

Agriculture Newsletter

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

COLORADO COUNTY

August 2015

Notice:

The Colorado County Extension Office will be closed on September 7th, October 12th, and November 11th, 26th, and 27th.

13 CEUs
available
inside

New Pest of Bermudagrass Forage Found in Lavaca County

By Stephen Janak - County Extension Agent, Ag/NR, Colorado County

The first time I heard of this new pest, the bermudagrass stem maggot (*Atherigona reversura*), it was in a picture message from Dad in 2013, when he found it in his pastures in Wied, between Hallettsville and Shiner. He didn't see any during 2014, but this pest seems to have spread in 2015. The bermudagrass stem maggot (BSM) has since been reported in Jasper, Comanche, Rusk, Denton, Lee, Lavaca, and Waller Counties. This non-native pest, which only affects bermudagrass, was first found in Georgia in 2010. The adult fly lays its eggs in the stem, and when the larvae or maggot hatches, it moves to the top of the stem and consumes the water and nutrient-conducting tissue inside the stem, resulting in the death of the top two or three leaves, which can resemble frost damage. When growing conditions are good, yield loss tends to be minimal. BSM causes the stem to stop growing, but healthy plants will send up a new stem from a lower stem joint. Dry matter yield may be significantly reduced if growing conditions are poor and the plant cannot compensate. Also, the timing of BSM attack can make a difference: if attacked when near full-growth, loss may be minimal. But, if bermuda stands are attacked early in regrowth (soon after cutting for hay) yield losses may be significant. Usually, by the time a producer notices the "frost damage" appearance, the damage is done and it is too late. Also, BSM may not be detected in grazed pastures as cattle keep forage

grazed down. There is no known threat to livestock from the bermudagrass stem maggot.

Bermudagrass Stem Maggot



(Photo courtesy of Joe Janak).

BSM Fly Adult



(Photo Courtesy of Dennis Hancock, The University of Georgia)



Damage Caused by BSM

(Photo courtesy of Richard Waligura, Waller County)

Management for hay fields is to harvest as soon as weather permits, as the crop is not likely to add a significant amount of yield. This can be followed by a foliar application of pyrethroid insecticides (ie. Beta-cyfluthrin, cyfluthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, permethrin, zeta cypermethrin, allethrin, or resmethrin) a few days after baling the previous crop. If damage was high and there is much growing season left, a second application may be warranted again 5-7 days later. Use the lowest labeled rate approved for hayfield application. Research has shown that a single round of treatments has lasted through the growing season.

For more information please contact me at the office or by email: stephen.janak@ag.tamu.edu

Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Service
Colorado County

Stephen Janak, CEA
Agriculture/Natural
Resources

316 Spring Street
Columbus, TX 78934
979-732-2082

colorado.agrilife.org

UPCOMING EVENTS/PROGRAMS

Emerging Technologies in Feral Hog Control - Lavaca County August 22nd

The Lavaca County Wildlife Management Association in cooperation with Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas AgriLife Extension Service of Lavaca County will host a program on the Emerging Technologies in Feral Hog Control. The program is set for **August 22, 2015 from 8:00-11:30 at Wied Hall** located between Hallettsville and Shiner on Highway 90A. Registration will begin at 7:30 a.m. with the program beginning at 8:00 a.m. **Two CEUs** (1 general and 1 IPM) will be offered for private pesticide license holders. Topics will include Landowner Co-operative Feral Hog Management presented by Caldwell County Feral Hog Taskforce representative Nick Dornak. A presentation on the JagerPro™ trap systems will be presented by All Out Ranch Improvements owner Brad Beach. Nobel Foundation researcher Josh Gaskamp will present the BoarBuster™ trap system. The day will conclude with displays and demonstrations on both trap systems.



For more information call: 361-798-2221

Gulf Coast Regional Cattlemen's Workshop & Trade Show, August 28th

On **Friday, August 28th from 3:00-8:15pm at the Bay City Civic Center**, area cattlemen are invited to join for an FREE afternoon of educational workshops, an industry trade show, and a beef dinner. **Two CEUs** (1 Laws and Regs, 1 IPM) will be offered. Topics include "News from the State of Texas" with state representative Dennis Bonnen, "Are You Covered (Insurance)", "Pasture Management" with Clint Kacal, and "Brood Cow Management" with Dr. Chance Farmer. RSVP by Friday, August 21 by calling 979-245-4100.

