

Austin County Ag News



Winter 2013

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Five Hour CEU Conference

Friday, December 6th

Renewal time for private pesticide applicators will be coming up shortly on February 28, 2014. As a reminder to anyone with a license, private applicators need 15 Continuing Education Units in order to re-certify. Two hours must be in Laws and Regulations and two hours must be in Integrated Pest Management, with the others coming in the General Category.

Anyone needing hours should mark **Friday, December 6th** on their calendar. On this day, the Beef and Forage Committee of Austin County, the Austin County Farm Bureau and the Sealy FFA Chapter will be co-sponsoring a 5 hour CEU course at Four County Auction Center in Industry. Registration will take place at 12:00 p.m., with the program following about 1:00 p.m.

The program topics will include Pesticide Laws and Regulations, Water Impairments and Runoff Avoidance Issues, IPM for Pasture Pests, Weed Control in Stock Ponds and the new products for controlling brush. There will be no meal served as in years past, however refreshments will be served following the meeting compliments of Mike Hopkins Distributing. We hope to conclude around 6:30 p.m. The registration fee is \$20.00 at the door. You can pre-register by contacting the Extension Office or Sealy FFA Department by December 5th. Credits to be given at the course include 1 hour of Laws and Regulations, 3 hours of General Credit and 1 hour of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Leadership Advisory Board to Host Annual Meeting

The Leadership Advisory Board of Austin County was formed six years ago for the purpose of promoting Extension work in the community and strengthening the programmatic efforts of the agents in Austin County. In 2008, the board hosted its first Extension interpretation event in which all of the program areas supporting Extension work in the county provided a brief look at their individual programs. This year's event will take place on Thursday, January 30th, at the Liedertafel Hall, 116 Lux Rd. in Sealy. The event, now entitled the "Annual Meeting" is the showcase event of the year for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County. Each of the program area committees that work the agents in their respective fields of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Science, 4-H and Youth Development and Community Development will be represented on the program giving highlights of their activities throughout the year and highlighting the impacts made on the citizens of Austin County.

Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Mark Dotzour, from the Texas A&M Real Estate Center in College Station. He will be sharing his thoughts on Texas land values and land market trends. The program will kick off with registration and a social at 6:00 p.m. followed by a meal and the presentations at 6:30 p.m. Please RSVP to the Extension Office at (979)865-2072, or via email at austin-tx@tamu.edu.

Crops Update Meeting

Row crop farmers, please mark Thursday, January 23rd, on your calendars for the crop update meeting in Wallis. The meeting will take place at the Brazos FFA building in

Wallis from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. Dr. Roy Parker, Extension Entomologist will be on hand to discuss the results of his latest applied research on army worm control for pastures and cotton, corn and grain sorghum pest applied research and demonstrations in the upper Texas Gulf Coast. Dr. Levi Russell will discuss the market outlook and will also give a farm bill update. Two (2) CEU's will be given to all pesticide applicators. There will be no charge for supper, however goodwill donations will be accepted.

Extension Entomologist, Dr. Roy Parker Retires

Dr. Roy D. Parker, Entomologist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service officially retired August 31, 2013. Roy served as the District 11 Entomologist since 1978, and worked for the Texas A&M University System for more than 40 years. During his tenure, he worked with county agents, ag producers and industry professionals on numerous applied research studies and result demonstrations in cotton, corn, grain sorghum, soy beans, forage crops and livestock just to name a few. He is a noted author, compiling over 100 research journal articles on pest management and each year put together a collection of applied research reports that he gave out at ag producer meetings. Roy was a past winner of the Texas County Agricultural Agents Specialist of the Year Award, a former Superior Service Award Winner for Specialist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M Vice Chancellors Award Winner. Even though he officially retired on August 31st, he continues to work everyday at the District 11 Office finishing up his research work from 2013. Roy was one of the best, and when he really does retire, he will be very hard to replace. If you would like to drop Roy a congratulatory note, you can email him at rd-parker@tamu.edu. I know

he'd appreciate it very much.

Private Applicator Training and Testing December 18th

There are some big changes coming from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) with regards to Private Applicator Training and Testing. Beginning January 1, 2014, the TDA will no longer do testing at County Extension Offices. The testing will be located instead at regional testing centers located across the state. The training remains a mandatory component for anyone wanting to receive their Private Applicator license, and will continue to be conducted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The final opportunity for anyone wanting to receive the training and take their exam at one location will take place on Wednesday, December 18, 2013.

