



TACC NEWSLETTER

Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council

1111 North Interstate
Highway, Suite 208
Round Rock, Texas 78664
512-450-0555 - Phone
512-450-0655 - Fax
www.texas.coop

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April Graves

United Ag Co-op, Inc.
El Campo, Texas

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Friona Wheat Growers
Friona, Texas

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THE STAGE IS SET FOR TACC'S JOINT COOPERATIVE MEETING

Cooperative managers, board of directors, employees, associate members & family will soon be taking on San Antonio for the **March 12-14, 2023 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting at the La Cantera Resort and Spa**. Several incredible keynote and guest speakers are set to present important economic, industry, and legislative updates along with some fun! The TACC-PAC Breakfast speaker, **Matt Mackowiak**, editor of the political, conservative newspaper, "Must Read Texas," and Travis Republican Chair in Austin, will share his story of how he operates in a very contentious environment. Our first keynote, **Ken Zuckerberg**, lead industry analyst and senior economist in CoBank's Knowledge Exchange division, will provide the group with key insights into the current and future economic state of agriculture. Following Zuckerberg will be several guest speakers including, **Greg Taylor**, D. Williams and Co., **Victor Ramon**, from OSHA, **Kelley Green** from the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association, and **Gary McLaren**, McLaren Law Firm, PLLC with all the "need-to-know" updates to help you navigate taxes, state regulations, and legal challenges at your co-op.

Tuesday morning keynotes include two amazing speakers, **Alex Epstein** and **Bob Phillips**. **Alex Epstein** is a Fox News contributor and New York Times bestselling author of *The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels* and *Fossil Future*. Using the latest data and insights, Alex challenges everything you thought you knew about the future of energy. Following Epstein is **Bob Phillips** with *Texas Country Reporter*. Since 1972, Bob has traveled the backroads of Texas and told the stories of real Texans – ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

We encourage you to register and attend this exciting annual meeting. Details can be found on our website at www.texas.coop/meetings/tacc-jcm/. If you have any questions, or require assistance, please contact our office at (512) 450-0555 or christy@texas.coop.

The hotel cut-off date is February 17, 2023 so reserve your hotel room today!

REGISTER TODAY: NSAC MEETING

FEBRUARY 23-24

The National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives Texas Chapter will be holding their spring meeting February 23-24 in San Antonio, Texas at Menger Hotel (210-223-4361). Office and bookkeeping professionals at both the local and regional co-op level and those CPAs that work in co-op audit firms are encouraged to attend. For meeting details, visit our website at <https://texas.coop/meetings/nsac-meeting/>. Russ DuBose, with D. Williams and Company CPA firm in Lubbock (806-785-5982), serves as president of the Texas Chapter. This is a great occasion to receive required CEU credits for those who need them. The program includes presentations on customer service, internal controls, fraud, accounting, auditing, mergers, and the agricultural economy.

INITIAL LOOK AT THE STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Although the State Legislative Session began in early January 2023 and a few House and Senate Committee hearings have been held, little substance has been produced and that is expected. Most of this is due to both chambers having to wait and see who will be selected for Committee appointments. The State Senate named theirs some weeks ago by Lt. Governor **Dan Patrick**, but the House selected theirs this week by State House Speaker **Dade Phelan**.

Most of the 65 – member ag lobby team in Austin would agree, due to the nearly \$33 billion dollars of excess funds in state coffers, that current and traditional state sales tax exemptions on numerous farm inputs are likely secure for another two years. Bill filing at the State Capitol began late last year and by law, ends the first week in March.

Right to Farm Act – This is one of the top priorities for the Texas Farm Bureau. This act basically says that if you, as a producer, were in place (with a hog farm for example) and a subdivision eventually moves in around you, with good protocols in place, you have the right to transact business on your farm without fear of nuisance issues. The Dallas / Ft. Worth metroplex has challenged this act; especially with regards to businesses that have expansion property within the city limits. Those cities say, as a farmer, you must operate that property by their code compliance ordinances. Several examples have been cited where rules have gone way off the rails & outrageous citations have been issued to farmers and ranchers, such as restricted grass heights and leaving hay bales in the field beyond 24 hours.

