

# Texas Animal Health Commission: Preparing Local Jurisdictions

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TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION  
Proudly Serving Texas Animal Agriculture  
Since 1893



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# TAHC Mission

- Assure livestock and poultry health
- Disease control and eradication
- Prevent production losses
- Maintain trade avenues
- Prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals

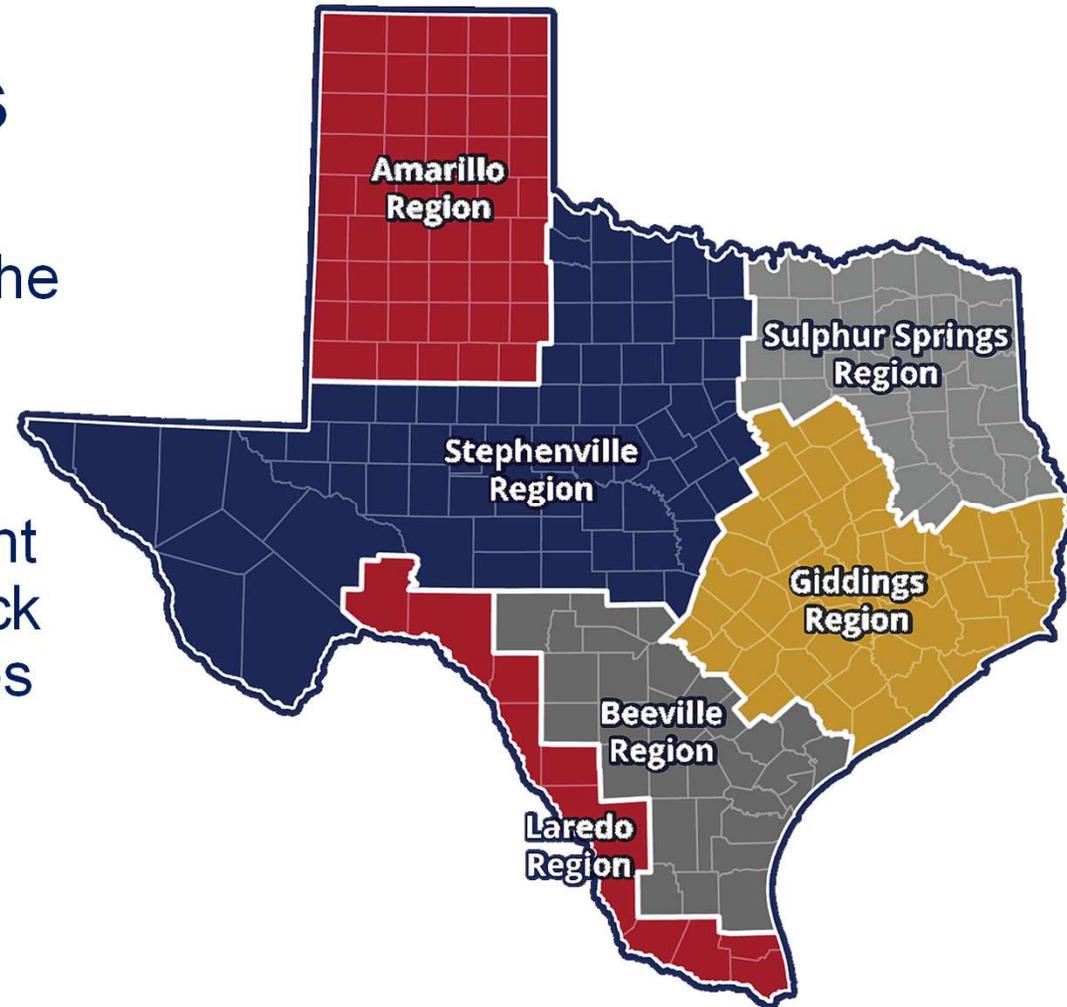




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# TAHC Regions

- Staff serve in each of the TAHC's six regions to effectively work with ranchers, livestock markets, slaughter plant personnel, and livestock industry representatives





