

...West of 98

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 As I've written before, too much "rural" talk in our national conversation is trendy, patronizing, and self-serving for the ones doing the talking, nor rural America itself. But we also lack rural voices from "out here." The rural communities of Appalachia, the Midwest, and West of the 98th Meridian have similarities, but they also have distinct issues and concerns. Each of those voices needs to be heard, not homogenized as one

"rural" voice for political speeches and cable news.
 I've told people that my essays are designed to make me think about our rural communities and hopefully inspire a few readers to think about their communities along the way. Each essay is written from the perspective and values developed from the people and institutions of the Great Plains, west of the 98th Meridian.
 My long standing plans have been to expand upon this

perspective in audio podcast format. There, I will have a recurring discussion of topics that require more elbow room than my limited essay space. I'll talk deeper about community development, discuss public policy issues from a rabidly non-partisan perspective, and then discuss various cultural matters like literature, movies, music, and food. Some of those cultural matters will be lighthearted, for pure entertainment. Other cultural discussions will help

illuminate my perspective and ideas for improving America (see Roosevelt, Theodore). Sometimes, guests might appear. Other times, it might be just me rambling.
 This project has been pending for far too long, stymied by both procrastination and by life's obligations. But after conversations with my wife and with my friend and noted podcast expert Ed Roberson (he of Mountain & Prairie fame), I'm vowing to "just do it," so to

speak. It won't happen in the next couple of weeks, but it will be in the next couple of months.
 So now you know the proverbial "rest of the story" as to why my essays are written from West of 98, and now you know what's coming next. Stay tuned.
James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in Stamford, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

Vesicular Stomatitis (VSV) in

Since the last vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV) update on Friday, July 19, 2019, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has received reports of 11 new confirmed cases of vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV).
Texas VSV confirmations since July 19, 2019

- 2 new VSV-infected equine premises have been confirmed in Bastrop County
- 1 new VSV-infected equine premises has been confirmed in Brown County
- 2 new VSV-infected equine premises have been confirmed in Travis County
- 1 new VSV-infected equine premises has been confirmed in Hood County
- 2 new VSV-infected equine premises have been confirmed in Palo Pinto County
- 2 new VSV-infected equine premises have been confirmed in Somervell County
- 1 new VSV-infected equine premises has been confirmed in Shackelford County

updates every Friday and all cases will be reported to the Equine Disease Communication Center.
What Equine and Cattle Owners Need to Know

- VSV is a viral disease that primarily affects horses and cattle.
- In the past decade, the Southwestern and Western United States have experienced a number of VSV outbreaks. Outbreaks usually occur during the warmer months, often along waterways.
- VSV normally has an incubation period of 2-8 days before the infected animal develops blisters that swell and burst, leaving painful sores. The virus can be transmitted through direct contact with infected animals or by blood-feeding insects.
- If VSV is confirmed, infected animals are quarantined for 14 days after clinical signs of lesions are observed. This short-term quarantine helps prevent the movement of animals and the spread of the disease to other premises, fairs or markets.

What Veterinarians Need to Know

- If you suspect your client's animal has VSV, contact your TAHC Region Office for paperwork, procedures, and important sample submission information.
- Several states are imposing enhanced entry requirements on Texas livestock due to the VSV cases. For information, contact the state of destination. For a list of state animal health offices visit <https://www.usaha.org/>

u p l o a d / alth/STATE_ANIMAL_HEALTH/2019/08/02/20190802%20Copy%201.pdf
 Federal%20and%20State%20Health%20OFFICIALS%20 - (Continued on page 8)

ROBERT LEE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 1323 Hamilton, Robert Lee, Texas 76945

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Robert Lee ISD** offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs **\$2.00** lunch costs **K-6 \$2.85, 7-12 \$3.10**. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals. Reduced price is **\$.30**, for breakfast and **\$.40** for lunch. If you received a notification letter that a child is directly certified for free meals, do not complete an application. Let the school know if any children in the household attending school are not listed in the letter.

The following questions and answers will provide additional information on how to complete the application. Complete only one application for all the students in the household and return the completed application to **Samantha Burns at Robert Lee ISD**. If you have questions about applying for free or reduced price meals, contact **Samantha Burns at (325) 453-4555 or email at samantha.burns@rlisd.net**.

