

# AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

Connecting West Texas Farmers & Ranchers  
with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



## Chronic Wasting Disease

### WHAT IS CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD)?

CWD affects the nervous system of all members in the Cervidae family, which includes white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer, elk & moose. It is caused by prions, a type of misfolded protein that causes the host animal to replicate this misfolded protein. These interrupt and degrade nerve cells, eliminating basic nervous system functions and eventually leading to death. CWD can be spread by indirect and direct contact with saliva, urine, feces or carcass of infected animals. Lateral transmission between animals is the typical route of infection.

### SYMPTOMS TO LOOK FOR

- Emaciation or poor body condition
- Decreased activity and/or erratic behavior
- Wide, low stance and blank expression
- Excessive drinking and urination
- Salivation and grinding of teeth
- Keeping distance from herd
- Loss of fear of humans



### WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A POSSIBLE CASE OF CWD

1. Do not attempt to touch, kill or move the animal
2. Document the location and contact your local game warden and/or wildlife biologist
3. Collect CWD sample

### TREATMENT & PREVENTION OF CWD

- Remove potentially infected animals
- Prevent high cervid densities by continuing hunting and harvest
- Minimize places of congregation, such as feeding stations

## Find your TWP Wildlife Biologist

[https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/technical\\_guidance/biologists/](https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/technical_guidance/biologists/)

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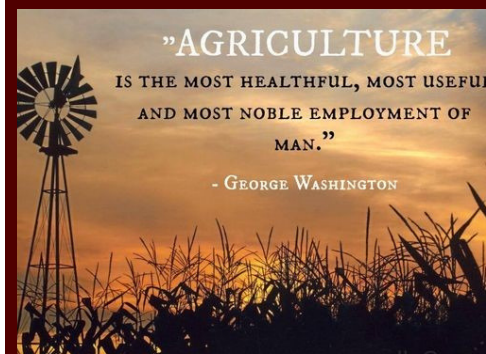
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# USDA Transitioning to EID on Certain Livestock

CATTLEMAN MAGAZINE: SEPTEMBER 2019

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with federal, state and industry partners to strengthen its traceability system to protect the long-term health, marketability and economic viability of the U.S. livestock industry. While there are several steps USDA needs to take to do this, the essential one is to move from metal identification tags to electronic identification tags in beef and dairy cattle, as well as bison.

“The transition from metal identification tags to radio frequency identification (RFID) tags will not happen overnight”, says Dr. Andy Schwartz, Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) executive director and state veterinarian. “The transition is projected to take four years and we want to use this time to educate and encourage Texas cattle, dairy and bison producers to start taking steps toward electronic identification.” Beginning January 1, 2023, only individual official RFID tags will be accepted as official identification for cattle and bison moving interstate, including:

## Beef Cattle and Bison

- Sexually intact and 18 months or older
- Used for rodeo or recreation events (regardless of age)
- Used for shows or exhibitions
- 

## Dairy Cattle

- All female dairy cattle
- All male dairy cattle born after March 11, 2013

## Implementation Timeline

Dec. 31, 2019

USDA will discontinue providing free metal tags. However, approved vendors will continue to be permitted to produce similar metal tags for one additional year. Approved vendor tags will be available for purchase on a state-by-state basis as authorized by each state animal health official through Dec. 31, 2020.

Jan. 1, 2021

USDA will no longer approve vendor production of metal ear tags with the official USDA shield. Accredited veterinarians and/or producers can no longer apply metal ear tags for official identification and must start using only official RFID tags.

Jan. 1, 2023

RFID ear tags will be required for beef and dairy cattle and bison moving interstate that meet the RFID tagging requirements. Animals with metal ear tags will have to be re-tagged with RFID ear tags in order to move interstate. Feeder cattle and animals moving directly to slaughter are not subject to RFID requirements.

