



For Immediate Release  
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## Governor Abbott Appoints One New Commissioner and Reappoints Four Commissioners to TAHC

AUSTIN, TX – In March, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Benedict L. “Ben” Scholz and reappointed Jimmie Ruth Evans, Barret J. Klein, Joe L. Leathers, and Thomas E. “Tommy” Oates to the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), for a term ending September 6, 2031. The commissioners will participate in their first commission meeting since the appointments, next week.

**Jimmie Ruth Evans** of San Antonio is a rancher and partner of Wittenburg Ranch. She is a member and past president of the San Antonio Livestock and Rodeo, and the honorary chair of the Young Women's Leadership Academy. Evans is also a member and past president of the Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association. Evans received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Texas Tech University. Commissioner Evans represents the sheep and goat industry.

**Barret J. Klein** of Boerne is owner of Klein Farms and Klein Smoked Meats, LLC. He is a member and former president of the Texas Pork Producers Association, National Spotted Swine Association, Texas Association of Meat Processors, and the Kendall County Economic Development Corporation. He is also a volunteer with Kendall County 4-H, Kendall County FFA, and the San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo. Klein received a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from Texas A&M University. Commissioner Klein represents the swine industry.

**Joe L. Leathers** of Clarendon is on the board of directors of the 6666 Ranch, the Texas Southwest Cattle Raisers Association, U.S. CattleTrace, Inc., and is a member of the National Ranching Heritage Association. Leathers attended Clarendon College. Commissioner Leathers represents the equine industry.

**Thomas E. “Tommy” Oates** of Huntsville is a rancher and former owner of Huntsville Livestock. He is a past president of the Exotic Wildlife Association. Oates attended Sam Houston State University. Commissioner Oates represents the exotic livestock and fowl industry.

**Benedict L. “Ben” Scholz** of Lavon is the owner and operator of B. Scholz Farms. He is a board member and past chairman for the Texas Wheat Producers Board and is the secretary and treasurer of the National Wheat Foundation. He is also the president of the Collin County Farm Bureau, chairman of the Collin County Soil and Water Conservation District, president of the Cereal Crops Research Institute, and member of the East Texas A&M University Alumni Ag Advisory Board. Scholz received a Bachelor of Science in Agri-Business from East Texas A&M University. Commissioner Scholz will represent the general public.

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