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## TAHC at the Local Level

- TAHC livestock inspectors may be seen at livestock markets, feedlots, and slaughter plants to test for diseases at the local level
  - Collect diagnostic samples from livestock and poultry
  - Inspect regulated facilities
  - Enforce movement restrictions on diseased or exposed animals
  - Perform road stops to enforce state entry requirements
  - Ensure agency regulations are followed
- Livestock inspectors also play a critical role in responding to natural disaster events and disease outbreak situations affecting livestock and poultry



# Animal Disease Outbreaks

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# Animal Disease Response

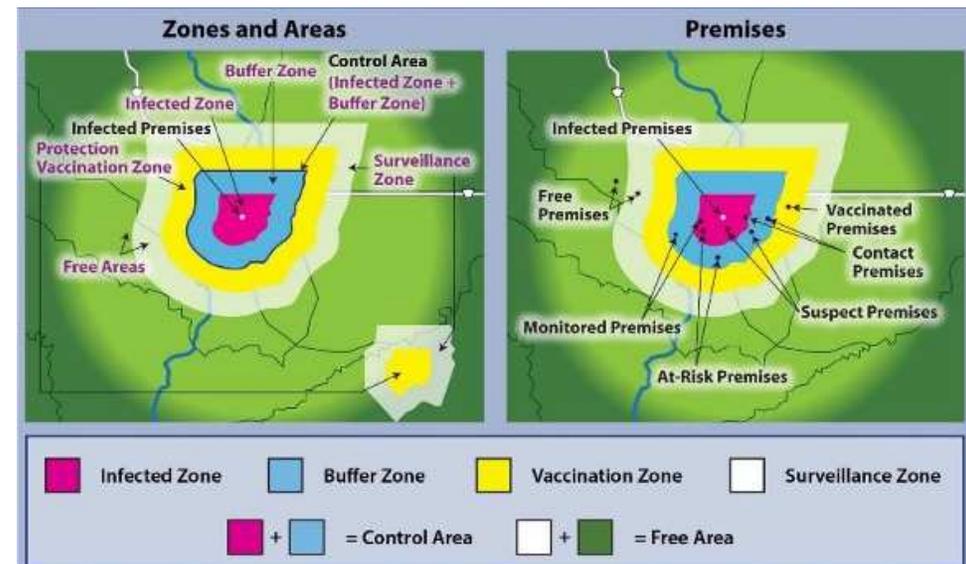
- The TAHC has legislative authority to make and enforce regulations to prevent, control, and eradicate specific infectious animal diseases which endanger livestock
  - Provide assurance of marketability and mobility of Texas livestock
  - Help sustain and continue to make a vital contribution to a wholesome and abundant supply of meat, eggs, and dairy products at affordable costs



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# Areas of Focus and Critical Activities

- Surveillance
- Diagnostics
- Epidemiological investigation & tracing
- Information management
- Communication
- Health & safety and personnel protective equipment (PPE)
- Biosecurity
- Quarantine & movement controls
- Continuity of business (COB)
- Regionalization for international trade
- Mass depopulation & euthanasia
- Disposal
- Cleaning & disinfection
- Vaccination
- Logistics
- Wildlife management & vector control
- Animal welfare
- Appraisal & compensation
- Modeling & assessment tools
- Incident management





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# Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs)

