

# Agriculture Newsletter

COLORADO COUNTY

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

October 2017

7 CEUs  
Inside

## Everybody has Sandburs

Grassburs, sticker burs, sandburs, sand spurs - It doesn't matter what you call them, if you have sandy soil with bare spots or thin grass, you have them. The most accepted common name is field sandbur. I can recommend herbicides all day, but unless we address the root cause, you will forever battle these devils. Let me first answer some of your questions: No, heavy fertilizer will not kill them. No, there's nothing you can do to kill them at this point in the year. No, burning them will not help much. No, they do not hate fertile soil. No, they are not "choking out" your yard or pasture grass. Yes, hand-pulling is hard but it is effective in the short term.

We must first understand that at every moment in time, plants on the land are in constant competition with one another for a finite set of resources: water, nutrients, and sunlight. The plant who is most competitive in your particular situation at that point in time will be the plant that grows there. Plants give us clues to what is happening on the land and in the soil. Since sandbur is an annual plant, it tells us that at some point the soil was bare or the vegetative cover was thin. Sandbur also tells us that the soil fertility was probably poor and the moisture-holding capacity is probably low. Those three factors help us design long-term management plans. Yes, herbicides are ONE of the tools we can use to control this plant. But if we do not address the real reason for sandburs, you will fight them forever. The best way to manage them long term is to grow other plants (Bermudagrass or St. Augustinegrass in lawns) that will shade the bare soil and be more competitive than sandbur. This often involves herbicides, fertilizer, compost, mulch, and/or grass seed or sod.



I could write a 10-page article on all of the variables that need to be considered when controlling sandbur. The simplest way to learn is to call me and I will help you design a management regime for your specific situation.

### Are You Reading This?

The Colorado County Extension Office receives a working office budget from the county every year that is used to conduct business - travel expenses, supplies, demonstration work, communications, postage, etc. It has always been my opinion that many of our clients still need and enjoy receiving their copy of the Agriculture Newsletter in a hard-copy format, delivered by the USPS; the old-fashioned way. However, in the interest of fiscal responsibility, we will be trying to reduce our hard-copy mailing list and adding more people to our emailing list. If you would like to keep receiving a hard, printed copy of the Agriculture Newsletter for Colorado County, simply contact us and we will be happy to do so. If you can receive the newsletter by email, let us know and we will put you on that list and remove you from the paper mailing list. It will take you less than 60 seconds. You can even call after-hours and leave a clear message with your name to let us know you'd still like to receive the hard copy, or provide us with an email address. You can also email us.

We thank you for your understanding and your help with this matter. Call or email us now:

979-732-2082 [stephen.janak@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:stephen.janak@ag.tamu.edu)

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## Upcoming Events & News You Can Use

### Austin County Fair & Noncommercial Wine Judging **October 15**

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 Sunday, October 15, 2017. *This event will take place at the **Bellville American Legion Hall**.*

There is no entry fee and the number of samples is unlimited, however, entrants must pay an admission fee or display a fair 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** at 1076 E Hill Street in Bellville, or call: 979-865-5995



Entries will be accepted from 12:30pm – 1:30pm. The judging will begin promptly at 1:30 pm 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.

### New Landowner Educational Series; Native Prairies - **October 20**

Wildlife Management, Native Grasses & Prairie Restoration will be the topics for the October New Landowner program that will be held at Willis Ranch in Cat Spring. Dr. Barron Rector, Associate Professor & Extension Range Specialist and Jim Willis, Wildlife Habitat Federation President will be featured speakers. Come learn how native grass and prairie restoration can attract wildlife and enhance grazing opportunities. Topics will include: how we lost native plants, planting and establishment of natives, and utilization.

Registration begins at 1:00 p.m. Fee is \$20.00 per person. **Three CEU's (2 Gen, 1 IPM)** will be offered to Licensed Pesticide Applicators.

*If you have a weed or plant that you would like identified, bring a fresh sample with you; include leaves, flowers, seeds, and stem if possible. Participants are asked to bring lawn chairs. All landowners, regardless of ownership tenure, are invited to attend. For more information call 979-732-2082.*

### Bluebonnet Master Gardener's Fall Citrus Seminar

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County will sponsor a Fall Citrus Seminar with guest speaker Monte Nesbitt, Extension Horticulture Specialist, on **October 20th** at the Hill Center in Sealy from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Registration fee is \$20.00. People who ordered trees may pick them up between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm.

