

Agriculture Newsletter

COLORADO COUNTY

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

August 2017

Scab Disease of Pecans

10 CEUs
Inside

Pecan scab is arguably one of the most common problems encountered by homeowners who wish to grow pecans in the yard or back pasture. It is a fungal disease problem that occurs throughout the Southeastern U.S. Effects include reduced leaf growth, leaf drop, stem dieback, nut drop, reduced nut size and reduced kernel percentage (Nesbitt, M. "Summer Pecan Scab Defense" *Pecan South*. June 2015). Infection and damage can occur from budbreak to shell hardening (~Aug. 1). Pecan shucks can still be infected after shell hardening, but by this time damage to the nut and kernel is minimal. Typically only new, expanding leaves are affected; toughened, mature leaves are not susceptible.

The disease survives the dormant season on infected twigs and shoots on the tree, as well as old shucks and leaves either in the trees or on the ground. Good sanitation can help reduce the occurrence of the disease, as well as selective pruning of infected (dead) twigs and branches.

Rain and cloudy, humid conditions encourage the spread of the disease. Infection is a two-step process: 1. Fungal spores germinate on leaves or nuts when there is free moisture present (physically wet). 2. Fungus grows into leaf or nut tissue, requiring dissipation of free moisture but high relative humidity. Rain, fog, or dew during warm weather that wets the leaves and nuts for 10-36 hours, followed by gradual drying and high relative humidity are ideal conditions for disease development (Nesbitt). So, what can be done about it?

Fungicide applications can be effective, but are often not feasible or even possible for homeowners and hobbyists. Large growers use air-blast sprayers and large tractors to effectively treat the entire tree.

Any tissue not treated with fungicide is susceptible. Small growers should focus on an integrated approach including: variety selection, spacing, pruning, and sanitation. Certain pecan varieties are resistant to the disease: Kanza, Lakota, Prilop, Caddo, or Lipan. Select these for new plantings or top-work and graft old trees to these improved varieties. Choose new planting sites with airflow in mind. Pecans should be planted 75-100 feet apart in an orchard for maximum airflow. Homeowners should keep this spacing in mind for backyard trees. Nearby shade trees may need to be pruned back if a reduction in scab pressure is desired. After a year of bad scab pressure, homeowners should collect fallen leaves and shucks, and remove any that remain on the tree. Burn or discard this material to avoid further infection. Some homeowners may consider partial tree spraying of fungicides with their own equipment to protect the leaves and nuts that can be reached from the ground. However, the only products available are in quantities for large acreage and may cost over \$100. Such a product may expire before it is used-up by the homeowner. Finally, if you desire to spray, keep yourself safe. Do not spray while standing beneath the tree to be treated unless your body is completely covered. Pesticides must be used in ways that do not contact people or pets. Always follow the label. For more info, call me: 979-732-2082.



Credit: William Reid, <http://northernpecans.blogspot.com/2015/09/>

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Upcoming Events & News You Can Use

Agricultural Leases Workshop September 1, College Station

The workshop will address the legal risks associated with agricultural leases. The goal is to educate landowners and producers on the importance of utilizing written leases as a risk management tool. The discussion will include potential legal implications of failing to have a sufficient written lease and the potential legal issues and litigation that the development of written leases can help avoid. The workshops will also familiarize participants with key terms and provisions that should be considered in lease negotiations. Participants will receive a leasing handbook that covers legal issues, designing lease payment structures and calculating payments, landowner liability, as well as checklists and sample lease forms for negotiating lease agreements. Participants will need to RSVP at least one week before the meeting with Kim Garcia, 806-677-5626 or kim.garcia@ag.tamu.edu. There is no cost. Workshop is 8:30am - 1:00pm at the Hildebrand Equine Complex, 3240 F&B Road, College Station.

Texas Grazing Conference August 29-31

Healthy Ecosystems = Profitable Ranches will feature livestock and wildlife producers sharing what works! Also a chance to hear from and interact with Tim Cansler of Cansler Consulting who will be very involved in the creation of the FARM BILL and available to discuss. Opening keynote address by Wyman Meinzer and also featuring Bob Lee, Montana rancher, sharing "Ten Dimes Makes a Dollar." Tour will take you to Rocosa Ridge Ranch and Flat Top Ranch. This is a conference you do not want to miss! Other talks include: How to Not Go Broke Ranching; Infrastructure for Intensive Grazing; Profitability and Stewardship; Ranching in Shifting Markets and Unpredictable Weather; Wildlife Ecology on the Storm Ranch; Big Bucks, Little Budget; Grazing for Quail; Transitioning the Ranch from One Generation to the Next. Tuesday features a meet'n'greet with speakers, drinks and refreshments. All speaker sessions will be on Wednesday, and the tour will depart on the morning of Thursday. Registration is \$125 and includes two mixers and two lunches. Online registration: www.regonline.com/txgrazland2017. More info: <https://texasglc.org/>

Private Applicator Training

Fayette County will be conducting Private Pesticide Applicator License Training on September 20 at the Extension Office in La Grange from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Individuals wanting to obtain a license should call 979-968-5831.