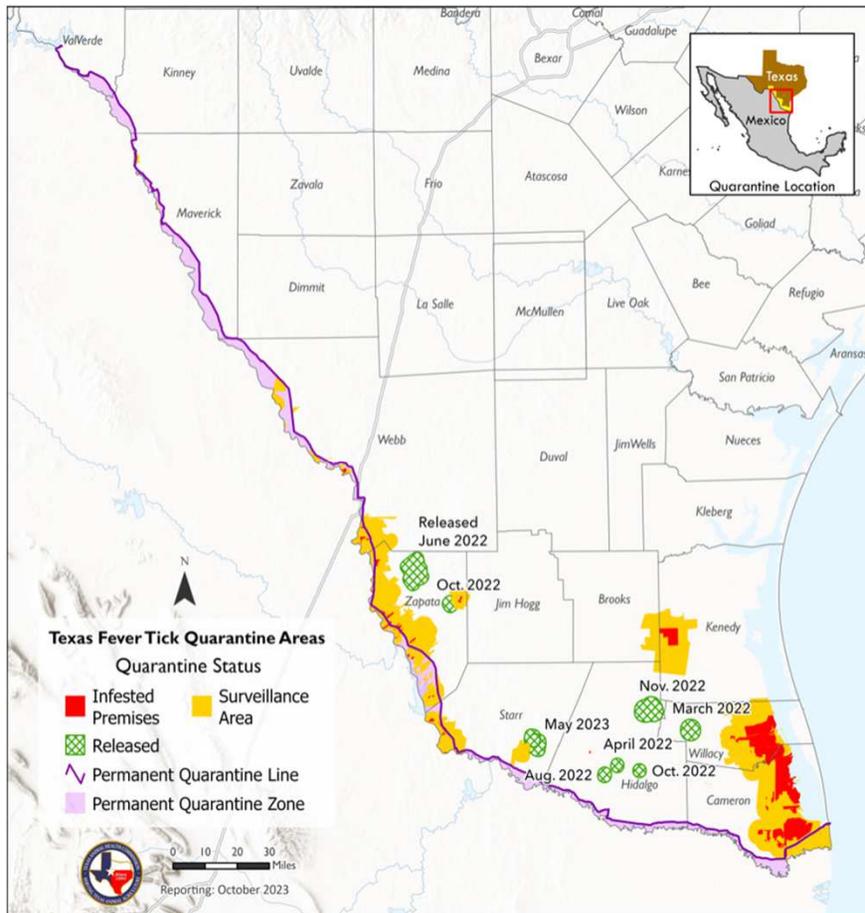
- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)
- African Swine Fever (ASF)
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)
- Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV)





