

# Austin County Ag News



Fall 2012

---

## *In this Issue*

Fall Forage Seminar and Hay Show.....	pg 2
South Central Texas Cow Calf Clinic .....	pg 3
Multi County New Landowners Educational Series .....	pg 3
Austin County Pecan Show .....	pg 4
Wildflower Seminar and Photo Contest .....	pg 4
Soil Test Drive .....	pg 5
Wine Show .....	pg 5
FSA Deadlines Approaching .....	pg 6
Austin County Fair .....	pg 6
Lone Star Water Forum .....	pg 6
85 <sup>th</sup> Austin County Fair.....	pg 6
Study on castrating calves ..	pg 7
Prussic Acid in Tifton 85 ....	pg 7
Upcoming Events .....	pg 8

## **Fire Ant Management Program**

Fire ants, who needs them? These destructive little pests have caused millions of dollars worth of damage in the relatively short time frame that they have been in Texas (since 1957). Is there anything that can be done to stop them? The Horticulture Committee of Austin County is sponsoring a Fire Ant Management Program for the general public on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012. **The program is scheduled to be held at the Texas AgriLife Extension Office meeting room in Bellville**, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m. The program will focus on the best management practices that anyone can do to bring fire ants under control. Special program topics will include;

- History and Morphology of the Red Imported Fire Ant
- Researched Based Fire Ant Control Measures
- Integrated Pest Management Approach to Control
- Update from the Fire Ant Research Project Team

There will be a \$15.00 registration fee per person. A meal will be served and two CEU's will be given to all pesticide applicators. 1 IPM and 1 General CEU. Please contact the Extension Office to preregister at (979) 865-2072, so we can have an accurate count for food and refreshments.

## Fall Forage Seminar and Hay Show

2012 was nothing like 2011, timely rains in the fall carried through to the spring and now on to the summer. The blistering heat has also seemed to be less this year with just a few days over 100 degrees, but livestock and forage producers know by now that we are only a few missed chances of rain away from our next drought. There has been an abundance of hay made this year, but it is still critical that stockmen know what the value of that hay is to their livestock. Low quality forage can be offset with adequate amounts of protein supplements, but at what cost and how much additional protein is needed. The only sure fire method for knowing the quality of your hay and the nutritional requirements for supplementing cattle is through testing of that hay.

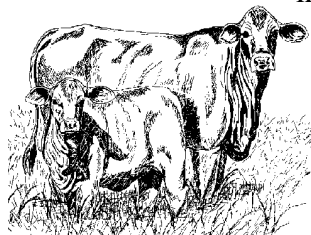
The Beef and Forage Committee of Austin County is encouraging every cattle producer to submit a hay sample for analysis at **NO CHARGE**. Hay samples may be dropped off at any one of the following locations around Austin County; Bellville - Harrison's Farm Service and Linseisen's Feed, Sealy - Steinhauser's and Wilderness Farm and Ranch, Industry - Blezinger's Inc. and Lindemann's Store, New Ulm - Dudensing's Farm Supply and Schulz Store. Instructions for submitting a hay sample and entry cards are available on our website <http://austin.agrilife.org> or at any of the drop off locations. Hay that has been purchased from a source other than yourself is welcomed. Once the hay is submitted, a sample will be taken to the Texas A&M Forage Testing Lab for analysis. The analysis will detail the nutritional value of the hay that you will be feeding. The results of the analysis will be handed out during the annual Fall Forage Seminar. The deadline for submitting your sample is September 10th.

The Fall Forage Seminar and Austin County Hay Show, sponsored by the Beef and Forage Committee of Austin County will take place on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Austin County Fair Expo Building in Bellville. The seminar is scheduled to begin with registration from 2:30 - 3:00 p.m., with the program starting at 3:00 p.m. This year's seminar will focus entirely on recovery from the drought. Dr. Sam Feagley, Extension Agronomist will be on hand to discuss soil fertility needs and pasture recovery. Dr. Diane Boellstorf, Extension Water Specialist, will focus on the water well situation in our area and water quality. Jack LeClare with DuPont Chemical will also be on hand to discuss weed control strategies in pastures. A total of three (3) CEU's will be given to pesticide applicators. A ribeye steak dinner will be served at the conclusion of the seminar, all compliments of the Beef and Forage Committee and their sponsors.