Texas Sheep & Goat Expo August 18-19

The 44th annual Sheep and Goat Field Day, followed immediately by the 2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo, will be August 18 and 19 in San Angelo. Sheep and Goat producers, large and small, from around the state are encouraged to attend the premier sheep and goat event in the state.

The annual Sheep and Goat Field Day is conducted by and on the grounds of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center located just north of San Angelo. The field day theme is "Feeding for Profit." Topics this day include: Performance Data in Breeding Animal Selection; Using Genetics to Manage Parasites; Wool and Mohair Markets; Premium Niche Markets; Guardian Dog Demonstration; Nutrition Basics; Live Animal Evaluation; Health Management Tips; Developing a Market for Your Product; Equipment and Handling Demonstration. Registration cost for this day is \$10.

The Expo on the 19th will feature sessions on Wool Sheep, Hair Sheep, Club Lambs, Meat Goats, and Angora Goats. Early Registration is \$40 before August 15th, and \$60 after that or at the door.

For more information and to register: sanangelo.tamu.edu/events, or 325-653-4576.

New Landowner Program - Bees and Trees

The Multi-County New Landowner Education program is a series of 8 informational meetings, seminars, and 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 a variety of fields in agriculture about best management practices that can be implemented on their own property.

The next New Landowner Program will take place on **August 18, 2017** at the Washington County Fairgrounds, 1305 E. Blue Bell Road in Brenham. Registration begins at 1:00pm and the cost is \$20 per person if you have not signed up for the entire series. The August program will discuss tree management, common problems with trees in our area, and how to care for trees. We will also discuss beekeeping for beginners: "What you need to know before getting into bees". **Three (3) CEUs (2 Gen, 1 IPM)** will be available, although how many is still to be determined. For more information: 979-732-2082

Bluebonnet Master Gardener's Fall Citrus Seminar and Fruit and Citrus Tree SALE

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County will sponsor a Fall Citrus Seminar with guest speaker Monte Nesbit, Extension Horticulture Specialist, on **October 20th** at the Hill Center in Sealy. Details about this seminar will be released at a later date. The Bluebonnet Master Gardeners Association will be selling citrus and fruit trees (peach, pear, plum, avocado, etc) in conjunction with this seminar. Place your orders NOW for best availability. Order forms are available under the FORMS tab on the Master Gardener website (<http://bluebonnetmastergardener.org/>) or at local county AgriLife offices. Orders are subject to availability. Updated order forms will be posted as new plant lists become available. Please send all orders and questions to Bluebonnet Master Gardeners at citrusbmga@gmail.com. Or call 979-732-2082.



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Statewide Quail Symposium - August 16-18, Abilene

The Statewide Quail Symposium brings together experts in the fields of quail management, research and conservation in the state of Texas. Topics include frequently asked questions and hotly debated issues such as invasive plants and quail, the self-regulating nature of quail hunting, and translocation of wild birds. Enjoy a series of engaging presentations from speakers with a wide range of backgrounds, including current land managers, research scientists and state agency professionals. participate in a field day to see quail management strategies in action and learn techniques for evaluating quail habitat. Hear updates on the latest quail research, outreach efforts, and more! To pre-register go to statewidequailsymposium.com. Early registration is \$50. For more information contact Clint Faas at cfaas@texas-wildlife.com or call 979-732-2082.



Soil, Forage, Water Testing Campaign, November

The Colorado County Beef and Forage committee will be sponsoring a Fall soil, forage, and water testing campaign in November of 2017. As usual, several pick up and drop off locations will be available around the county. This campaign offers testing at a reduced price and we take care of the shipping for you. Make plans now to get your soil, hay, or water tests done during November. More info will be in the next newsletter.

Reduce Winter Feeding Program August 24th

Would you prefer to feed hay for 60 days? 100 days? or 150 days? Here's an opportunity to learn how to significantly reduce your hay feeding needs. Topics Include: Stockpiled forage: management and utilization; How many acres do you need of stockpiled forage and winter pasture?; Cool-season forages and variety selection; Establishment and fertilization; Grazing and utilization strategies; Monthly and seasonal forage production potential; Appropriate mineral supplementation. **2 (two) CEUs available, 1 IPM & 1 Gen.** Register online at: <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu>, or call Extension Conference Services @ 979-845-2604. Register before August 13th: \$60/person. Register before August 22nd: \$75/person (Includes lunch and program materials).

