

Austin County Ag News



Fall 2013

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Wildflower and Bee Seminar

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 Wildflower Symposium, sponsored by the Horticulture Committee of Austin County. The seminar will take place on Thursday, September 12th, at the Hill Center in Sealy, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Henry Flowers, Horticulturalist with Festival Hill in Round Top, 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.

The second half of the program will be devoted to anyone interested in raising bees. In some recent legislative action, bee keeping now qualifies as an ag enterprise and can be used to obtain an ag valuation on property, as small as 5 acres.

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.

Huisache and Native Prairie Restoration Field Day

A Huisache and Native Prairie Restoration Field Day will be held on Friday, September 13th, 2013, at the B. R. and Charlene Koehler Farm, located at 4596 Kurtz Road in Sealy. The field day is scheduled to begin at 8:00 a.m. with registration followed by the program and field demonstrations beginning at 8:30 a.m. and concluding at 10:30 a.m. Participants will be able to see the effects of both mechanical and chemical huisache control and a successful native prairie restoration site. Dr. Megan Clayton will be on hand to discuss the preliminary results of applied research on foliar applied herbicides for the control of huisache. There will also be discussion on the best methods for restoring native prairie and management of them once they are established.

Two CEU's will be given to pesticide applicators. There is no registration fee, however anyone wanting attend is encouraged to contact the Extension Office at (979) 865-2072 and let us know your coming.

Fall Forage Seminar and Hay Show

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; 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 Tuesday, 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 27th, at the Austin County Fair Expo Building in Bellville. The seminar is scheduled to begin with registration from 8:30 - 9:00 a.m., with the program starting at 9:00 p.m. This year's seminar will cover a variety of topics, such as Factors Affecting our Climate, Cool Season Forages, Weed Control update, Soil Fertility and Factors Affecting the Quality of Hay.

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. Three CEU's will be offered to pesticide applicators. There is a \$10.00 registration fee that can be paid at the door. Everyone is encouraged to contact the Extension Office to preregister at (979) 865-2072, so we can have an accurate count for food and refreshments.

Multi-County New Landowners Educational Series

The program for September will focus on Fruit Crops and Horticulture. This program is set for **Friday, September 20th**, in Colorado County. The field day will begin at 1:30 p.m. with registration, followed by the program and field tour. September's program will be a tour of a pecan operation, grape vineyard and will end with a look at growing shade trees. The \$20.00 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 18th**, and begins at 1:30 p.m. The program will be held at the Gen VI Ranch near Fayetteville. The October program will focus on Rainwater Harvesting, Fire-wise Landscaping and Turf Grass Selection. Registration is \$20.00 per person and includes refreshments and educational materials. One (1) CEU will be offered to all pesticide applicators.

The final program in the 2013 series will take place on **Friday, November 15th**, and will focus on Livestock Production for Small Acreage. The program will be held at Sarofim Angus Ranch in Industry at 1:30 p.m. Registration is \$20.00 per person and includes refreshments and your educational materials. 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 2014 new landowner program. Details about next year's courses will be in the Winter 2013-14 Austin County Ag News Letter.

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 annual Austin County Fair Non Commercial Wine Makers Contest & Show on Saturday, October 12th, 2013 at the Turnverien Building at the Austin County Fairgrounds in Bellville. *(Please note the new date for the Austin County Fair Wine Show is Saturday, October 12, 2013, which is during the Austin County Fair. The new location for the show will be at the Turverien Building located on the Hwy 529 entrance gate.)* There is no entry fee and the number of samples is unlimited, however, entrants must pay admission fee or display a season pass or life member pass to enter the grounds. Prices for admission are - Adults & Children 12 & Over \$15.00, Senior Citizens 65 & Over \$6.00, Children 6-11 \$6.00. Entry forms may be obtained from the Austin County Fair Office, or online at www.austincountyfair.com. Entries will be accepted from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. at the Turnverien Building. The judging will begin at 3:30 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, a special award given to the highest placing Austin County produced sample. The general rules and entry cards are also available on our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>. For more

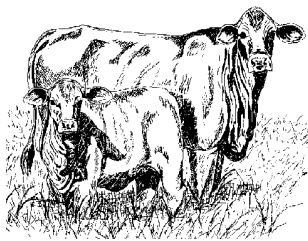
information please contact the Extension Office.