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# Cattle Fever Ticks



**Counties with infested premises quarantines include:**

- Cameron
- Starr
- Val Verde
- Webb
- Willacy
- Zapata

**Total Quarantined Premises:**  
2,684

**Non-Permanent Quarantine Acreage:** 680,583

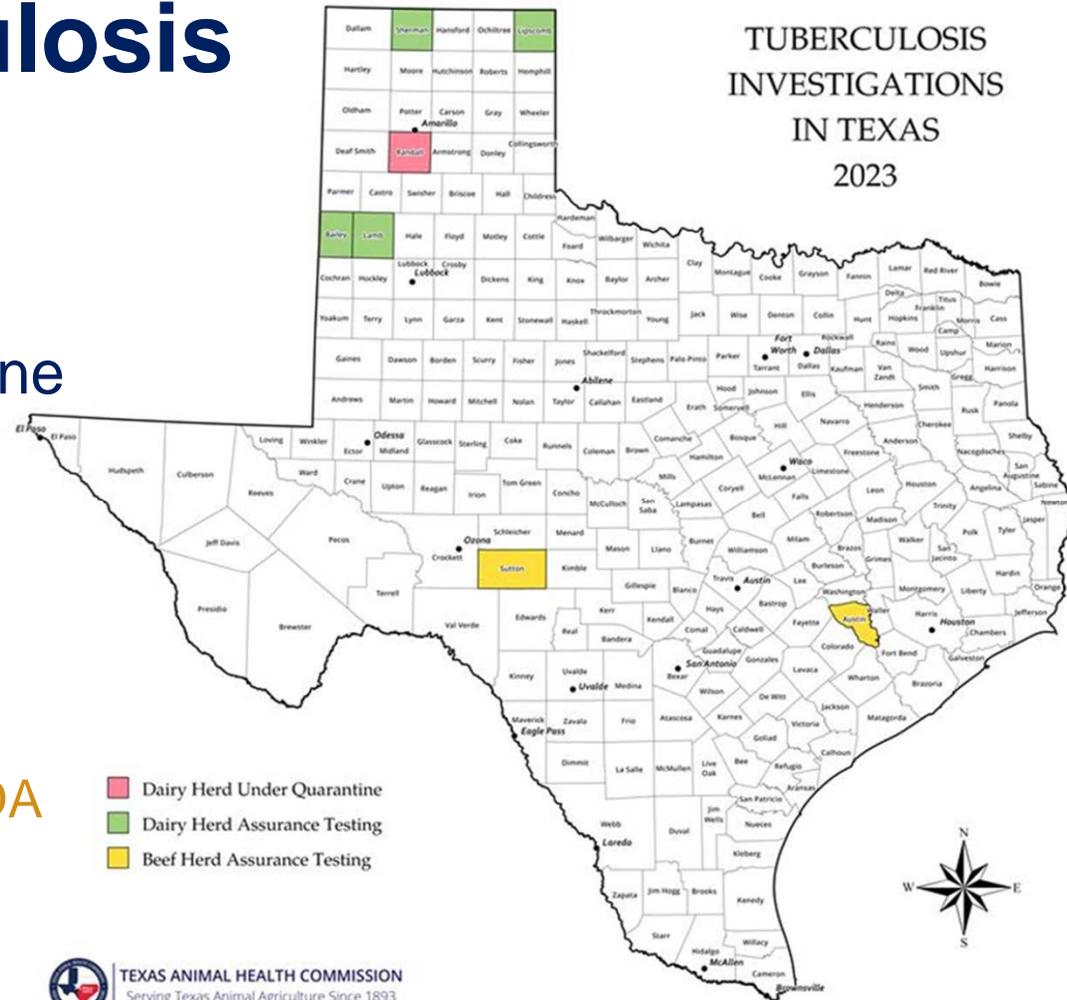
**Permanent Quarantine Zone Acreage:** 157,030



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# Cattle Tuberculosis

- 6 Herds under TB Assurance testing
- 1 Herd under Quarantine for TB testing plan
- Ongoing Tuberculosis facility trace investigations: 43
  - Open from FY2022
  - Collaborating with USDA for review and closure





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# Cattle Brucellosis

- Highly contagious bacterial disease (*B. abortus* & *B. suis*)
- Can affect cattle, bison, elk, deer, and pigs
- Federal eradication program (1954)
  - 2008: Texas classified as Free
- Can have reproduction problems, decreased milk production and sick/lame animals
- Public health concern – can infect humans
  - 1947 – 6,400 human cases
  - 2022 – 48 cases (US Residents, ~100/yr reported to CDC)
  - Raw milk is a zoonotic risk



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# Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

**2023 Positive Deer Table**

<b>CWD 2023 Facility</b>	<b>Number of Positive Deer</b>
Zavala County #1	7
Washington County	1
Gonzales County	10
Hamilton County	1
Frio County #1	2
Sutton County	2
Zavala County #2	4
Frio County #2	7
Brooks County	1
Kimble County	3
Medina County	1
Cherokee County	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>



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# Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

- Cervid Jurisdiction in Texas
  - Indigenous species of cervids regulated by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (White-tailed & Mule Deer)
  - Non-Indigenous species regulated by TAHC (Elk, Red Deer, Sika, etc.)
  - CWD program in Texas is shared between both agencies