1. Who can get free meals?

- **Income**-Children can get free or reduced-price meals if a household's gross income is within the limits described on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
- **Special Assistance Program Participants**- Children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are eligible for free meals.
- **Foster**-Foster children who are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- **Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start**-Children participating in these programs are eligible for free meals.
- **Homeless, Runaway, and Migrant**-Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant qualify for free meals. If you haven't been told about a child's status as homeless, runaway, or migrant or you feel a child may qualify for one of these programs, please call Aaron Hood at 325-453-4555.
- **WIC Recipient**-Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals.

2. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?

You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to **Aaron Hood, 1323 Hamilton, Robert Lee, Texas 76945 or call (325) 453-4555**.

3. My child's application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out another one?

Yes. An application is only good for that school year and the first few days of this school year. Send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for this school year.

4. If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?

Yes. Apply at any time during the school year. A child with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.

5. What if my income is not always the same?

List the amount that normally received. If a household member lost a job or had hours/wages reduced, use current income.

6. We are in the military. Do we report our income differently?

Basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. Any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, or Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments count as income. If housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include the housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is excluded from income.

7. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?

Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price meals.

8. Will application information be checked?

Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the reported household income.

9. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?

To find out how to apply for other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or 2-1-1.

If you have other questions or need help, call **Samantha Burns at (325) 453-4555**.
 Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al telefono: **Samantha Burns at (325) 453-4555**.

Sincerely,
 Samantha Burns
 Food Service Manager

Income Eligibility Guidelines for Determining Free and Reduced Price Benefits

Effective from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

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Family Size	Annually		Monthly		Twice per Month		Every Two Weeks		Weekly	
	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced
1	\$16,237	\$23,107	\$1,354	\$1,926	\$677	\$963	\$625	\$889	\$313	\$445
2	\$21,983	\$31,284	\$1,832	\$2,607	\$916	\$1,304	\$846	\$1,204	\$423	\$602
3	\$27,729	\$39,461	\$2,311	\$3,289	\$1,156	\$1,645	\$1,067	\$1,518	\$534	\$759
4	\$33,475	\$47,638	\$2,790	\$3,970	\$1,395	\$1,985	\$1,288	\$1,833	\$644	\$917
5	\$39,221	\$55,815	\$3,269	\$4,652	\$1,635	\$2,326	\$1,509	\$2,147	\$755	\$1,074
6	\$44,967	\$63,992	\$3,748	\$5,333	\$1,874	\$2,667	\$1,730	\$2,462	\$865	\$1,231
7	\$50,713	\$72,169	\$4,227	\$6,015	\$2,114	\$3,008	\$1,951	\$2,776	\$976	\$1,388
8	\$56,459	\$80,346	\$4,705	\$6,696	\$2,353	\$3,348	\$2,172	\$3,091	\$1,086	\$1,546
9	\$62,205	\$88,523	\$5,184	\$7,378	\$2,593	\$3,689	\$2,393	\$3,406	\$1,197	\$1,704
10	\$67,951	\$96,700	\$5,663	\$8,060	\$2,833	\$4,030	\$2,614	\$3,721	\$1,308	\$1,862
11	\$73,697	\$104,877	\$6,142	\$8,742	\$3,073	\$4,371	\$2,835	\$4,036	\$1,419	\$2,020
12	\$79,443	\$113,054	\$6,621	\$9,424	\$3,313	\$4,712	\$3,056	\$4,351	\$1,530	\$2,178

For each additional family member add:

+ \$5,746	+ \$8,177	+ \$479	+ \$682	+ \$240	+ \$341	+ \$221	+ \$315	+ \$111	+ \$158
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**Cup in Hand
 Kickball Tournament**
Saturday, August 31, 2019
7 pm • Gladney Field • Robert Lee

\$100/Team (at least 7 players,
 due to BYOB, must be 21 years+)

**Free Activities for the Kids
 Concession Stand**

Call/Text 325-262-2529
to sign up • Deadline is August 26

Sponsored by and proceeds to RL4Restoration Foundation