Judging of the hay samples will take place prior to the seminar, with the winners of the show being named at the conclusion of the seminar. This year's Austin County Hay Show will again offer prize money and awards to the top placing entries in each category. Please contact the Extension Office to preregister at (979) 865-2072, so we can have an accurate count for food and refreshments.

## South Central Texas Cow-Calf Clinic

The 41<sup>st</sup> edition of the South Central Texas Cow-Calf Clinic and Trade Show is set for Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012, starting at 7:15 a.m. at the Washington County Fairgrounds



in Brenham. The program will provide area beef producers with latest information on beef cattle production. All attendees will be treated to an excellent educational program, bar-b-que for lunch, and an opportunity to visit with various animal and agriculture industry representatives. The registration fee is \$20.00 per person. For more information, contact the Extension Office.

*Two CEU's will be given during the afternoon portion of the program.*

## Multi-County New Landowners Educational Series

The program for September will focus on Fruit Crops and Horticulture. This program is set for **Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>**, at Weimer Veteran's Baseball park in Weimer. The field day will begin at 1:30 p.m. with registration at the farm, with the program and field tour to follow. September's program will be a tour of a pecan operation, grape vineyard and will end with a look at growing shade trees. The \$15.00 registration fee applies. Anyone interested in attending is asked to contact the Extension Office prior to coming so we can know how many to plan for. Three (3) CEU's will be offered for all pesticide applicators.

The October program will take place on **Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>**, and begins at 1:30 p.m. The tour will begin and end at Washington County Fairgrounds in Brenham. The October program will focus on Native Grasses and Prairie Restoration. Registration is \$15.00 per person and includes refreshments and educational materials. Three (3) CEU's will be offered to all pesticide applicators.

The final program in the 2012 series will take place on **Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>**, and will focus on Livestock Production for Small Acreage. The program will include a tour of a local cow calf and stocker cattle operation and a goat operation. The program will begin at the Columbus High School at 1:30 p.m. Registration is \$15.00 per person and includes refreshments, your educational materials and a catered meal. Two (2) CEU's will be offered to all pesticide applicators.

The Multi County New Landowner Educational Series is open to anyone that wants to attend, but it specifically targets new landowners in the Austin, Colorado, Fayette and Washington County areas. The agents in the four county area are currently planning for the 2013 new landowner program. Details about next year's courses will be in the Winter 2013 Austin County Ag Newsletter.

## **Austin County Pecan Show**

It's time once again for all commercial pecan growers and home pecan tree enthusiasts with a few pecan trees to gear up for the annual Austin County Pecan Show and Bake Show. Everyone with an interest growing pecans or eating pecans is encouraged to participate. The pecan show and bake show will take place on Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, at the Courthouse and the Texas AgriLife Extension Office in Bellville. Entries for the show will be received between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. A total of 50 pecans should be submitted per contestant in the pecan show. Bake show participants are asked to bring a printed copy of the recipe and your food item. There is no limit on the number of entries. Pecans will be judged on the basis of kernel weight, fill, absence of blemishes and color. Winners in the pecan show will receive prizes compliments of the Texas Pecan Producers and the Horticulture Committee of Austin County. Certain entries will advance on to the regional pecan show judging to be held sometime in early December.



## **Wildflower Seminar and Photo Contest**

This region of Central Texas is known for its beautiful wildflowers. Spring time in Austin County is as good as it gets. Bluebonnets, Indian Paintbrushes and a whole litany of other varieties of wildflowers dot the country side, but have you ever tried planting your own wildflowers and it just didn't work? It could have been the soil, it could have been the time of the year you planted or it could be that you just have a brown thumb. Wildflowers add a special kind of flare to a property and make it come alive in the spring. If you would like to learn more about planting wildflowers and how to grow them on your property, then you won't want to miss the Wildflowers Seminar, sponsored by the Horticulture Committee of Austin County. The seminar will take place on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Industry. Retired Extension Horticulture Specialist, Dr. Bill Adams will be the featured speaker. Topics of interest to be discussed will include: site selection, soil fertility, seed bed preparation, varieties for the area and photography.