Emerging Issues and Technology in Agriculture, Three CEU Seminar, September 17th

The Colorado County Soil and Water Conservation District #333 is hosting a seminar on Emerging Issues and Technology in Agriculture on **September 17th** at the Columbus Knights of Columbus hall. **Three pesticide CEUs** will be offered. Topics will include the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs or Drones) in Agriculture (including a demonstration), Precision Mobile Drip Irrigation on Pivots, Farm-Wide Management of Herbicide-Resistant Weeds, Control of Deeproot and Flathead Sedge, Laws and Regulations update, and more. Pre-registration is \$25 and \$30 at the door. Lunch will be provided. For more information: 979-732-2773

Austin County Fall Forage Seminar, September 25th

Austin County AgriLife Extension is hosting the Fall Forage Seminar in **Sealy on Friday, September 25th**. Registration fee will be \$10. **Three CEUs** will be offered. Topics include: Hay Quality vs. Quantity, Winter pastures, Grasshoppers and Armyworms, New forage pesticides, and a hay show. For more information: 979-865-2072

New Landowner Education Series Continues, August 21st

The sixth seminar in the series will take place **Friday, August 21st**, and will focus on Weed and Brush Control for the South Central Texas area. We invite all program series participants and anyone interested in learning more about weed and brush control to join us for a great afternoon of learning. Dr. Megan Clayton, Assistant Professor and Extension Range Specialist, will be our feature speaker and will provide an abundance of practical resources for landowners to utilize in managing their property. We will meet at the Washington County Fairgrounds in the VIP Building located at 1305 E Blue Bell Road in Brenham, Texas. From Blue Bell Road turn north on Old Independence Road and enter through the 1st gate on the left (West). If you have a weed or brush sample you would like identified please bring a sample along with you. Ideally the sample will be freshly collected just prior to the meeting and needs to have leaves and flowers if possible/applicable. **Three CEUs (1 IPM, 2 Gen)** will be offered to all pesticide applicators in attendance. Call the office to register or for more information: 979-732-2082.

Upcoming New Landowner programs:

- September 18, Rural Laws and Codes, to be held in Austin Co.
- October 16, Rainwater Harvesting & Demonstration, to be held in Fayette Co.
- November 20, Livestock Production Tour, to be held in Washington Co.

County Burn Ban Enacted

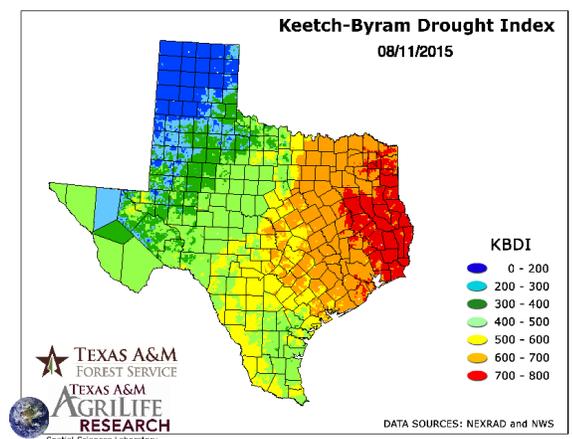
Colorado County Commissioners voted on August 10th to approve an order restricting outdoor burning due to drought conditions. Outdoor fires and combustibles (fireworks, welding) is prohibited outdoors. Trash may be burned in enclosed receptacles covered with a mesh material with no more than 1/4 inch openings.

Outdoor welding is permitted under the following circumstances:

- Welding, cutting and grinding shall not take place when wind is over 15mph.
- Welder must notify Sheriff's Department before and welding, cutting, or grinding begins.
- All grass, leaves, brush and other combustible material must be cleared within a fifty (50) foot radius surrounding the work area before work begins.
- A spotter with water and a ready pressurized delivery system must be on hand before welding, cutting, or grinding begins and must remain on hand until work is completed.

Flash Drought

Texas A&M Forest Service is reporting flash drought conditions for much of Eastern Texas. Flash drought: The rapid swing from wet conditions in June to the dry conditions presently. The eastern Piney Woods has seen its driest 30-day period of record which dates back 121 years. The upper Texas coast is currently experiencing the second driest 30-day period, and the Texas Hill Country is going through its third driest.



Picture: The KBDI attempts to measure the amount of precipitation needed to bring the top eight inches of soil back to saturation. Zero represents complete soil saturation or no moisture deficiency. 800 means it would take 8 inches of precipitation to fully saturate the soil. 800 is the maximum drought that is possible.

Additional Info Required When Recording Pesticide Applications

Two new questions must be answered by both commercial or private pesticide applicator license holders when recording applications of Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs). In February, State officials made two additions to the required info when recording applications:

1. Method or Type of Equipment Used to Make Application (applies to everyone)
2. Non-licensed Applicator's Name Working Under Licensee (applies to you ONLY if you are supervising the application being made by someone who does NOT have a license)

For more information call the office: 979-732-2082

A Request for Herbicide-Resistant Weeds

Researchers from the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences at Texas A&M are looking to collect samples of suspected resistant weeds along the Upper Gulf Coast in order to better understand the biology and control of such plants. They will respond to any suspected resistant weed populations, but are greatly interested in problem weeds in rice fields including barnyardgrass and sprangletop. If you suspect you may have resistant weeds, they will come to that field location to take samples; no extra work is required from you. Call me if you have questions or think you might have resistant weeds: 732-2082.