R) **DeWayne Burns** of Cleburne has filed HB 1750 to bring remedy to this situation. Burns was recently named chairman of the House Land and Resource Committee, which is where all private property rights bills must pass & where this bill is likely to be considered in Committee. Last State Legislative Session, Burns chaired the House Agriculture and Livestock Committee and was the lead author on several eminent domain bills.

Foreign Ownership of Agriculture Land – This issue has gotten considerable publicity both at the state and federal level. In Texas, New Braunfels R) State Senator **Donna Campbell** has filed SB 552 to reign in this issue and the bill basically says it would ban citizens and companies of China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia from purchasing or leasing agricultural land. Already the bill is being attacked by foreign – born state legislators as being unconstitutional and “hate” legislation. R) State Senator **Lois Kolkhorst** of Brenham, another strong rule vote, has also filed a similar bill – SB 147.

In the House, R) **Cody Harris** of Palestine, R) **Jacey Jetton** of Richmond / Rosenberg, and R) **Angie Button** of Richardson have filed a similar bill – HB 147.

SUMMARY OF KEY AG LEADER POSTS IN NEWLY APPOINTED STATE HOUSE AND STATE SENATE COMMITTEES

If you ever get around the noise of legislation being made at the State Capitol, most ag lobbyists would agree, one of the key features of being successful is knowing the key appointments to Committees that are special to rural interests. This paper will serve that role. The State Senate Committees & their chairs and vice chairs are selected by the Lt. Governor (**Dan Patrick** R- Houston) and the State House Committees are appointed by the Speaker (**Dade Phelan** R- Beaumont). If a chair or vice chair do not like a particular bill sent to their committee or it is harmful for a particular industry, they can hold it hostage by never allowing it to receive a hearing – thus dying in committee. This is how ag is successful at killing harmful animal rights and environmental bills. All bills expecting to make it through the House and Senate floors and on to the Governor's desk, MUST be heard and passed in a given committee. What follows are just some of the key appointments for rural Texas.

Key Senate Committee Appointments

Senate Water, Ag, & Rural Affairs: Chair, R) **Charles Perry** of Lubbock.....All water & ag – related bills in the Senate must pass this through this committee and Senator Perry also held this role last Session. He is always a strong vote for rural Texas.

Senate Committee on Transportation: Chair, R) **Robert Nichols** of Jacksonville.....This is a key committee for agriculture and Senator Nichols also chaired this Committee last Session. He is also a strong rural vote and all transportation – related bills must pass through this Committee. As you know, transportation issues and movement of ag products is huge for agriculture. He once served as one of the three state commissioners for TxDot.

Senate Committee on Administration: Vice Chair, R) **Drew Springer** of Muenster.....This legislator once represented co-ops and rural areas from near the metroplex to Lubbock and also served in key ag Committee roles in the past in both the House and Senate. He is a very strong rural vote. This Committee is responsible for all “administrative” happenings around the State Capitol such as state office building planning, construction, & oversight, as well as state office facilities throughout Texas.

Senate Committee on Border Security: Vice Chair, **Pete Flores** of R) Pleasanton.....He is always a very strong rural vote and is a former game warden & well-liked in the ag community. For those having ag interests and property along the border, given the influx of illegals, this is key for them ---- someone who understands their plight.

Senate Committee on Education: Chair, R) **Brandon Creighton** of Conroe.....He once threw his hat in the ring for Texas Ag Commissioner and also once spoke at a TACC Board of Directors meeting. He and his family have deep roots in Texas agriculture. With so many issues regarding education these days; like school choice, school safety and teacher pay, he will be an instrumental figure this Session.

Key House Committee Appointments

House Ag & Livestock Committee: Chair, R) **Briscoe Cain** of Houston.....To many people in agriculture, he is not well known. For those around the State Capitol, he is a highly – regarded vote for the industry. He represents much of the Southeast Houston area. For this Session, there was a major overhaul of Committee membership, with many not as connected to agriculture as in the past.

House Calendars Committee: Chair, R) **Dustin Burrows** of Lubbock.....He is a strong vote for rural Texas and is a lawyer by trade; representing many farmers in West Texas. He held this same position last Session and is key because his role is to determine what bills reach the House floor. If he does not like a particular bill, it will not ever likely reach the House floor for a vote.