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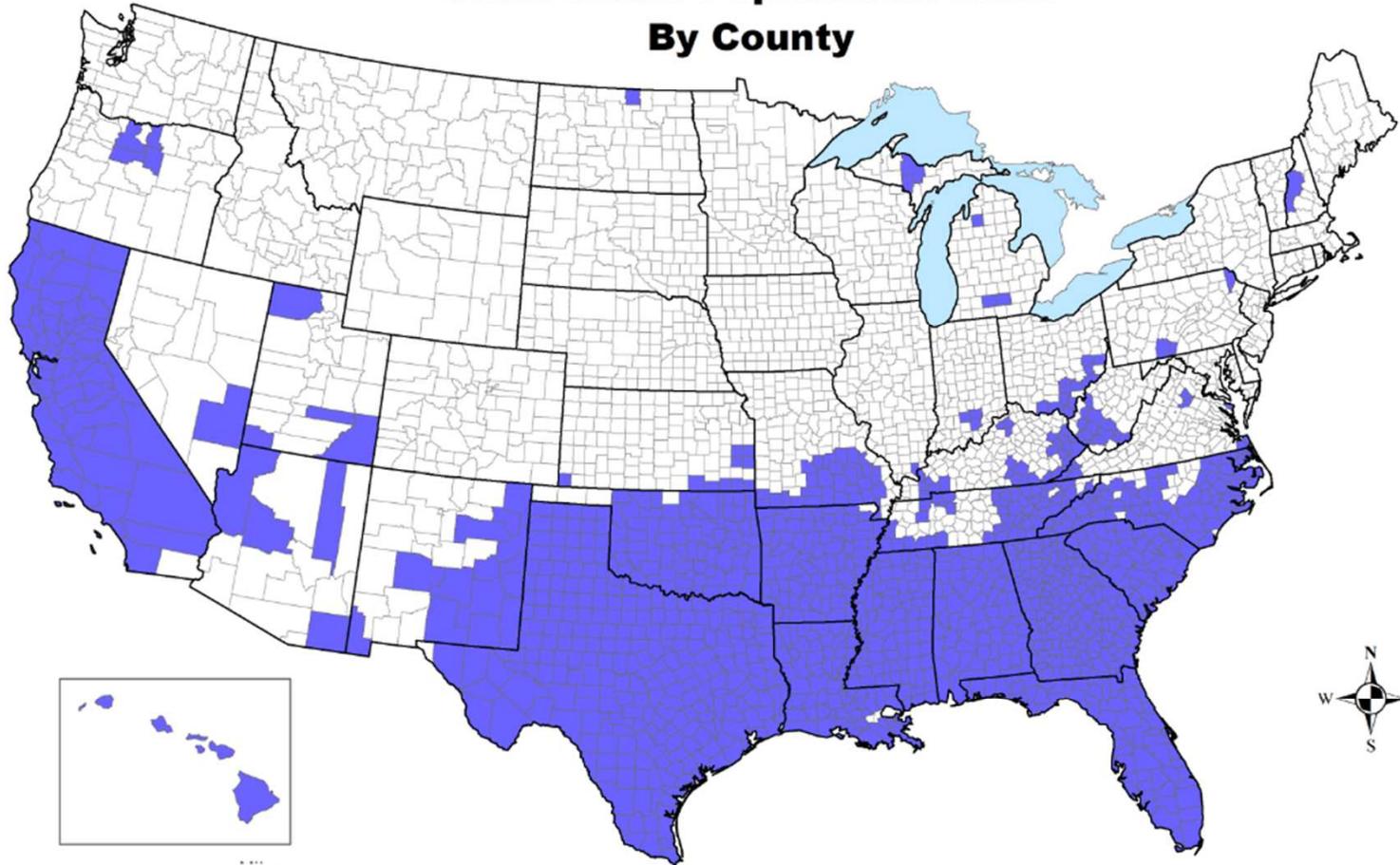
# Swine Pseudorabies

- Contagious herpesvirus
- Reproductive problems, respiratory problems and occasional deaths
- Can affect cattle, dogs, cats, sheep, and goats
- Federal Program
  - Texas USDA Stage 5 - 2004
  - All US commercial production swine herds were recognized as PRV-free in 2004
- Feral swine remain a reservoir for PRV in the United States



