

Comanche County Agriculture Newsletter

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Livestock & Dairy Committee Members

*Will Braim
Neil Carroll
Roland Collins
Brian Dudley
T. J. Dudley
Doug Erwin
James Lain
Hugh McCrary
Elton McDonald
Pete McDougal
James Mercer
Tim Stallings
Shane Tucker
Calvin Zwicker
Frans Beukeboom
Linda Beukeboom
Yme Bosma
Wes Frazee
Gerard Hoekman
John Koster
Phil Modisett
Wayne Moerman
Frans Osinga
Mike Steward
Ben Volleman
David Volleman
Frank Volleman*

Spring is my favorite time of the year. I realize January is the actual beginning of each new year, but spring is the beginning of the year for farmers and agriculture. Trees start budding, grass starts greening-up and the farmers get busy. Even though you are going full steam, this is the time of year that it is easy to wonder at the many blessings the Lord has bestowed on us.

How Much to Spend on Fertilizer?

With many hay lots still mostly full to full, hay prices are still pretty much in the dumper. Most hay that has been sold this past year has been sold at a loss when compared to cost required to produce the hay. This is certainly a change from a few years ago, but like all commodities supply is directly related to price. This situation understandably may lead many folks to question how much if any fertilizer they want to apply to hay meadows this year. If you do decide to cut back on fertilizer be sure not to let your potash and phosphorus level drop below critical levels. Just applying nitrogen and cutting out potash and phosphorus will lead to trouble in the future. Disease and poor root health can damage your bermudagrass stands as a result of low potash and phosphorus levels. Once levels of these two nutrients get low it is extremely costly to get the levels back to where they need to be for the field to remain healthy and productive. Putting lower yield expectations, grazing or just maintenance on your soil sample yield goal will provide you with excellent information on how to keep fields healthy while still lowering cost.

Pesticide Application Record-Keeping Requirements

Many of you are spraying thistles and other weeds right now and may be applying other herbicides later in the season. With some of the new dicamba and 2,4-D tolerant cotton, there will be more of these products applied this year. This could increase the chance of drift. If you are not using one of our excellent commercial applicators, here is a reminder of the basic records you are required by the Texas Department of Agriculture to keep on restricted use herbicide applications:

- » *Name of applicator and license number*
- » *Month, day and year of application*
- » *Start time of application*
- » *Product name and EPA registration number*
- » *Total amount of undiluted pesticide*
- » *Total volume of material used*
- » *Crop that received the treatment*
- » *Size of the area treated (acres)*
- » *Location of area treated (use maps, field numbers, GPS, etc.)*
- » *Pest for which product was used*
- » *Site treated (name of crop)*
- » *Wind speed and direction*
- » *Total acres treated*
- » *ID # for application equipment*
- » *Name of person and license number responsible for the application if different from actual applicator*

You must complete the records within 14 days of application and you need to keep the records for two years.

This is quite a bit to keep up with, but I do recommend you keep records; it could save you from a potential fine in the future and it is the law. There is a simple form provided by the TDA, we can provide you with a copy of this record-keeping form, just stop by the office.

Upcoming Programs

Dairy DOPA Program

The DOPA Program will be Thursday, April 6th. There will be two separate sessions. The morning session will be held at the Dublin Rotary Building. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. and the program will start at 10:00 a.m. During the first session Dr. Sam Feagley, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service State Soil Specialist, will cover "Nutrient Management When Utilizing Lagoon Water and Sludge"; Dr. Anish Jantrania, Extension Specialist, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, and Dr. Zong Liu, Extension Specialist Animal Waste Engineer, will be covering "Waste Water Treatment Options".

The second session will begin after lunch, with Darren Turley, Texas Association of Dairymen, covering "Policy and Regulations Update". We will then travel to the Dreamcatcher Dairy where Dr. Dana Porter, Professor & Associate Department Head, Lubbock Research and Extension Center, will cover "Irrigating with Lagoon Water"; and Dr. Anish Jantrania, Extension Specialist, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, and Dr. Zong Liu, Extension Specialist Animal Waste Engineer, will finish up the day with "Keeping it Simple Lagoon Designs and Management and New Technologies for Lagoon Management". We will finish up around 4:00 p.m.

There will be a total of 5 DOPA credits offered, 2 for the morning session and 3 for the afternoon session. Lunch will be provided by our excellent agriculture businesses.

Small Grain Tour

This year's variety trials include 40 varieties of small grains for forage production. Species include oats, wheat, rye, ryegrass, barley and triticale. The trials and the tour offer an excellent opportunity to compare many different small grains at one location. We are planning the small grain tour for Thursday, April 20th, dependent on weather and crop conditions. The date is subject to change. I will advertise the event in the newspaper, so be sure to keep an eye out. We will be providing 1 or 2 CEU's at the tour.

Pecan Program

Our spring pecan program will be on Thursday, April 27th at the Comanche Community Center. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. and the program will start at 10:00 a.m. and end at 2:00 p.m. We have an excellent line-up of speakers and topics scheduled for the program, and you will not want to miss this one. We will be offering 3 CEU's and lunch will be covered by our excellent local agriculture sponsors.

Corn Progress Tour

This year's corn progress tour is scheduled for May 16th, depending on the weather and crop conditions. We will be touring corn trials as well as looking at any issues in the corn crop. Please watch the newspaper for more details on the tour.



101 W. Central, Suite B-101
Comanche, TX 76442

Phone: 325-356-2539
Fax: 325-356-3710
E-mail: mwberry@ag.tamu.edu

Michael Berry
County Extension Agent -
Agriculture/Natural Resources
Comanche County

Wildfires

The wildfires that roared through the Texas Panhandle as well as Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado have been devastating to the areas affected. The response to help those affected has been incredible. In visiting with the local Texas county agent offices in areas affected, it is clear the good folks in Comanche County went above and beyond to help folks affected by the wildfires. The outpouring has been so great that the receiving stations are currently not in need of supplies or feedstuffs.

The recovery process for ranchers in the area will be long-term and other needs will arise as folks begin to get back on their feet. If you are interested in helping with monetary donations here are locations in the areas affected set up to deal with these donations: Rancher Relief Fund, Lefors Volunteer Fire Department, Lefors Credit Union, Attention: Carol Watson, PO Box 425, Lefors, Texas 79054; Panhandle Fire Relief Fund, Happy State Bank, PO Box 97, Canadian, TX, 79014; Rancher Relief Fund, Lipscomb County Fire Fighters Association, Attention: Pam, PO Box 636, Booker, TX, 79005.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
The Texas A&M University System
101 W. Central, Suite 101—B
Comanche, TX 76442-3264