86th Austin County Fair

It's time once again for the annual Austin County Fair. This year's fair will be held October 10 - 13, 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>.



South Central Texas Cow Calf Clinic



The 42nd edition of the South Central Texas Cow-Calf Clinic and Trade Show is set for Friday, October 25th, 2013, 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, covering topics ranging of livestock handling to forage management. Participants will be served a barbecue 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.

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 1st thru November 30th, 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; 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 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 22nd, at the Courthouse and the Texas A&M 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 with the judging to be held sometime in early December.

5th Annual Lone Star Water Forum

The fifth annual Lone Star Water Forum will be held on Saturday, October 5th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Washington County Fairgrounds Event Center, 1305 East Blue Bell Rd., Brenham.

The forum will begin with water rights historian, Charles Porter, explaining the issues to be debated. Then Zach Holland, General Manager, Bluebonnet Groundwater Conservation District, will explain why counties need a GCD. His presentation will

be followed by two more experts in the field of water: Edmond R. McCarthy, Jr. who is a career water rights attorney, and Tim Brown who is a former general counsel at the Texas Water Rights Commission.

Following lunch, there will be a panel discussion answering questions from the audience. Members of the panel include the speakers and the moderator plus Darrell Peckham, Senior Consulting hydrogeologist at Water Quest, Inc. and Bill Neinast, community activist, commentator and “opposition” leader to the formation of a Groundwater District in Washington County a decade ago. Charles Porter will also draw from his field work, personal interviews, observations, and empirical studies across the state, to give a broad overview of what he thinks makes up the good, the bad, and the ugly of GCDs. He will also discuss the practical impact of GCD regulations on real people's lives, particularly in the way these regulations will affect them the most - in their everyday real estate transactions.

The registration fee for the conference is \$25.00 before September 23rd, when it raises to \$35.00. Net proceeds of this event go to the fund to establish BISD's outdoor classroom. For more information and to register go to wcwildlife.org or contact Richard Thames at 979-278-3053.

Growing Olives in South Central Texas

Another alternative crop seems to be growing in popularity in South Central Texas. Olives are one of the earliest crops ever cultivated by man. Referenced numerous times in the Bible and other ancient texts, olives have been a mainstay of

the human diet since time began. Olives are grown world wide and many olive farms have sprung up in the Texas Hill Country, which has sparked the interest of many in our area to consider growing olives both as a hobby and possibly a cash crop.

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County will be hosting a seminar entitled "Growing Olives in South Central Texas" on Friday, November 8th, 2013, at the Industry United Methodist Church. The program is scheduled to begin with registration from 8:30 - 9:00 a.m., and the program beginning at 9:00 a.m. and concluding at 2:30 p.m. State Extension Fruit Specialist Monte Nesbitt will speak on the potential for growing olives in our area, information will also be presented from the Texas Olive Council and the Texas Department of Agriculture the potential markets for olives in Texas. Local olive producers will also be on hand share their experience with raising olives and provide some valuable insight on getting started.

A registration fee of \$30.00 will be charged at the door. The fee includes lunch, handout materials as well as break foods. Three (3) CEU's will be given to all pesticide applicators. Anyone interested in attending is asked to contact the Extension Office at (979) 865-2072 to pre-register.

Hypoxyton Canker in Trees

A disease that has been showing up in most of our Water Oaks (aka Pin Oaks), Post Oaks, Hickory and Pecans the past few years is one known as "Hypoxyton Canker (fungus - *Hypoxyton atopunctatum* and other *Hypoxyton* spp.): This disease is first evident as a dieback of one or more branches. The foliage of the diseased limbs

turns yellow and dries. This dieback continues from branch to branch through the stem until eventually the tree dies. This may require 1 or more years depending upon the environment and amount of stress experienced by the tree. Near death or shortly after tree death the outer bark sloughs off and exposes large masses of brown, dusty one-celled spores (conidia). These spores are gone within a few weeks and a grayish surface is visible. This is covered with numerous black fruiting structures. They are then blown to surrounding trees where infection occurs again. Entry appears to be through injured surfaces on limbs or trunk. The fungus grows best at 86 degrees F but can grow at 50 and 100 degrees F.