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## Feral Swine Populations 2022 By County



### Legend

 FY22 Counties

0 150 300 600 Miles

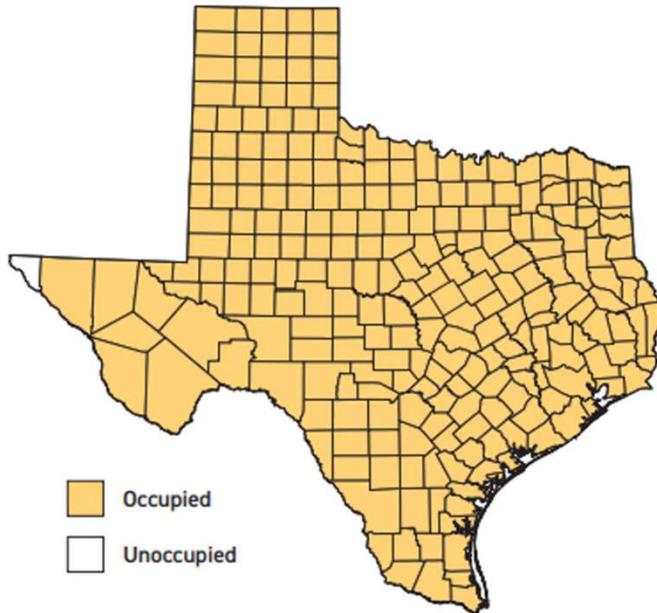
Last Updated 12/11/2022  
USDA-APHIS





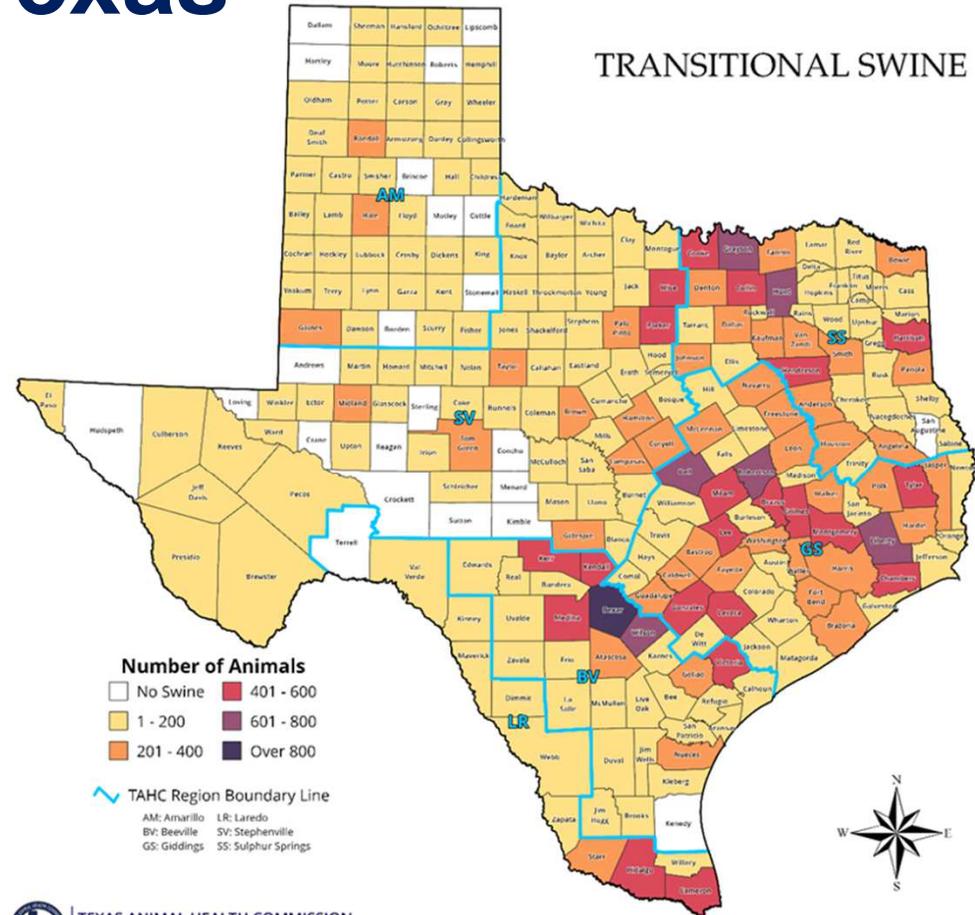
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# Feral Swine in Texas