House Environmental Regulation Committee: Chair, R) **Brooks Landgraf** of Odessa.....He held this same position last Session and to chair such a Committee, and be from the heart of oil & gas country, is a remarkable feat. He is also a strong rural vote.

House Natural Resources Committee: Chair, D) **Tracy King** of Uvalde / Batesville.....He held this position last Session and is an agricultural engineering graduate who lives on a ranch in South Texas. ALL water bills must pass through his Committee, which is key for agriculture. He also once spoke at the TACC – PAC Breakfast at the Joint Cooperative Meeting when it was held in San Antonio.

House Land & Resource Management Committee: Chair, R) **DeWayne Burns** of Cleburne.....Last Session he was chairman of the House Ag & Livestock Committee and carried key property rights legislation. Now, he chairs the Committee by which ALL private property rights and eminent domain legislation must initially pass on their way to the House floor. Very strong ag vote & has spoken at TACC events in the past.

House Public Education Committee: Chair, R) **Brad Buckley** of Salado / Killeen.....He spoke recently at a TACC Board of Directors meeting in Austin and also carried the key “fake meat” bill on behalf of agricultural during the last Session. He is a veterinarian by practice. All public education – related bills in the House, must pass through his Committee such as school choice, teacher pay, school safety.

House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee: Chair, R) **Jeff Leach** of Plano.....Few in agriculture know the huge impact this legislator had on the industry last year when he successfully carried trucking legislation to remedy the runaway litigation judgement awards to high – dollar lawyers in the event of accidents --- thus causing insurance rates to soar. His stock rose immensely among numerous industries after successful passage. He is an attorney by trade, but is also very pro-business!

House State Affairs Committee: Chair, R) **Todd Hunter** of Corpus Christi.....This is a huge appointment for agriculture because numerous key issues must pass his Committee, such as most all sunset review matters of state agencies, among many other things. Every 12 years or sooner, all state regulatory agencies, must go under sunset review, which means they must endure relentless scrutiny and then be reauthorized for existence. This is a very challenging experience! Again, most all legislation related to agencies under sunset, must pass through this key Committee, one of the top three committees in the House.

House Homeland Security & Public Safety Committee: Chair, R) **Ryan Guillen** of Rio Grande City.....This guy was an agricultural education major in college and also switched from the Democratic to the Republican Party a few years ago. Any legislation dealing with DPS & other law enforcement matters must pass his Committee. He has always been a strong ag vote.

House Appropriations Committee: Vice Chair, D) **Mary González** of Clint (near El Paso).....This is a rising star within the Democratic Party & her dad was a county agent. As a 4-H kid, she showed in numerous stock shows. This Committee decides how all the \$300 billion – plus state budget is allocated and spent ---- a huge committee appointment; especially for an ag person! She once spoke at a TACC – PAC Breakfast at the Joint Cooperative Meeting in Galveston.

House County Affairs Committee: Vice Chair, R) **Lynn Stucky** of Denton.....This guy was raised on a large wheat farm in Central Kansas and received his veterinarian degree from Kansas State University. His farm also traded with one of the largest grain & farm supply co-ops in Kansas. He knows our business! Whether its ordinance encroachment into rural areas or tax issues, counties (especially the urban ones) have not always been a friend to Texas agriculture, this is a key appointment for rural Texas. He once spoke to a TACC Board of Directors meeting in Austin.

House Transportation Committee: Vice Chair, R) **John Raney** of Bryan.....This is a very loyal legislator to agriculture and co-ops and given that trucking issues are big for rural Texas, this becomes a key appointment.

RECRUITING FOR SCIP CONTINUES

Over the past several months, **TACC's Tommy Engelke** has driven to ag universities across Texas, presenting the co-op business model and recruiting candidates for the 2023 Summer Co-op Internship Program. There are now six state universities the council works with: Angelo State University, Tarleton State University, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, West Texas A&M University, and our newest opportunity, Texas A&M University-Kingsville! This internship program has been a fantastic way for students to gain experience & knowledge in the agricultural cooperative industry, and for co-ops to vet these interns as potential employees. **Christy Lewis** will be presenting to Angelo State and Texas Tech University on February 22nd.