Hypoxyton canker causes a dark brown discoloration of the sapwood. With age the infected wood is lighter in color and has black zones or patterns in the wood when observed in cross section. It occurs primarily on trees which are or have been in stressed conditions. Trees which have been damaged by excessive fill soil are often attacked by this organism. It is also suspected to be a fungus that can invade on oak wilt-infected trees.

Control is achieved by maintaining the trees in a healthy condition. Avoid injury to the trunk and limbs and never apply fill soil around the trees. Chemical treatments are

not effective because the fungus is located within the tree.

For more information on Hypoxylon Canker and landscape tree health, contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County at (979) 865-2072, or visit our website <http://austin.agrilife.org> and click on the Ask the Expert tab.

Look Out if You See Me!

When I moved to Austin County back in January of 2000, my oldest son Grayson was only 2 ½ years old. He was the sweetest little boy back then, heaping affection on his dear old dad, following me around everywhere I went like a little shadow. We'd play football in front yard or catch with a baseball when he got a little older. Later he got involved in Little League Baseball, and then in 4-H, showing pigs at the fair. You could catch him on most nights jumping on the trampoline or swimming in the pool at his grandparents house or simply shooting baskets with the neighbor boys up the street. Life was good!

Now, we've hit the teenage years, and life is still good, but it just changed for me and for you. He recently got his learners permit to drive a car!!! That's right, my little boy is now driving. Our talks about manhood, character and responsibility (some of which I should have recorded because they were that good) have turned in discussions about how to drive. Here are just a few of the phrases that have been rolling off the tongue within the past few weeks; "Look out for that car; slow down right here; don't get so close to that pole; you can go a little faster; slow down; don't slam on the brakes, push down on them gently; I'm getting car sick; no don't stop in the middle of the road;

where are you going; stop at the stop sign; look both ways; use your blinker; stay between the yellow and white lines; AHHHHH!"

Yep, for me life has definitely changed. I'm sure with time, a new normal will set in and I won't think twice about letting him drive me somewhere or even drive by himself. I'm sure him being able to drive will come in handy someday when it comes to running an errand for his parents, or delivering his siblings somewhere, but not just yet. So the next time you see my old red dodge coming down your road and think it just might be the County Agent coming to pay you a visit, you might want to step back up on the curb, cause it may not be me that's behind the wheel. So look out if you see me!

Just a few Dates to Remember

- September 10 - Deadline for submitting hay samples
11 - Horticulture Committee Meeting
12 - Wildflower and Bee Seminar - Sealy (2 CEU's)
13 - Huisache and Native Prairie Field Day - Sealy (2 CEU's)
20 - Multi County New Landowners Series - Colorado County (3 CEU's)
24 - Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting
27 - Fall Forage Seminar and Austin County Hay Show - Bellville (3 CEU's)
28 - Austin County Fair Shrimp Boil and Kick Off Dance (tickets available in the Extension Office)
- October 4 - Beef and Forage Committee Meeting
5 - Lone Star Water Forum - Brenham
12 - Austin County Non Commercial Wine Show
10-13 - Austin County Fair - Bellville (Extension Office will be relocated to the Fairgrounds)
14 - Extension Office will be closed
18 - Leadership Advisory Board Meeting
18 - Multi County New Landowner Tour, Fayetteville (3 CEU's)
22 - Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting
25 - South Central Texas Cow Calf Clinic- Washington County Fairgrounds in Brenham (2 CEU's)
- November 8 - Growing Olives in Texas, Industry Methodist Church (3 CEU's)
11 - Office Closed in observance of Veterans Day
12 - Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association Board Meeting
15 - Multi County New Landowner Program - Industry (2 CEU's)
22 - Austin County Pecan Show
28-29 - Office Closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday

Sincerely,



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