Houston Urban Food Production Conference August 25, 2017

This educational training is taking place at the Harris County AgriLife Extension office, @ 3033 Bear Creek Dr. in Houston from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Topics to include: Specialty Vegetable Production; Small Scale Diversified Farming; Cottage Food Laws; Vegetable Production and Integrated Pest Management. Cost is \$40.00 per person and sign up can be done at www.hufpc.eventbrite.com. Call: 713-274-0950

Regional Cattlemen's Workshop August 25, 2017

This FREE workshop will be held at the Bay City Civic Center from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Speakers to include Senator Lois Kolkhorst with Legislature Update, other topics addressed will be Beef Cattle Nutrition, Farm Service Agency Programs that Support Ranchers, Texas Farm Bureau Update from state president Russell Boening, "Are You Covered? - Ranch Liability," and Cattle Industry Update from TSCRA. RSVP by calling 979-318-9527 by **August 18th**.

Texas Fruit Conference 2017 October 2nd & 3rd

The 6th Annual Texas Fruit Conference is a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension educational event, aimed at bringing together commercial and recreational fruit growers from around the state to hear and discuss the challenges and successes of fruit growing in Texas. The New Braunfels Civic Convention Center will again be the site for the 2017 conference. This conference is aimed at small acreage and commercial growers, but has content for and is attended by hobbyists and backyard growers from all over the state.



The program this year has four important components:

- Basic Training for New Fruit Growers
- CEU Recertification, at least **4 (four) CEUs** will be available
- The Future of Fruit Growing in Texas
- Texas Fruit Tasting



Early Bird registration is set at \$65/per person for those people registering by **September 10th**. Regular online registration from **Sept. 11 to September 28th** is \$75/person. On-site registration on Oct. 2nd is \$85/person. Registration is available at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/Fruit> or call 979-732-2082.

Soil Health and Cover Crop Field Day, August 24th

Williamson County AgriLife Extension is conducting a soil health field day on **Thursday, August 24th** near Thrall, TX. The field day will start at a local producer's farm to view cover crop practices that have been put in place there. Nathan Haile, NRCS Soil Health Specialist, will lead the discussion. Dr. Clark Neely will discuss a double-crop yield study and their herbicide protocols for double-cropping. There will be in-depth discussion and demonstration on how "soil health" is measured and evaluated. Extension Economist Dr. Mark Welch will discuss the Economic Impacts of Cover Crops. There will also be discussion on sesame production as well as soil nutrient and water management in relation to cover crops and double-cropping. **One (1) CEU** will be available for licensed pesticide applicators. There is no charge for attending, and lunch will be served, sponsored by Sesaco. For more information and to register, call: 512-943-3300.



WOTUS: Where Are We Now? By: Tiffany Lashmet - Agricultural Law Specialist, AgriLife Extension

Adapted for print.

For years now, agriculture has been closely following the drama surrounding the definition of "Waters of the United States," commonly referred to as WOTUS. With a new administration in place, changes have recently occurred in Washington, DC on this issue. The Clean Water Act, passed in 1972, gave federal jurisdiction to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers (COE) over "waters of the United States." Essentially, a person who wishes to do certain activities in a water of the United States—such as point source discharge of pollutants or discharging dredge and fill materials—must obtain a federal permit in order to do so. The Act, however, offered no explanation of what was included in the definition of a "water of the United States." Not surprisingly, this proved problematic. In 2015, the EPA and COE promulgated a regulation that defined WOTUS under the Clean Water Act. Almost immediately, lawsuits began pouring in across the United States, claiming that the new definition was overly broad and exceeded the scope of authority granted to the agencies pursuant to the Clean Water Act. The United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit issued a nationwide stay on the rule pending litigation. In February 2017, President Trump issued an Executive Order which required the EPA and COE to "rescind or revise" the 2015 Rule. In June, the EPA announced it would be taking the first step to rescind the 2015 Rule and to re-codify the definition of WOTUS prior to the passage of the 2015 rule.

Rescinding a rule already promulgated is not as simple as it may sound. The EPA has published a new proposed rule in the Federal Register, which essentially seeks to codify the rule as it was prior to the 2015 EPA rule being passed (and, due to the 6th Circuit stay, the approach currently in place across the US). Specifically, the proposed rule would rescind the 2015 approach and codify an approach consistent with the Rapanos Supreme Court decision, applicable case law, and other longstanding agency practices. Now, notice and comment rulemaking will take place, which will allow the public to offer input on the new proposed rule. This period is open through August 28, 2017. After that, the EPA plans to conduct a "substantive re-evaluation" of the definition of WOTUS and conduct notice and will likely propose a new rule after property notice and comment rulemaking occurs.

Meanwhile, the 2015 rule is not in force anywhere in the United States, as the 6th Circuit stay remains in place. Thus, currently, the definition of WOTUS is governed by the pre-2015 rule that got us the complex decision in the Rapanos case. Unfortunately, until a new rule is promulgated, landowners are left with trying to interpret the Rapanos decision in order to know whether federal permits are required on their land.

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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