

# Commissioner Todd Staples

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER TODD STAPLES CELEBRATES HIS FIRST TERM IN OFFICE



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## The Highlights -

- Jan. 4, 2007 – Todd Staples sworn in as 11th Texas Commissioner of Agriculture
- May 23, 2007 – Commissioner Staples quadruples fines on fuel retailers who shortchange drivers
- Sept. 14, 2007 – TDA celebrates 100-year anniversary with Texas-sized celebration
- Nov. 29, 2007 – Commissioner Staples announces Texas agriculture industry has a record \$100 billion annual economic impact on state
- Jan. 15, 2008 – Commissioner Staples presents initial Texans Feeding Texans grants to home-delivered meal providers
- Jan. 17, 2008 – GO TEXAN Restaurant Program is launched
- June 19, 2008 - TDA begins first summer as administrators of the summer nutrition programs
- Oct. 1, 2008 – Commissioner Staples kicks off inaugural GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up
- June 9, 2009 – Commissioner Staples launches Mayors Challenge to assist in feeding more Texas children
- June 26, 2009 – GO TEXAN Wildlife initiative is established
- Nov. 4, 2009 – Commissioner Staples announces first-ever Young Farmer Grant Program
- Dec. 11, 2009 – Commissioner Staples chairs new Bioenergy Policy Council
- Feb. 16, 2010 – Commissioner Staples joins challenge to halt EPA from regulating greenhouse gases
- June 16, 2010 – Commissioner Staples unveils broadband map of Texas
- Aug. 20, 2010 – TDA and the Cooper Institute partner to develop Nutri-gram to promote healthy living
- Nov. 2, 2010 – Commissioner Staples wins a second term as Texas Commissioner of Agriculture

## Operation New Fences a Success

April 24, 2009



WINNIE — On Saturday, Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples led an effort to rebuild fences on ranches that were hit by Hurricane Ike more than six months ago. Through "Operation New Fences," Commissioner Staples, state agency officials, local community leaders and volunteers distributed more than \$100,000 worth of donated fence posts and barbed wire to nearly 100 ranchers in the Hurricane Ike surge zone in Chambers, Galveston, Jefferson, Liberty and Orange counties. Each rancher received 250 fence posts and 10 rolls of barbed wire, enough to rebuild a half-mile of fence.

"Seven months ago the skies were dark when Hurricane Ike ripped through this region, but today the true spirit of Texas is shining brightly," Commissioner Staples said. "It is a tribute to our grand state to see these donors and volunteers helping their fellow Texans overcome adversity and build a new future one fence post at a time."

Commissioner Staples announced "Operation New Fences" last month after learning many ranchers were still leasing pastures for their livestock in other areas of the state because of a lack of resources to rebuild fences destroyed by Hurricane Ike. The Texas Department of Agriculture created a Web page specifically for this effort where producers could sign up for this one-time assistance.

## Congratulations on the Outstanding Success of Your First Term.

### Your Communications Staff,

Bryan Black · Veronica Obregon · David Glessner · Jeremy Fuchs · Becky Ozuna · Bill McLean · Joyce Hill · Elizabeth Longoria



## Gettin' the Hogs Outta Texas!

October 4, 2010

ARLINGTON — With as many as 2 million feral hogs causing millions of dollars in urban and rural property damage across the Lone Star State each year, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) today challenged all 254 Texas counties to step up efforts to curb the ongoing problem and decrease the state's feral hog population.

Today in Arlington, which has been seriously impacted by feral hogs, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples read a proclamation declaring October "Hog Out Month - Get the Hog Outta Texas!"

## Staples Launches New Fuel Quality Initiative

January 26, 2010



AUSTIN — Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples today strengthened consumer protection in Texas by launching a new statewide fuel quality program targeting contaminated fuel. Until now, there has not been a state agency in Texas with the authority to protect drivers from receiving tainted fuel.

"When Texas drivers top off their tanks, they need to know that the fuel they pay for is of the highest quality," Commissioner Staples said.



"After more than four years of banned beef cattle exports to Mexico, I am pleased to report the stalemate is over. The U.S. and Mexican governments have come to an agreement on exporting breeding beef cattle to Mexico consistent with the guidelines of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)," Commissioner Staples said.

On March 4, 2008, Commissioner Staples issued an order banning the movement of Canadian cattle through TDA export facilities along the Mexican border. This action came after Mexico signed an agreement with Canada that allowed for a more lucrative trade of Canadian cattle than what had been allowed with U.S. cattle producers.

