



November 29, 2007

Dr. John R. Clifford
Deputy Administrator
USDA, APHIS, VS
12th & 14th St. Independence
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Dr. Clifford,

On behalf of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) Cattle Health Committee, this letter is written in support of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) fund request for \$13.3 million for the Fever Tick Program. These funds are needed to address the current fever tick situation over the next one to two years in the Temporary Preventive Quarantine Areas on the portions of Zapata, Starr, Maverick, Dimmit and Webb counties outside the permanent quarantine zone in order to stop the spread of fever ticks in the free areas of these Texas counties. We believe USDA must have support for its regular tick program appropriation in order to conduct all of the work that is necessary in the permanent quarantine zone.

Failure to gain control of fever tick outbreaks in the border area of Texas will result in fever tick infestations in other areas of Texas and the spread of fever ticks to many other states. If we fail to gain control of the current fever tick outbreak and fever ticks continue to spread outside the quarantine zone it is highly likely that other states will begin imposing importation restrictions on Texas cattle. Such eventuality would cost the cattle industry and the economy of the state of Texas many millions of dollars. Information contained in the 2006 National Strategic Plan for the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program describe that the direct and indirect economic losses caused by cattle fever ticks were estimated to be \$130.5 million in 1906 (equivalent to over \$3 Billion in 1999 dollars). The economic impact of reintroduction of fever ticks today would be this and much more.

We thank you for your continued efforts to the safeguarding of our national livestock populations.

Sincerely,

Michele Vise-Brown
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Secretary Chuck Conner
Under Secretary Bruce Knight