If you are planning on using a state limited use or state restricted use pesticide, such as Grazon P+D, 2 4-D, Weedmaster, etc... and need a license, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County will be sponsoring a Private Applicator Training and Testing on Wednesday, December 18th, at the Extension Office, located at 20 S. Holland in Bellville. The training will last from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. A representative from the Texas Department of Agriculture will be on hand to administer the 100 question exam following the training. If you complete the training portion and then score a 70 or above on your examination, you will be eligible to apply for your Private Applicator License, which will allow you to purchase all state limited use and restricted use pesticides used in agriculture.

There is a \$50.00 fee to attend the training. Your registration fee includes the study materials, lunch and refreshments. Once you have completed the training and passed the exam, you will be able to apply for your private applicators license. The license fee is \$60.00 and is valid for five years. You are strongly encouraged to pick up your materials early and read through them prior to coming to the training. Please bring something to write with and a calculator to the training. To reserve your spot at the training, contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Office at (979) 865-2072, or email us at austin-tx@tamu.edu.

Master Gardener Sign Up



For anyone interested in participating in the Master Gardener training program, the deadline for signing up is Thursday, January 23rd. Participants need only come by the Extension Office to register. There is a fee of \$175.00 per participant, which will cover the cost of materials, and defray speaker expenses. The classes will be held on Tuesdays mornings beginning on January 28, 2014.

The Master Gardener program is a unique opportunity for individuals who are interested in horticulture and serving their community. Master Gardeners are trained in all facets of horticulture such as plant & soil science, entomology, plant pathology, landscape design, vegetable gardening and much more. Upon completion of their training, Master Gardeners will be required to give at least 50 hours of volunteer service time in their local community in order to receive the title of ***Master***

Gardener”.

An open house will be held at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office in Bellville on Thursday, January 23, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. For more information on the Master Gardener program, contact the Extension office at (979) 865-2072, visit the Bluebonnet Master Gardener Website at <http://bluebonnetmastergardener.org>.

Texas Master Naturalist Training Class 2014

The Gideon Lincecum Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist™, citizen volunteers in conservation, education and outreach to the community, is taking applications for the training class of 2014. The course will be from 6 to 9pm on Monday nights between February 3rd and April 7th of 2014 at various venues: Winedale Historical Complex, Blinn College, TAMU, and at AgriLife offices. There will be occasional Saturday field trips to prairie locations and state parks that form an integral part of the science-based course. Join us to help conserve our native species, restore the Texas prairie land and help give the next generation the skills they need to continue our efforts.



To apply online or for more information visit our website at <http://txmn.org/glc>
You may also contact outreach coordinator, Judith Deaton, at judithdeaton@gmail.com
phone: 936-878-9900.

Multi County New Landowners Program starts in January 2014

Multi-County New Landowner Education program is a series of nine informational meetings/seminars/field days designed to make new landowners in Austin Colorado, Fayette & Washington Counties aware of what types of agricultural enterprises are best for their property. Participants in the program will hear from experts in certain fields of agriculture about the best management practices that they can implement on their own property. This innovative program assists new landowners in understanding the concepts of rural living. Participants in the program are given exposure to ideas on raising livestock and horses, plant identification, fence building, applying pesticides, soil testing, stock pond management, pond construction, fruit and nut production, and much more. The program also serves as a way for new residents of the four counties to network and meet new people in their communities, find out what can be done on their land, what operations can be profitable, and possibly what opportunities they have to serve the community.



The program will be held on the third Friday of the months of January, February, March, April, May,

August, September, October and November. Each month's meeting will be held at different locations in each county. The meetings begin at 1:30 p.m., and last about 4 hours. The first meeting for the 2014 series will take place on Friday, January 17th, at Braeden Hall in Columbus. Cost is \$100.00 per person or \$150.00 per couple for all nine meetings or \$20.00 per person per individual meeting. CEU's for Pesticide Applicators will be given at each meeting, and refreshments will be served at each program session. Participants will receive a notebook full of timely and useful information. For more information on the program, contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County at (979) 865-2072, or visit our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>.

