

# Congressman Henry Cuellar

28<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## USDA OPENS NEW LAREDO LIVESTOCK SITE AFTER BORDER SECURITY CLOSURE IN MEXICO

*Important USDA Inspection Site Reopens in New Location After Seven Weeks of Closure*

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28) today announced that the United States Department of Agriculture Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has resumed operations in a new location following weeks of border security concerns. Operations ceased over a period of seven weeks at the original APHIS location in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. The new livestock cattle inspection site opened today at the City Vat Pens location in Laredo, Texas, located just miles from the U.S. Mexico border at 7209 E. Saunders St.

“This is good news for Laredo and Texas trade,” said Congressman Cuellar. “Resuming these operations is vitally important to our Texas ranchers, farmers and cattlemen. For the past seven weeks, I’ve been working with the USDA to ensure they understand how we rely on these services and I want to thank them for their diligent work in resuming this Nuevo Laredo/Laredo operation.”

Over the past seven weeks, two APHIS locations across the Rio Grande in Mexico were closed due to security concerns, including the one in Nuevo Laredo and an additional site in Reynosa, Mexico. The APHIS Reynosa/Pharr location recently resumed operations last week at a new location inside Hidalgo County, Texas. Beginning today, the USDA will resume its Nuevo Laredo operations at the new location in Laredo and will begin processing between 200-300 cattle per day.

These inspection operations are a critical part of maintaining cattle trade in Texas. This industry helps employ ranchers, ranch-hands, custom brokers, trade experts and other agricultural workers across the state.

“Reopening these inspection sites will sustain those jobs that rely on this industry for their livelihood,” said Congressman Cuellar. “Ranchers and customs brokers have told me these closures have had an impact on their business.”

APHIS inspections facilitate safe international trade between the United States and Mexico. Before livestock can be transferred from Mexico farms and ranches, to those in the United States, they must be inspected by APHIS personnel to be deemed safe. Due to ongoing border security concerns, the USDA has decided to resume these operations in a temporary capacity on the U.S. side of the border.

As a member of the U.S House Committee on Agriculture, Congressman Cuellar has worked with the USDA, including USDA Under Secretary Ed Avalos, and local stakeholders since the APHIS closures began.

“Reopening this local operation is vitally important to Texas cattle trade,” said Congressman Cuellar. “As the leading livestock state in the nation, Texas relies heavily on these operations. The USDA understands how these inspections cannot be discontinued all together, and I applaud their efforts for working with us to create a temporary solution to this security problem. This ensures their workers are safe and sustains an important industry in Texas.”

For more information from the USDA, media partners can contact Lyndsay Cole at (970) 494-7410.

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*Congressman Henry Cuellar is a member of the U.S. House Homeland Security, Agriculture, and Government Oversight & Reform Committees in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. Accessibility to constituents, education, health care, economic development, and national security are his priorities. Congressman Cuellar is also a Senior Whip and member of the Blue Dog Coalition.*