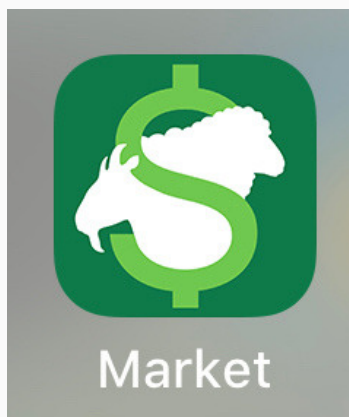
For questions about current accepted forms of official identification. USDA approved RFID ear tag specifications and premises identification numbers (PIN) and USDA’s transition to electronic identification, click the respective links at [thecattlemanbuyersguide.com](http://thecattlemanbuyersguide.com).





# Selling Lambs or Goats? There is a new APP for that!

BY: CODY TRIMBLE



The West Texas summer brought what was expected, lots of heat and very little moisture. This has even extended into the early fall. Because of this, we have seen a sharp decline in forage quality across the region. According to a newsletter by Reid Redden, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Sheep and Goat Specialist, while well-conditioned adult sheep and goats are doing well, young growing stock and lactating females are having performance issues without supplementation. Redden adds that due to the number of parasites accumulated during the spring, some sheep and goats continue to have issues with those. These are certainly things to be thinking about and watching for as we head into the fall.

If you are looking for help deciding whether to sell your lambs or goats, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension has an app for that! In conjunction with the San Angelo State University information technology department the Lamb and Goat Market Forecast app for iPhone has been developed to help producers know the best time to sell.

"This app addresses the basic question producers face: 'Should I sell them now, or do I retain ownership and sell them a little bit later down the road? And if I do wait, what would be my reasonable expectations for change in value?'" said Bill Thompson, an Agrilife Extension economist based in San Angelo.

According to Agrilife Today, the app uses eight years of statistical data to help optimize gross revenue per head based on time of year, animal weight and cost of gain while also providing current market value. The app is the first of its kind for lamb and goat producers.

If you are interested in the app you can download it on an iPhone by searching for The Lamb and Goat Market Forecast in the app store.

## Specialist Highlight



### Bruce Carpenter, Ph.D. Associate Professor & Extension Livestock Specialist

Dr. Bruce Carpenter, associate professor and Extension livestock specialist, is headquartered at the District VI Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Center in Ft. Stockton. He is also a member of the physiology of reproduction section in the Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M. He received his bachelor's in animal science and range science at New Mexico State University. He earned both master's and doctorate degrees at Texas A&M University in Physiology of Reproduction.

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# SPOTLIGHTING...The Good & Bad!

BY: MATLIN A. SAIN: PRESIDIO COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

## THE BAD: HUNTING

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) states, "it is unlawful to hunt with the aid of artificial light of any form that casts or reflects a beam of light onto or otherwise illuminates a game animal or bird" (Wildlife, 2019). Furthermore, if a hunter is caught spotlighting, they could be subject to a fine anywhere from \$500 to \$4,000, or a year in jail. Unfortunately, for some hunters the risk of doing time is worth it when trying to find that perfect buck. According to Hart, a 19 year-old man was charged in 2015 with 128 counts; consisting of spotlighting, shooting from a vehicle, shooting across a road, and failure to obtain a license (2015). The young man was sentenced to six months in jail and fines racking up to \$6,800.

So, how do we encourage hunters to stay within the confines of the law? First, I wanted to confirm if it was legal to use a spotlight for recreational use. After speaking with Bo Hancock, a game warden of Presidio County, he confirmed that it is legal to use a spotlight on your own private property at night if you are taking night-time wildlife counts. However, there is a fine line; if you have a weapon in your vehicle and you are using a spotlight or participating in suspicious activity, law enforcement might assume that one is illegally hunting. Additionally, Hancock stated, "he recommends not spotlighting during the night, solely to prevent illegal hunting and to always call your local game warden if you have questions or encounter anyone hunting illegally."