Mole and Gopher Control Seminar

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County will be sponsoring a Mole and Gopher Control Seminar on Thursday, February 20th, 2014, at the Hill Center in Sealy. Registration will take place from 6:00-6:30, with the program to follow. A light meal will be served. If you have had problems in your yard and want to know how to get rid of moles and gophers, or at least keep them under control, then you might want to attend this seminar. World renown Mole and Gopher enthusiast, and Master Gardener Dr. B.R. Koehler will be the featured speaker for the evening. He is known county wide for his expertise in trapping these little, but tenacious pests. Following B.R.'s presentation, a short program on controlling gophers in pastures will also be presented. A minimum of 2 CEU's will be given to all pesticide applicators. There will be no registration fee, however a good will donation can be made at the door. Anyone that plans on coming is asked to call the Extension Office at (979) 865-2072 and preregister.

Multi County Fruit Tree Seminar February 21st

Do you have a fruit tree, and have questions on how to get it to produce fruit? Here is your chance answer those questions and to learn what is needed to know to have a successful and enjoyable experience. On February 21st, at Winedale Historical Complex at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History in Winedale. Monte Nesbitt, Extension Horticulture Associate, will be the main speaker and will cover a wide range of topics, including varieties, selection, pruning and planting demonstrations. The agenda will also include some visual demonstrations of these practices in Winedale's orchard.

As an added bonus during the training, the Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association will be selling fruit trees at the program. Anyone wanting fruit trees are encouraged to order them prior to the meeting. Order forms will be available on the county master gardener website <http://bluebonnetmastergardener.org>. There will be a variety of different types of trees available for sale at very reasonable prices. All of the varieties sold are specially selected to grow and thrive in South Central Texas.

This program is a multi-county effort that includes Austin, Colorado, Fayette, and Washington counties. Refreshments and handouts will be provided. Registration is from 1-1:30 pm and the program will run from 1:30 to approximately 5 pm. A registration fee of \$20.00 will be charged at the door to help defer the cost of refreshments and materials. To register, contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office

of Austin County at (979) 865-2072, or visit our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>. Winedale Historical Complex is a division of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, the University of Texas at Austin. Winedale is located at 3738 FM 2714, four miles from Round Top, Texas. Take FM 1457 to FM 2714. You can visit the website at, <http://www.winedale.org>.

Gulf Coast Grape Growers Field Day, February 7th

The 22nd annual Gulf Coast Grape Growers Field Day will be held on Friday, February 7th, at the Cat Spring Ag Society building in Cat Spring. The day will begin with registration from 8:30-9:00 a.m., with the program beginning at 9:00 a.m. The field day will conclude around 4:00 p.m.

Featured speakers will be Extension Economist Dr. Levi Russell, Pierce's Disease Researcher Jim Kamas, and long time Professor and former Extension Specialist, Dr. George Ray McEachern. There will be several topics of interest to those in the Wine Grape production business as well as those who thinking about getting started growing grapes.

There will also be an update from the Texas Wine and Grape Growers Association and a social at the end of the evening. A minimum of 3 CEU's will be given to all pesticide applicators. A registration fee of \$35.00 per person will be required at the door, but anyone that plans on coming is asked to contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office of Austin County at (979) 865-2072, email us at austin-tx@tamu.edu.

Small Farms & Vegetable Conference scheduled for February 28th

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County will be sponsoring a Small Farms and Vegetable Conference on Friday, February 28, 2014, at Cat Spring Ag Society Hall. Registration will take place from 8:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. with the program to follow. This year's program will focus on several issues affecting vegetable growers as well as diversified animal production, focusing on raising meat and dairy goats.

The program will begin at 9:00 a.m. and last until about 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be served and there will also be several snack breaks built-in to help get the blood flowing again. There will be **5 CEU's** offered to pesticide applicators, 3 hours in General, 1 IPM and 1 Laws and Regulations. Cost for the event is \$30.00 per person, which goes to cover speaker materials, meal cost and the handouts. To pre-register for the event, contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Office of Austin County at (979) 865-2072, or visit our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>.

Austin County Calf Scramble

The Austin County Calf Scramble Committee formed in November of 2012 will be hosting a reception to meet all current sponsors and any new folks that would like to become a sponsor. The new committee has hit the ground running this past year and are looking forward to a great 2014. We would like to provide you with an overview of the program, the goals we have set and introduce you to a great bunch of volunteers. The reception is currently set for April, 2014 with an exact date and time to be announced. If you are interested in attending or becoming a sponsor, please email kruegerac@gmail.com or call 979-

865-0110 so we can send you an invitation.

