in a dynamic, active community, not a dead one,” he added, pointing to the importance of a community’s news media.

Sheppard believes AgriLife Extension’s network of agents covering every Texas county is a natural conduit for such initiating progressive leadership. “They are professional people who are in the communities and who deal with the population.

“Look for people who can wake up a community. Who are the people who would benefit economically if the community started changing? Those are your prime

prospects to get working on it,” he said. “I’m interested in the level of living. Standard of living is what you would hope to have and level of living is what you actually have. We can do something about the level of living. We want to get the people together and find out what we can do to stir up the levels of living in our communities.”

The rural leadership program’s board president, Lynn White of College Station, said Sheppard’s life experiences are “symbolic of the program’s mission.”

“We strive to follow his example as we teach emerging community leaders and citizens to identify and engage their resources as the basis for building and sustaining community life,” White said. “The funds provided by Dr. Sheppard will be used to recognize best practices in community development and servant leaders from communities that conduct the Texas Rural Leadership Program.”

For more information about the Texas Rural Leadership Program, go to <http://trlp.org>.

Source: Kathleen Phillips, Texas A&M.



### Registration opens for Feeding Quality Forum

You listen to the markets on the radio, pick up a paper to read about the latest consumer scare or watch an employee hand in his two-weeks notice. What does it all mean for your operation? Find answers at the 9th annual Feeding Quality Forum in Kearney, Neb., Aug. 19, or in Amarillo, Texas, Aug. 21.

Each year producers gather in August to hear from experts on the issues they face in their operations every day. The forum updates them on the news and research that go into feeding success.

“The cattle industry continues to operate in uncharted waters with regard to price, supplies and demand,” says Mark McCully, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) vice president for production. “Staying on top of this ever-changing marketplace is crucial for feedlot operators.”

Space is limited, but registration by Aug. 4 takes just \$50 to reserve a spot; that price increases to \$75 after the deadline.

“The Feeding Quality Forum has really evolved into one of the premier networking and educational events for the cattle feeder,” McCully says.

Strategically located and planned with a program packed full of expertise, McCully says he is sure this year’s event will give attendees “the upper hand” when it comes to market and management insight.

Sign-in begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a quick welcome at 10 before informational sessions kick off with Dan Basse, AgResource Co. president. As requested by returning participants year after year, Basse will be discussing the market outlook for protein “foodstuffs” and feedstuffs, both locally and globally.

Scott Brown, University of Missouri research economist, will speak on the impact of high-quality and high-grading cattle before a lunch featuring the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand and the 2014 Industry Achievement Award presentation.

Afternoon sessions include a presentation covering consumer demand, consumer questions and the “Ground Beef Nation” by Brad Morgan, meat science and food safety specialist for Zoetis.

To conclude the seminar, participants will hear about how to get the most from testing their feed, and then engage in the feedlot-manager panel discussion on conquering the labor, hiring and retention battle.

The seminar, sponsored by Zoetis, Roto-Mix, Land O’ Lakes Purina Mills, *Feedlot* magazine and CAB, should adjourn at 4:15 p.m.

To register, visit [www.feedingqualityforum.com](http://www.feedingqualityforum.com) or contact Marilyn Conley at 800-225-2333 or [mconley@certifiedangusbeef.com](mailto:mconley@certifiedangusbeef.com).