Two CEU's will be offered to the anyone with a pesticide applicators license. There is a \$15.00 registration fee for anyone wanting to attend that can be paid at the door. Please contact the Extension Office to pre-register in order to get an accurate head count for the meal.

The Horticulture Committee is also sponsoring a Wildflower Photo Contest. Photos will be displayed at the Wildflower Seminar and everyone will have an opportunity to judge the photos and pick out their favorite. Photos can be dropped off at the Extension Office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. 8X10's are preferred, but any size will be accepted.

## Soil Test Drive November 1-30, 2012

Growing better quality hay and pasture grass is a major goal of all hay and livestock producers.

Starting with a soil test is the most important step to determine the amount of fertilizer needed each year.

Producers should consider soil testing as an investment in this year's hay and pasture, because the correct amounts and timing of fertilization can greatly enhance hay quality and growth.

November 1<sup>st</sup> thru November 30<sup>th</sup>, has been set as the time for all Austin County landowners to participate in the soil testing campaign for this year's hay meadows and pastureland. Soil samples submitted during this time frame, will be at a reduced price for a routine analysis, if they are turned in to one of the following locations around Austin County; Bellville - Harrison's Farm Service and Linseisen's Feed, Sealy - Steinhauser's and Wilderness Farm and Ranch, Industry - Blezinger's Inc. and Lindemann's Store, New Ulm - Dudensing's Farm Supply and Schulz Store or to the Extension Office in Bellville. Soil sample bags, special information sheets and directions for sampling are available at each of the locations.



## Austin County Wine Show

The Grape Growers Committee of Austin County is putting out a call to home wine makers and inviting them to the third annual Austin County Fair Non Commercial Wine Makers Contest & Show on Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Austin County Fair Expo Building in Bellville. Any non commercial or amateur wine maker is encouraged to enter. Participants in the show are not limited to the number of entries they submit, however there is a \$10.00 entry fee per bottle. Entries will be taken early at the Austin County Fair Office, or you may enter the day of the show. Entries will be accepted from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. at the Austin County Fair Expo Building in Bellville. The judging will begin at 2:30 p.m. and will be followed by a tasting upon the completion of the show. Gold, silver and bronze medallions will be awarded to the top placers in each category, and belt buckles will be given to the best of show and runner up. The general rules and entry cards are available on our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>.



## **Deadline for USDA NAP Approaching**

The United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency has announced the deadlines for several of their non-insured crop programs. The deadline for small grains, such as oats, wheat, rye grass is September 1st . The deadline for warm season grasses for 2013 is December 1<sup>st</sup>. To sign up for the program, simply contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) office in Bellville at (979) 865-3139 extension 2 to schedule your appointment. The NAP program is an insurance policy that can be purchased through the USDA-FSA and can be taken out on hay, annual grazing crops such as clover or sorghum or grazing pastures. In order to qualify for the Livestock Forage Program for 2013, you must have purchased NAP in 2012.

## **85<sup>th</sup> Austin County Fair**

It's time once again for the annual Austin County Fair. This year's fair will be held October 9 - 14, at the Fairgrounds in Bellville. A full



slate of activities and events are on tap for this year's fair, including some top notch entertainment, competitions for all ages and fun for everyone. Fair catalogs are available from the Austin County Fair Office and more information is available online at <http://austincountyfair.com>.

## **Lone Star Water Forum**

On Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the Lone Star Water Forum will present an educational program on the Science and Politics of Water. This event will be held at the Washington County Fairgrounds Events Center in Brenham. Registration is \$25.00 per person prior to October 1. You may register online at <http://wcwildlife.org> or call the Washington County Extension office for a registration form. Educational presentations include information on climatology, surface water supply, and groundwater regulation and ownership as well as a panel discussion on the politics of water from the state, local, and citizen perspective.

## **Private Pesticide Applicator License Training**

Another private pesticide applicator license training will be held on **Wednesday, September 19** at the Lee County Extension office at 310 South rimes Street in Giddings, TX. Registration begins at 7:30AM; training at 8:00AM, and testing at 1:00 p.m. Contact the Lee County Extension office at (979) 542-2753 for information.