Texas Rice Harvest: Hot & Dry Weather Brings Smut and Stink Bugs

By Dr. Mo Way, Professor of Entomology, Texas A&M University

It's been hot and dry since the end of June which is good for harvest. However, I'm a little concerned about panicle blight which can be associated with high night time temperatures during flowering, but I have not received any reports of this problem. On the other hand, I have received reports of severe kernel smut south and west of Houston. Also, it seems rice stink bug populations are on the increase which does not surprise me. Please check your fields for rice stink bug---use a sweep net and apply an insecticide only if populations are above threshold levels. I have swept some fields lately that did not warrant treatment, so scouting fields can help your pocketbook and the environment!

2015 Texas Fruit Conference, Texas High Tunnel Conference, **October 5th, 6th, & 7th**

The Texas Fruit Conference will be held **Monday, October 5th and Tuesday, October 6th**. It will be followed by the High Tunnel Conference on **Wednesday, October 7th**. Both events will be held at the **Hilton College Station and Conference Center**. This program offers valuable information updates to seasoned fruit growers while also providing persons with no experiences in orchard management a place to learn how to get started. Registration fee: \$80 for Fruit Conference, \$55 for High Tunnel Conference, \$125 for both. For more information: Contact Monte Nesbitt (979) 862-1218, MLNesbitt@tamu.edu

Stink Bugs and Leafhoppers in Pecan - By Bill Ree, Extension Program Specialist - IPM

It is that time of year when adult stink bugs and leafhoppers will be moving into the orchard. As weed hosts and row crops are senescing or are being harvested, adults will move to pecan to feed. Be aware of what is going on around the orchard and watch border rows for migrating adults. Unfortunately there are not any thresholds to guide SB/LFB treatments. If adults are being observed on clusters then a treatment is probably needed and if so a pyrethroid class insecticide will be the product of choice. With stink bugs able to cause damage late in the season the preharvest interval (PHI) will have to be observed. The closest PHI for a pyrethroid that I am aware of is Danitol which has a 3 day PHI.



Figure 1 Brown stink bug feeding

Cow-Calf Operations Remain Profitable, but Profit Margins will Tighten

An article in the July issue of Cattle Fax Update discussed the price and profit trends for cow-calf operations and concluded that these producers are still in better shape than other segments of the industry, but profits will begin to diminish in the coming years. Producers have enjoyed high calf prices recently, but as supplies and production increase, calf values will decline. Many producers rebuilt herds, buying heifers whose values were at the top of the market. These operations should look to prepare for lower calf prices, and strive to maximize production from their recently-purchased high-dollar replacements. A copy of the Cattle Fax issue is available at the Extension Office.

Chronic Wasting Disease Detected in Medina County

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a disease that affects the nervous system of deer, moose, and elk, and is similar to bovine spongiform encephalopathy that we see in cattle. It was first found in west Texas in a wild mule deer herd in 2012, but was confirmed in a captive white-tail deer herd in Medina County on July 1st, 2015. The disease cannot affect livestock (exotic deer herds CAN be affected) or humans, but hunters are advised not to harvest sick-looking animals, and extra caution should be taken when harvesting animals in the known infection area. Symptoms do not appear in animals until 16-36 months after exposure. Infected animals not showing symptoms can still transmit the disease.

Symptoms include: poor body condition, erratic behavior, wide & low stance, excessive drinking, urination or salivation, or loss of fear of humans. Hunters that harvest deer in areas affected by CWD should avoid touching the brain, eyes, tonsils, spine, spleen, and lymph nodes during slaughter, and all of the carcass waste should be buried out of reach of predators. A fact sheet with more information is available at the Extension office and on the AgriLife Bookstore.

Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) Rule has been Finalized

The FDA has recently finalized the new VFD in an attempt to reduce antibiotic use for performance enhancement in livestock by requiring veterinarians to have a working relationship with clients and trusts the client to follow directions on the antibiotic's label. If you use medicated feeds or have them mixed, this will likely affect you. Producers must obtain a VFD from a licensed veterinarian to feed these products. Brochures with explanations for both cattlemen and veterinarians are available at the Extension office. 732-2082

As always, please feel free to contact me about your individual issues, needs or concerns.

I can be reached by phone at 979-732-2082

or email at stephen.janak@ag.tamu.edu.

Sincerely,



Stephen D. Janak

County Extension Agent—Ag/Natural Resources—Colorado County

colorado.agrilife.org

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office at (979) 732-2082 ten (10) days prior to the meeting to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.

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