## THE GOOD: SPOTLIGHT CENSUS

The spotlight technique involves counting deer at night using a vehicle (preferably a pickup). One person drives the vehicle and preferably two people count deer and make visibility estimates from the bed of the truck. Aircraft or high intensity spotlights are used. This is considered the most consistent method of deer census. However, while it provides a valuable density data and is easy to do, it does not work as well for composition (buck:doe, doe:fawn) data. For this reason, a daylight mobile line may be run to assist in obtaining this information. The criteria for a spotlight line are as follows:

1. The count should be started 45 minutes to 1 hour after official sunset.
2. The driver should not exceed 10 mph. On ranch roads 57 mph is preferable.
3. Texas Parks and Wildlife uses lines at least 15 miles long. Shorter lines may be used on a ranch but should be run frequently.
4. Visibility is taken at 1/10 mile intervals along the route.
5. Winds should be less than 20 mph and cloud cover less than 50%. Relative humidity should be less than 70%.
6. Record all deer observed within the sample area. Identify as to sex and age when possible.
7. The local game warden should always be contacted prior to the count and advised of spotlighting activities, time of spotlighting, and exact location of the activity. No weapons should be carried in the vehicle.

For information about other Deer Census Methods go to: <http://agrilife.org/wildlife2/files/2010/05/Deer-Census-Techniques.pdf>

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# Industrial Hemp Farming & Common Questions for Texas What's Next? Major Questions for a Texas Hemp Industry

DR. CALIN TROSTLE, DR. LARRY REDMON

Texas Gov. Gregg Abbott signed legislation June 10 legalizing production, processing and marketing of industrial hemp and products in Texas. This is only the beginning of an extended months' long process for regulatory provisions to be developed and put in place for Texas hemp. The process of permitting, issuing licenses, reporting, fees, inspections and guidelines for any hemp materials with  $\leq 0.3\%$  tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) will take some time to be developed and approved. Prospective growers, processors and marketers must know hemp remains illegal for you or your business in Texas until you have a license. Under current proposed Texas guidelines, hemp production will only be legal when you have a license to grow it.

**Q1:** Is industrial hemp now legal in Texas?

Not yet. As noted above, the process by which guidelines will be determined for Texas hemp has just begun. This process will result in proposed guidelines for Texas involving application for a license, background check, fees, inspections, what plant parts must be tested for potential THC, and reporting. These guidelines will also address required destruction of hemp from the field, during processing, or its products if found to exceed the federally mandated maximum 0.3% THC.

**Q2:** How long until hemp guidelines are issued for Texas and license applications can begin?

We currently do not know. Realistically, the establishment process will not be complete until 2020. Southern regions of Texas might not receive approval for timely hemp planting (we will have to figure out when that will be) by spring 2020 (February or March). Overall, there must be necessary parallel hemp market development in Texas. It may be more practical to view 2021 as a likely start of significant initial Texas hemp field production.

**Q3:** When/where will viable Texas commercial markets be developed for CBD oil, fiber and grain?

The answer is unknown. There are many individuals or business entities that have stated plans to engage as hemp buyers and processors. But these entities are not yet in operation. Some are developing plans for infrastructure, and a few have started. This ranges from renovations of a large former coffee facility in Houston to conversion of multi-acre greenhouse space in West Texas that will have adjacent processing facilities. TDA's Miller warns that Texas could easily overproduce hemp in the first year or two of licensed production. Despite enthusiasm and interest, prospective Texas hemp growers must curtail plans to initiate hemp production until readily available markets are clearly defined. Otherwise, there could be significant grower losses of capital with no place to sell hemp raw materials. One hemp industry advisor offers prospective growers this caution: Be hesitant on any agreement to grow hemp unless you see physical facilities of your buyer in place.

Go to <https://lubbock.tamu.edu/programs/crops/hemp/> for information about Hemp.

"Success Is  
Never Owned,  
It Is Rented  
And The Rent  
Is Due Every  
Day."

UNKNOWN

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District 6 Extension  
Service**

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