For more information on TACC's SCIP, visit our website at <https://texas.coop/career-center/summer-internship-program/>. The deadline to apply is March 24, 2023.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TACC FARM STORE SUMMIT

TACC kicked off 2023 with another successful **Farm Store Summit** held January 12-13 in Fredericksburg, Texas. With continued labor shortages and supply chain issues, the group discussed their approaches and solutions to these challenges, and others, in a roundtable session emceed by **Dr. John Park**, Roy B. Davis Co-op Chair and **Dr. Clark Springfield**, an economist and professor, Texas A&M University. Dr. Clark Springfield then shared proven strategies for improving customer service and loyalty at the co-op. **Rob Fox**, Director at the Knowledge Exchange Division of CoBank, provided key insights into how global supply chains have been impacted by disruptions over the past few years and what to expect, as well as an overview of the rural economy.

TACC CO-OP BOARD CHAIR'S CONFERENCE BRINGS LEADERS TOGETHER

Co-op board members from across the state attended **TACC's Cooperative Board Chairmen's Conference** in Fredericksburg on January 18-20, 2023. The program opened with an interactive discussion amongst the group that addressed best practices, increasing board engagement, and teamwork. Following was a comprehensive presentation from **Courtney Berner**, Executive Director, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives breaking down a recent study of 500 cooperatives nationwide across various sectors that provides cooperatives the data necessary to reflect upon and improve their governance. **Dr. John Park**, Roy B. Davis Co-op Chair, Texas A&M University and **Dr. Diane Friend**, Agricultural Economics Professor, Texas A&M – Kingsville, led a discussion on a newly – developed leadership assessment tool that boards can use to improve their performance. The program closed with heavy-hitter, **Gary McLaren**, co-op attorney, sharing specialized legal cases relevant to co-op board presidents and he addressed several legal questions from the group.

TACC DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Over 50 co-op personnel, directors, and industry representatives braved the icy weather to attend the 2023 **TACC Director Development Program** held in Lubbock at the **Farmers Cooperative Compress** on February 2nd. The must-see program kicked off with CPA and co-op tax specialist, **Greg Taylor**, giving a look at taxes & audit trends and changes. Texas A&M University professors, **Dr. John Park** and **Dr. Diane Friend** showcased their new board assessment tool. **Clint Cryer**, from Capital Farm Credit in Lubbock, gave a unique perspective on reviewing co-op financials followed by legal updates from **Gary McLaren**, renowned co-op attorney. The meeting closed with a powerful presentation by **Miquela Smith** and **Tiffany Dowell Lashmet**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Amarillo, about the role of co-op leadership in recognizing & dealing with mental health issues in agriculture.

We want to thank our sponsors, **CoBank**, **Plains Cotton Cooperative Association**, **Texas Cotton Ginners' Trust** and **The Triangle Companies** and as well as the host, **Farmers Cooperative Compress** for making this meeting happen!

GET LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND MARKET INSIGHT: APPLY TODAY FOR GRAIN LEADERS ACADEMY

As part of a new generation of leaders in the grain industry, it's important for you to understand changing markets, identify emerging risks, and design and execute risk management strategies that guard against volatility and improve the bottom line.

That's why I think you may benefit from **StoneX Financial Inc.'s** comprehensive and immersive **Grain Leaders Academy**. This is an exclusive program, and space is limited. It includes trainings over three sessions in different cities throughout the year, starting with a virtual meet up in May.

If you're ready to step up and advance your leadership skills, we invite you to apply for this program by clicking the link below and registering to attend. You'll receive confirmation upon approval of your application after registering. [See the registration site for more program details!](#)



Academy Dates & Cities

May 16, 2023 | Virtual
 June 13-14, 2023 | Kansas City, MO
 November 15-17, 2023 | New Orleans, LA

\$5,000 for all 3 sessions

Application Deadline: March 16, 2023

FROM
OUR

facebook

Quick Facts



We averaged around **900 views** a week on our Facebook posts since January 1st, with one week receiving nearly 2,000 views!



Our most interacted posts center around **TACC's Conferences**.



In the past month, we have received **430 likes** on our daily Facebook posts.