### Recreational Pond Management **October 27**

A Pond Management workshop is scheduled for **October 27** from 1-5pm at the Colorado County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall. Registration begins at 12pm. Mr. Peter Woods, Extension Program Specialist will address the following topics: Aquatic weed management, Clearing Muddy Ponds, Sealing Leaky ponds, Fish selection and stocking, Fertilization of ponds, Pond Construction and site selection. There will be a \$20.00 registration fee. **Three CEUs (2 Gen, 1 IPM)** will be offered to private applicators.

*If you have problematic pond weeds, bring a **FRESH** sample for identification and management recommendations!* Plastic jars with good lids and pond water are preferred.



### **Comprehensive Tree Care and Management Seminar - November 3**

Trees provide many services to humans including energy use reduction in homes, clean air, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic beauty. Come hear the most comprehensive tree care seminar you've ever attended and bring your questions. Learn how to deal with drought and other stress factors. You will also learn about common diseases and insects that plague trees in Colorado County. Other topics will include: planting, pruning, fertilization, watering, mulching, and more. The seminar will be held **November 3rd** at the Colorado County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall. Registration will begin at 12pm and the program will be from 1-5pm. Cost is \$10 per person. One **(1) general CEU** will be provided for licensed applicators. If you would like a tree identified or a specific problem diagnosed, bring a FRESH sample of a twig with plenty of leaves; include flowers or seeds if possible. For more information: 979-732-2082.



### **Colorado County Soil, Water, and Forage Testing Campaign - November**

During the month of November (**Nov. 1 - Nov. 30**), the Colorado County Beef and Forage committee is sponsoring a soil, forage, and water testing campaign that offers these testing services for a reduced charge. Materials may be picked up and dropped off at several agricultural businesses throughout the county, or at the Extension office. For more information, call our office: 979-732-2082.

Kits will be available for pickup on **November 1** at the following locations: Colorado County Extension Service; Bernardo Farm & Ranch; Colorado Feed; Dudensing Farm Service; Eagle Lake General Store; Garwood Farmers' Co-Op; M-G Farm Service and Sandy Creek Country Store.

### **Grape Camp November 5-6**

Grape Camp is an annual two-day event filled with educational sessions, vendor demonstrations and a celebration dinner focused on Texas grape growers. Educational Sessions are held at the Gillespie County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall in Fredericksburg. Educational sessions include: legalities and startup issues; soil challenges; variety and rootstock selection; viticulture and enology research in Texas; sustainability in grape production.

On Sunday night, there is a celebration reception and dinner held at the Inn on Barons Creek Conference Center. This is a great time to enjoy your favorite Texas wines. For more information go to [txwines.org](http://txwines.org) or call 817-421-3201.

### **Cotton Stalk Destruction Deadline**

Cotton Stalk Destruction deadline for Colorado & Wharton Counties has been extended until **October 31st**.

### **South Texas Western Heritage Schools & Sortings December 9, 2017**

Back to The Cowboy Way; Join Ranch Sorting National Championships in an exciting new class for youth and adults. This is an opportunity for horse owners, ranchers who use horses, breeders, and trainers to participate in a sorting program which uses a combination of education and then competition to help adults and youth learn more about handling horses, especially around cattle. The event is organized by retired Extension Horse Specialist, Dr. Doug Householder. The class is "for those who excel in slow and quiet cattle handling." It is a 1-day school for youth and adults. Sorting competition starts at 4:00 p.m. Beginner, Rookie & Stockman classes will take place - 16 Buckles Awarded. 1 School/class/buckle set will also be held for Spanish-speaking cowboys. For more information: 903-520-1218 or [www.msc.us/events/](http://www.msc.us/events/)

**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](mailto:stephen.janak@ag.tamu.edu).

Sincerely,



Stephen D. Janak

County Extension Agent—Ag/Natural Resources—Colorado County

**[colorado.agrilife.org](http://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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