

unattended. While it is against the law, it can also be a deadly decision.

The web site NoHeatstroke.org shows 948 children have died due to Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke (PVH) since 1998, most because they were forgotten by a caregiver. So far in 2023, eight have died, including one in Houston.

“We are creatures of habit so sometimes the parent unintentionally will leave the child in the seat,” O’Kane said. “Say for example mom always takes baby to the daycare. For some reason dad takes baby to the daycare, but he’s used to going straight to work. What we want to do is leave a reminder for when that happens, leaving a lanyard, phone, bag, wallet to ensure you look in the back seat before leaving the vehicle.”

Depending on what part of Texas you’re in, that heat can feel differently as locations like Presidio and El Paso experience a dry heat versus cities like San Antonio that experience humidity. Triple digits are not rare in the state.

“The record high

temperature for Texas is 120F, which has occurred at three different locations across the state,” said Victor Murphy with the National Weather Service.

Murphy said that temperature has occurred in three different areas:

Monahans, TX---Ward County—on June 28, 1994

Olney, TX-----Young County--- on June 3, 1998

Seymour, TX----Baylor County--- on August 12, 1936

“As for which is worse, heat or humidity, the answer would be both,” Murphy said. “The NWS uses a value called “heat index”, which is also known as the apparent temperature. This is what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature.”

The NWS generally issues Heat Advisory product when Heat Index values reach 105F. The NWS issues Excessive Heat Warnings when these values reach the 110F to 115F value.

Take precautions against Texas heat, call 9-1-1 if you see a child unattended in the vehicle.



Camp! Robert Lee Baptist Church held a send off for their youth group on Monday morning, July 10, as the kids headed off to church camp.

Drought eases, but beef cow herd faces challenges to rebuild

By Shelby Shank
TFB Field Editor

Extreme drought conditions have dissipated in Texas, but rebuilding the beef cow herd won’t happen overnight.

“Ranchers aren’t going out and buying a large number of cows or heifers and restocking,” Tracy Tomascik, Texas Farm Bureau associate director of Commodity and Regulatory Activities, said. “We’ll see more ranchers hold on to some females as replacements, and that slow but steady incremental process will build us back to larger inventory levels over time.”

U.S. cattle producers have seen this cycle before following the drought of 2011, but Senior Rabo AgriFinance’s Beef Analyst Lance Zimmerman says this time is different.

The U.S. culled the beef cow herd at 13.5%, prior to the record of 12.5%, according to Zimmerman.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s cattle inventory report from Jan. 1 reflected a four-year decline in numbers, landing at 28.9 million head. That’s the smallest beef cow herd since 1962, according to Rabo AgriFinance’s first-quarter Global Beef Quarterly Report released in February.

Heifer placements in feedyards were record-high on Jan. 1 with heifer calf sales staying strong. This resulted in limited numbers of young heifers on ranches that can be put into production to quickly rebuild the herd.

With expected weather patterns switching to El Niño, 2023 is still likely to be dry and will affect feedstocks.

Zimmerman noted hay stocks are the tightest they’ve been since the 1970’s due to drought. The feeding segment is struggling with \$6 corn on the future bases with some southwest Kansas feedyards facing a local cash market at \$1.50 to \$2 over the future price. “We went through this in the early 2000s, with the Renewable Fuel Standard propping up the corn market with ethanol demand,” Zimmerman said. “That’s great for our grain farmers—nothing against them in that—but we’re repeating that again with the renewable diesel. And when you have \$15 soybeans, you have to keep prices for corn high because

there’s only so many acres to go around.”

At the same time, consumers are tightening their wallets with concerns about the economy.

“We saw record-high beef prices post-pandemic in about October 2021,” Zimmerman said. “We’ve pulled back about 40 cents per pound since then. But, if we’re talking about needing to get calf prices to, let’s say, \$3 a pound, we probably need to get beef prices to \$8 to \$9 per pound on the retail side.”

Poultry and pork are competing for consumer dollars, but cash-conscious consumers are still reaching for ground beef, Zimmerman said.

“Ground beef is pretty hard to beat, and really, the price data would back it up,” Zimmerman said. “You can take the ground beef price paid at retail against the chicken breast or against the pork chop, bacon, roasts, steaks, and there’s really only two items

that ground beef hasn’t continued to gain a premium over. That’s bacon and steaks. Otherwise, it continues to grow in a premium price advantage to all the other protein categories, and that’s pretty fascinating.”

But will ranchers want to rebuild? That’s the question Zimmerman said will be important to consider. The last U.S. Census of Agriculture in 2017 reported the average age of beef cow producers was 57, which is 10 years older than any other livestock producer.

“How do we make sure that we keep those ranches, farms operable, even if ownership changes?” Zimmerman asked.

The cow-calf sector is about 90% owned and operated by

ranchers with 200 head or less, according to Zimmerman. With increasing pressure to implement and record sustainability measures, cattle ranchers will need to decide if they want to rebuild and how changes in the beef cattle industry will affect their ranch and operating practices.

Sleeping Giants

Sit on a rocking chair on the front porch of the Gage Hotel in Marathon, and time slips away.

In the lobby behind you, a worn leather saddle hangs from the wall. Across the street, a train rumbles past. In the distance, a gray-green carpet of cactus and brush ripples into the distance like a prickly runway.

(Continued on next page)



Rent is not getting any cheaper! If you live in San Angelo and have a disability, our new Tenant-Based Rental Assistance for Persons with Disabilities program (TBRA PWD) could cover part of your rent for 2 years!

If you are a renter in our rural counties, remember we have our rural Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program waiting for you!

For more information, go to cvcaa.org or call us at 325-653-2411



SHOP LOCAL
Please Support
Your Hometown
Businesses!

WHERE
your needs matter!

Yes, right here! We are here to assist you with your financial assets and show you how our banking services can work for you. Come by and talk to us about saving. Certificates of Deposit, loans, and much more. You’ll be glad you did!

For your future, we’re your bank!



Robert Lee State Bank

621 Austin Street Robert Lee, Texas

453-2545

MEMBER
FDIC



**IT’S OUR PLEASURE TO
SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY!**