The distribution of wild pigs across Texas by county, using data from the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study gathered in 2019 and current as of November 2023

## TRANSITIONAL SWINE





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# Surveillance, Detection, Response

- Disease program surveillance includes:
  - Testing and monitoring
- Partnerships help detect and respond to animal issues:
  - Producers/Industry
  - Veterinary practitioners
  - Diagnostic laboratories
  - State agencies
  - Federal agencies
    - USDA – APHIS – VS
- Disease detection response includes:
  - Hold order/quarantine
  - Epidemiological investigation
  - Additional testing
  - Ongoing evaluation



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# Resolution

- Develop herd plan
- Completion of file and reports
- Release of hold order/quarantine
- Continued inspection/surveillance
- Required and option disease programs





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# Outreach

- Animal health programs
  - Presentations/meetings
  - Conferences/exhibits
  - Presence at livestock markets
  - Animal disease traceability
- Emergency management
  - Local Animal Issues Committee(s)
  - Response exercises/planning





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# Local Jurisdictions: Animal Issues Committees

- Animal Disease Outbreak
  - Develop plans and establish relationships between TAHC and partners in order to effectively respond to an outbreak
  - Help local officials identify resources needed during an animal disease outbreak response
    - Bring various types of animal expertise together so that response plans may be enacted quickly and effectively
    - Identify area specific vulnerabilities to create more detailed guidance on the actions taken by local AICs to respond to animal issues (high density industry areas i.e. feedlots, dairies, small ruminant ranches, poultry facilities)



# Natural Disasters

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# Animal Issues in Natural Disasters

- The TAHC works with local, state, federal, non-governmental, and sector partners to help plan for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters that affect livestock, companion, and service animals
  - Plan for, respond to, and recover from weather related events
  - Ensure a Whole Community approach to all-hazards disaster response
  - Lead Emergency Support Function 11- Agriculture and Natural Resources with the Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team (VET), and other partners



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# Natural Disasters





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# ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Coordinate response efforts to animal and plant diseases and pest outbreaks
- Provide technical expertise in support of animal and agriculture emergency management
- Ensure the safety and security of the food and feed supply
- Provide nutritional assistance
- Support response efforts to protect natural, cultural, and historical resources



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# Local Jurisdictions: Animal Issues Committees

- Natural Disasters
  - Help prepare for and manage animal emergency evacuation, transportation, sheltering, and veterinary medical concerns during disasters
    - Bring various types of animal expertise together so that emergency/disaster animal issues can be addressed
    - Incorporate animal issues in all relevant emergency plans
    - Identify area specific vulnerabilities to create more detailed guidance on the actions taken by local AICs to respond to animal issues
  - Whether preparing to assist with a traffic accident where animals are involved, or dealing with large-scale evacuation and sheltering scenarios, planning for animal issues is important



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# Incident Specific Animal Planning Tools

- TAHC Emergency Management provides resources for
  - Developing AICs
  - Facilitating discussion for disaster specific animal issues plans
    - Tropical storms and hurricanes
    - Tornadoes and flooding
    - Transportation incidents
    - Wildfires
    - And more
  - Establishing animal issue plans within existing emergency plans



# Thank you

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