Most Interaction-Single Post

Sharing a post of TACC's 2023 Farm Store Summit garnered the most attention on our Facebook, reaching nearly 1,000 people. Below is the text of the post:

"We are underway in Fredericksburg, Texas at the Farm Store Summit, discussing innovative ideas and challenges facing farm stores! We look forward to bringing back ideas to benefit members."



WITH TACC

(Since December 19, 2022)

- Participated and provided significant research in three TACC Dues Study Committee meetings with chairman **Eric Wanjura** of Farmers Cooperative Compress in Lubbock.
- Settled in TACC's new relocation offices in Round Rock on the Second Floor of the Chase Bank Building at the corner of I-35 and Hwy 79.
- Began preparation to host the 9-member board of directors and CEO **James Deatherage** of Producers Cooperative Association in Bryan at the State Capitol on March 22, complete with their television crew, to tape state legislators in 30-minute interviews for their weekly TV program – "From the Ground Up."
- Held the December 13 TACC Executive Committee meeting virtually.
- Completed conducting annual dues solicitation.
- Initiated the process to elect new Division Officers for the TACC Executive Committee.
- Worked to recruit participants and finalized the programs for the Farm Store Summit, Cooperative Board Chairmen's Conference, Academy in Cooperative Excellence, and Director Development Programs in January and February.
- Participated in periodic meetings in Austin of the 65-member group of ag associations receiving updates and legislative priorities for state regulatory, legislative, and university leaders.
- Continued TACC's daily Facebook posts since December 2016, and weekly LinkedIn posts since July 2020.
- Attended the National Cotton Council Annual Meeting, February 10-12 in Dallas.
- Finalized all speakers and activities for the March 12-14, 2023 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio.
- Attended the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives Annual Meeting, February 8-10 in Orlando, FL.
- Assisted with preparations for the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives meeting on February 23-24.
- Participated with numerous other ag associations in the Texas Ag Council's Taste of Texas event at the State Capitol on February 9 where over 1,300 legislators and staffers attended.
- Selected and ordered PAC awards for 2023 to be a decorative hammer for those giving \$100 & not associated with a particular category, and a snow globe featuring the State Capitol building for those attaining the \$1,000 Charlie Award level.

What will we be up to...

- Hosting the 2023 Joint Cooperative Meeting on March 12-14 in San Antonio, Texas at the La Cantera Resort and Spa.
- Presenting to students at Angelo State University and Texas Tech University about TACC's summer intern program on February 22.
- Conducting multiple days of intern interviews to select this summer's co-op interns.
- Attending the March 30-31, 2023 Texas Cotton Ginners' Trust Gin Show & Annual Meeting.
- Hosting a TACC Board Meeting, May 10-11 in Austin.
- Preparing the program for the July 12-14 TACC Co-op Managers Conference at the Choctaw Resort and Casino in Durant, OK (NEW LOCATION!).
- Securing job placements in co-ops.
- Participating in Cotton Day at the State Capitol with several other cotton industry associations on March 7.
- Facilitating a strategic plan for Farmers Cooperative Compress in March.
- Developing economic footprint placemats, daily Facebook posts & weekly LinkedIn papers.

CALENDAR

March

1-2 – Land O'Lakes Annual Meeting, San Antonio
 7 – Cotton Day at the State Capitol
 12 – Daylight Savings Time Begins
12-14 – TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting, San Antonio
 24 – Teach co-op business model at Texas A&M University ag economic class and participate in a Masters Degree Oral of former TACC intern **Conner Neumann**, College Station
 24-26 – Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Convention & Expo, Ft. Worth
 28 – Plains Cotton Growers Annual Meeting, Lubbock
 30-31 – Texas Cotton Ginners' Trust Gin Show & Annual Meeting, Lubbock

April

3-4 – CoBank Customer Meeting, Bastrop
 5-6 – Texas Grain & Feed Association Annual Meeting, Fort Worth
 7 – Easter Holiday
12 – Land O'Lakes, TACC, and Texas Association of Dairymen Co-op Dinner at the State Capitol, Austin

May

10-11 TACC Board Meeting, Austin
 29 – Memorial Day Holiday

June

1 – Texas A&M Gin Engineering & Mechanization Chair Advisory Council Meeting, College Station
 8-9 – PCCA South Texas Gin Workshop, San Antonio
 25-27 – Texas Cotton Ginners Association Summer Meeting, Galveston