

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **USDA Satellite Features Feed**

**August 27, 2009**

**Contact: USDA-TV (202) 720-6445 or (202) 720-3319**

## **FEATURE – BATTLING TICK FEVER IN SOUTH TEXAS**

INTRO: USDA efforts to control cattle fever ticks are on-going in South Texas, but ranchers and officials say more help is needed from the federal government. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:28)

CATTLE FEVER TICKS CAN LEAD TO CATTLE DEATHS AND ECONOMICALLY DAMAGE THE CATTLE INDUSTRY. THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE IS PROVIDING TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL HELP TO RANCHERS IN SOUTH TEXAS TO KEEP THE FEVER TICK FROM SPREADING.

Jose Dodier, Chairman, Zapata Soil & Water Conservation District, Zapata Co., TX: As long as we control it, it would be alright but it's an outbreak now so this could be a major issue for the cattle industry in the state of Texas.

Raul Villarreal, Jr., RC&D Coordinator, Brooks County, TX: Prescribed burning, it is a practice that can be used to eradicate fever tick or control fever tick on a pasture. If you burn an entire pasture you're pretty much going to get everything. We're trying to work with our county governments and with our county representatives to restore, refurbish some dipping vats that may be within the quarantine area.

AND WHILE N-R-C-S AND U-S-D-A ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE ARE WORKING WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS TO STOP THE SPREAD, SOME IN THE AFFECTED AREA SAY MORE MONEY IS NEEDED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM.

Samuel Rodriguez, Jr, Sale Barn Owner, Starr County, TX: Right now the problem is lack of funding. We've been knocking on I don't know how many doors trying to see if we can get funding, but we have been told that the problem is not big enough in territory to where the area can be declared a disaster area.

THE CATTLE FEVER TICK ERADICATION PROGRAM STARTED IN NINETEEN OH-SEVEN AS SHOWN IN THIS U-S-D-A FILM FROM THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY FEVER TICKS WERE ERADICATED FROM THE U-S IN NINETEEN FORTY THREE EXCEPT FOR AN AREA IN SOUTH TEXAS. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.