## **Study on Castration of Bull Calves**

Calves averaging 200 days of age and 471 lbs were allotted to one of five groups:

- \* castrated surgically using an emasculator
- \* castrated with a Callicrate Bander
- \* castrated surgically with a Henderson Castrating Tool
- \* left intact as bulls
- \*castrated surgically at 52 days of age (controls)

After 14 days, calves castrated earlier at 52 days of age and intact bulls had gained significantly more than the other groups, among which there was no significant difference. However, by 84 days, when the study was concluded, there was no significant difference among all groups in gain, nor in daily feed intake, daily water intake, gain:feed ratio, or residual feed intake. Surgical castration at the start of the study resulted in a short-term inflammatory response and banding resulted in a delayed response. NOTE: Other research has shown that pain due to castration is more acute and lasts longer as age, weight, and testicular size increase, so early castration is more humane and is strongly recommended as a part of Beef Quality Assurance. (J. Animal Sci. 90:2345; Univ. of Florida)

## **Prussic Acid Found in Tifton 85**

An apparently isolated incident of prussic acid poisoning in cattle grazing a pure stand of Tifton 85 bermudagrass was reported in late May in Bastrop County, Texas, resulting in 15 cattle deaths. Several popular media reports with incorrect or misleading information caused undue alarm among producers and the public in general. Tifton 85 is a hybrid bermudagrass released in 1992 by Dr. Glenn Burton at the USDA-ARS station in Tifton, Georgia. Dr. Burton also developed Coastal bermudagrass, released in 1943, at the Tifton station. Tifton 85 has the potential of producing prussic acid, but it has been planted on millions of acres throughout the South and no prior prussic acid problems have been reported.

This specific incident may have been due to a particular combination of conditions. The pasture was severely drought-stressed last year. After good rains over the winter and early spring, the pasture was moderately fertilized in April and received about five inches of rain over 30 days before the incident occurred. The pasture was in hay-harvest stage of growth. Generally, prussic acid poisoning has been associated with young flush growth after drought or growth following frost. Cattle had been off feed during the day before being placed on the pasture. Subsequent analyses of other Tifton 85 pastures in other areas of Texas have revealed no prussic acid.

### Just a few Dates to Remember

- |           |       |   |                                                                                         |
|-----------|-------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September | 3     | - | Labor Holiday, Office Closed                                                            |
|           | 10    | - | Deadline for submitting hay samples                                                     |
|           | 12    | - | Horticulture Committee Meeting                                                          |
|           | 13    | - | Fire Ant Management Seminar - Bellville (2 CEU's)                                       |
|           | 21    | - | Multi County New Landowners Series - Weimer (3 CEU's)                                   |
|           | 25    | - | Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting                                    |
|           | 28    | - | Fall Forage Seminar and Austin County Hay Show - Bellville (3 CEU's)                    |
| October   | 5     | - | Beef and Forage Committee Meeting                                                       |
|           | 6     | - | Austin County Non Commercial Wine Show                                                  |
|           | 9-14  | - | Austin County Fair - Bellville (Extension Office will be relocated to the Fairgrounds)  |
|           | 13    | - | Lone Star Water Forum - Brenham                                                         |
|           | 15    | - | Extension Office will be closed                                                         |
|           | 17    | - | Leadership Advisory Board Meeting                                                       |
|           | 19    | - | Multi County New Landowner Tour, Brenham (3 CEU's)                                      |
|           | 23    | - | Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting                                    |
|           | 25    | - | Wildflower Seminar - Industry UMC (2 CEU's)                                             |
|           | 26    | - | South Central Texas Cow Calf Clinic- Washington County Fairgrounds in Brenham (2 CEU's) |
| November  | 12    | - | Office Closed in observance of Veterans Day                                             |
|           | 13    | - | Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting                                    |
|           | 16    | - | Austin County Pecan Show                                                                |
|           | 16    | - | Multi County New Landowner Program - Columbus (2 CEU's)                                 |
|           | 22-23 | - | Office Closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday                                     |

Sincerely,



Philip Shackelford  
County Extension Agent-Ag/NR  
Austin County

Mailing Address:  
Courthouse, 1 East Main, Bellville, TX 77418  
Physical Address: 20 S. Holland, Bellville, TX 77418  
Email: p-shackelford@ag.tamu.edu  
Website - <http://austin.agrilife.org>  
Phone 979-865-2072  
Fax 979-865-2065