The Greatest Generation

A few nights ago, I had the privilege of attending a birthday party for my wife's grandfather. He turned 90 years young, back in August, and although we had already had one party for him with his Sunday School Class, it seemed that a second one would be appropriate, because after all how many times do you turn 90? This time, the party was limited to family and a few close friends that showed up to enjoy each other's company, some good food and to wish him a happy birthday.

When I was kid, the men of this generation were my idols. Of course, they were all my grandfather's age and what little boy doesn't idolize his grandpa. These were the guys who came out of the Great Depression, grew up and saved the world from Hitler's Nazi Germany. They beat back the tide of the Japanese after they had bombed Pearl Harbor. They faced great odds and got off to a late start, but they succeeded on every front and won "the War". They came home to joyous and short-lived celebrations and immediately began the task of rebuilding their lives and the world they wanted. They married in record numbers and gave birth to another distinctive generation, the Baby Boomers. A grateful nation made it possible for more of them to attend college than any society had ever educated. They gave the world new science, agriculture, industry, and economic strength unparalleled in history.

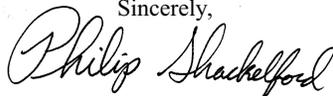
The former NBC nightly news man, Tom Brokaw came out with a book a few years ago chronicling the exploits of this group. He entitled his book, "The Greatest Generation". In it, he examined the lives of many famous people from that era, most notably former President George H. W. Bush. It was a fitting title to describe the people of that age, their struggles and accomplishments before, during and after the war, and how much has changed since those days. If I could go back in time, I would like to have a conversation with my own grandfather about his experiences, but unfortunately for me, I can't because he passed away 15 years ago. I do know that he was stationed in England and later in France as the war progressed. He never talked much about what happened other than an occasional reference here or there, but I do recall one conversation that he and I had just before he passed away. I was at his house and looked at an old photo of him and my grandmother on his dresser, taken just before he shipped out in 1942. He looked very dapper in his brown captain's hat and brown blazer with his khaki shirt and tie (much like the Texas A&M Corp of Cadets wear today). I mentioned something about the photo and I stated "there will never be another war like that one." to which he replied, "I sure hope not." His reaction surprised me. I guess I wanted him to wax nostalgically about that time of his life and tell me some old war stories, but with his short and simple answer I knew that he didn't regard that era as special or romantic, but rather something that just happened along the way.

As "The Greatest Generation" now reaches the twilight of their adventurous and productive lives, they remain just like my grandfather, exceptionally modest. They have so many stories to tell, stories that in many cases they have never told before, because in a deep sense they didn't think that what they were doing was that special, because everyone else was doing it too. They believed themselves to be ordinary people caught up in an extraordinary time.

Just a Few Dates to Remember

- December 6
 - Beef and Forage Committee Meeting
 - Five Hour CEU program, 4 Co. Auction Center, Industry
 - Bluebonnet Master Gardener Annual Meeting
- December 18
 - Private Applicator Training and Testing, Bellville
- December 24-25
 - Extension Office Closed, Christmas Holiday
- January 1
 - Extension Office Closed, New Year's Holiday
- January 10
 - Leadership Advisory Board Meeting
- January 15
 - Horticulture Committee Meeting
- January 17
 - Multi Co New Landowners Series, Columbus
- January 20
 - Extension Office Closed, Martin Luther King Day
- January 23
 - Master Gardener Open House, Bellville
 - Crops Update Meeting, Wallis
 - Deadline to sign up for Master Gardener Class
- January 27
 - Master Naturalist Orientation, Winedale
- January 28
 - Master Gardener Orientation, Bellville
- January 30
 - Leadership Advisory Board Annual Meeting, Sealy
- February 7
 - Gulf Coast Grape Growers Field Day, Cat Spring
- February 14
 - Beef and Forage Committee Meeting
 - Leadership Advisory Board Meeting
- February 17
 - Extension Office closed, Presidents Day
- February 20
 - Mole and Gopher Seminar, Sealy
- February 21
 - Multi Co New Landowners Series, Fruit Tree Seminar, Winedale
- February 28
 - Small Farms and Vegetable Conference, Cat Spring

Sincerely,



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