## Texas-Mexico Cattle Trade Takes Center Stage

May 20, 2008

LAREDO — Texas Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples announced today a major trade agreement has been reached between the U.S. and Mexico.

## Certified Retirement Communities Abound

November 8, 2009

AUSTIN — Nationally acclaimed economist Dr. Ray Perryman recognizes the Texas Department of Agriculture's GO TEXAN Certified Retirement Community Program as an excellent tool for cities across Texas to use for enhancing economic development. He also suggests other states should use the program as a model for their recruitment of retirees.

## Austin American-Statesman

Austin American-Statesman METRO & STATE Sunday, November 8, 2009

### Texas becoming a retirement hot spot

Retirees being lured by state's low housing costs, resilient economy

By Don Lee  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

GALVESTON — After trying out Atlanta, Miami and Southern California, Tilden Jones decided that Texas was the place to retire.

Being near his son was the first attraction, but soon he was drawn by the same features that have lured tens of thousands of others from out of state: Gulf Coast living at a reasonable cost.

With some of the country's lowest prices for housing, gas and food, no state income tax and one of the most resilient economies in the nation, Galveston and other parts of the Lower State have become places along the Gulf Coast are not only attractive to retirees, but also to young families.

Florida recently reported population figures that show a decline of 37,000 people in the 12 months ending April 1, the first annual drop since the 1960s. Much of the loss has come in South Florida, long a haven for retirees.

Meanwhile, other Sun Belt states such as Nevada and Arizona have been hit hard by the recession, and California has long seen more people leave than move in, a domestic migration measure that doesn't include births or foreign immigration.

But Texas, which has weathered the recession better than most parts of the country, is almost booming. In part because an earlier oil industry crash had left the state's banks too shaken to go on the home mortgage binge that ended up crippling so many other states.

Texas' population, the nation's second largest at about 25 million, is expected to grow as much as 60 percent in parts of the state.

"We're not clear is how Texas will fare with baby boomers, whose retirement path remains undefined. The oldest of that generation is 63 this year. The recession and loss of wealth may hold back their migration, and many boomers may settle in places where they can find part-time work."

That could be a big plus for Texas. It's expected to outpace the nation in job growth in the next few years.

Already four of the nation's 10 fastest-growing metropolitan areas over the past decade have been in Texas, according to the Brookings Institution, a public policy think tank.

"I think Texas has been attracting many seniors to large numbers and has many amenities along with low living costs which lure them," said William Frey, a Brookings demographer.

Last year, more than 82,000 people from California moved to Texas, while about 32,000 from Texas went to the Golden State, according to data from the Internal Revenue Service.

Charles and Joan Baker will be joining that trend this year. Even before selling their San Diego-area town home on the market for \$629,000, the California couple closed on a ranch-style house in the Sun City retirement community in Georgetown.

Joan Baker, who is in her 60s, wouldn't say how much they paid for the new place, which is slightly larger than their property in San Diego County. But a Sun City representative said the average home in the community of rolling hills is running about \$210,000.

"I'm not saying it's easy to leave," said Baker, a retired schoolteacher. "The whole Sun Diego area is lovely. To go north and south, west or east, it's a little less than that."

For health care, she goes to the University of Texas Medical Branch, where she drives an hour to Houston, which has world-class medical facilities.

Poorly, highway gridlock, crime and humidity can be a hassle in some parts. And Florida isn't any better, she said.

"It's not just the better," she said. "It's everything in the area."

And for seniors on Social Security and other retirement income, their checks don't change from place to place. Annual cost of living adjustments are the same nationwide, so their income should go further where prices are lower.

Then there's the Mexico price.

Every couple of months, retirees Thomas and Shirley Jones, transplants from Indiana, cross the bridge outside McAllen into Nuevo Progreso, where he hopes to find a home.

"The whole best investment loss."



## Operation Spotlight Shines in the News

July 22, 2008

AUSTIN — Commissioner Staples today announced results of "Operation Spotlight," a major investigation into Petroleum Wholesale, L.P.'s fuel stations. The company operates under the name Sunmart in Texas, and has stations located in several cities across the state. Findings from "Operation Spotlight" have confirmed numerous Sunmart gas stations have cheated Texas consumers by giving them less fuel than they purchased.