Volume 17, Issue 3

August 2017

Comanche County Agriculture Newsletter

We are getting closer to fall and sometimes you can feel it in the air late in the evening and early in the morning. It is a good time of the year for farmers and cattlemen. Although its starting to get dry for some of us now, for the most part, we have had a good summer. We do not often see summers like this and we have had two in a row. It is now August, we still have green grass and the daily temperatures are not in the 100 degree range, that is a blessing. Most crops in the county are looking very good. Producers have made a lot of hay and silage. The grass is tall and the cattle are fat. Things can certainly turn around at any time, but for now climatologist are predicting warmer and wetter than average conditions for the next 3 months.

To Plant or Not to Plant Small Grains?

With the abundance of hay and the cost associated with planting small grains, you will want to take a long look at your options this year. However, much of the hay produced this year is only of fair quality and there is no better way to put gain calves than grazing small grains. It is still a little early, but now is the time to be making plans to plant small grains for grazing and forage production. If you are planning to graze your small grains, it is critical to get them in the ground as early as possible, mid to late October is as late as you would want to plant and still be able to get some winter grazing, mid to late September would be much better time frame to maximize grazing. Every year is different, but later plantings are usually not cost effective for grazing as they will not yield enough forage to be economical. Unfortunately, the earlier you plant the more issues you will have with insects and weather, but these are just problems you have to manage when planting small grains for grazing. In livestock production, forage is the key to success and there is no better milk or beef producer than grazing small grains; however, they are not cheap to plant and maintain. The estimated cost to grow an acre of small grains for grazing, including fixed cost for rent and machinery in our area for 2016 is estimated to be $173.78 per acre, this is actually down from 227.69 in 2016. This cost can vary, but it is going to be pretty accurate for most of us. So watch the long-range forecast and take a close look at your current forage supplies when deciding how much to spend on small grain plantings this year.

If you do plan to plant small grains I would encourage you to come to the small grain workshop to be held on August 25th.

Fall Armyworms Are Already Here

We do not usually see fall armyworm until late August or September, but they are already here and doing considerable damage to managed hay fields. We can expect to see them until we get a good frost. If you have hay meadows or if you are planting small grains, you will want to keep a watchful eye out for them.

The larvae of the fall armyworm are green, brown or black with white to yellowish lines running from head to tail. There will be a white line between the eyes that forms a "Y" pattern on the face. At first the fall armyworm caterpillar or larvae are very small about 1/8", at this stage they cause very little damage and usually go unnoticed. The larva will feed for 2 to 3 weeks growing to 1 to 1.5". Once the armyworm reach ¾" in length the quantity of forage they eat increases dramatically. During the final 2-3 days of feeding, armyworms consume 80% of the total forage during their entire development. Once the armyworm completes feeding, it tunnels into the soil and enters the pupal stage. The moth emerges from the pupa in about 10 days and repeats the lifecycle.

Scouting is the key to controlling damage associated with the fall armyworm. It is best to check fields late in the evening or early in the morning; this is when they will be feeding in the upper canopy. If you have small grains and a thinning stand but cannot find any armyworms, look under the dirt clods. This is where they will go during the day. Damage from the small larvae will leave a clearing or window pane effect on the leaf, as the larvae grow they will begin eating on the edges of the leaves. The bigger they get the faster they will march through your fields, eating everything in their path.

If you do not need early grazing from your small grains you should hold off as long as possible before planting or be ready to scout and spray. Armyworm damage will continue and populations will grow until we get a frost. This will be a good time to support your local chemical supply and custom applicator businesses.

The following is a list of insecticides for fall armyworm control provided by Dr. Allen Knutson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Entomologist. I have tried to identify all that are labeled for use on small grains.

Insecticides Labeled for Armyworm Control in Pastures, Hayfields, and Small Grains

Always read and follow all label instructions on pesticide use and restrictions. Information below is provided for educational purposes only. Read current label before use.

Karate Z. 13.1% lambda cyhalothrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture and rangeland grass, grass grown for hay and silage and grass grown for seed. Pasture and rangeland grass may be used for used for grazing or cut for forage 0 days after application. Do not cut grass to be dried and harvested for hay until 7 days after the last application. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains for forage production.

Lambda-Cy. 11.4% lambda cyhalothrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture and rangeland grass, grass grown for hay and silage and grass grown for seed. Pasture and rangeland grass may be used for used for grazing or cut for forage 0 days after application. Do not cut grass to be dried and harvested for hay until 7 days after the last application. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Mustang Max. 9.6% zeta-cypermethrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Applications may be made up to 0 days for forage and hay, 7 days for straw and seed screenings. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Tombstone Helios. 25% cyfluthrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture, rangeland, grass grown for hay and seed. Zero days to grazing or harvesting hay. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Warrior II. 22.8% lambda cyhalothrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture and rangeland grass, grass grown for hay and silage and grass grown for seed. Pasture and rangeland grass may be used for used for grazing or cut for forage 0 days after application. Do not cut grass to be dried and harvested for hay until 7 days after the last application. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Baythroid XL. 12.07% cyfluthrin**.** Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture, rangeland, grass grown for hay and seed. Zero days to grazing or harvesting hay. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Dimilin 2L. 22% diflubenzuron. Fall armyworm and immature grasshoppers. Dimilin must be applied before armyworm larvae reach ½ inch or larger. Provides residual control for up to 2-3 weeks, as long as forage is not removed from the field. Label does not list a restriction on grazing. Not labeled for small grains.

Prevathon. 5% chlorantraniliprole. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Prevathon has a 0 day waiting period for harvest or grazing and is not a restricted use insecticide. It is the most expensive product, but will provide very good residual, may be worth the extra cost this year. Labeled for small grains.

Besiege. 9.26% chlorantraniliprole and 4.63% lambda cyhalothrin. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Pasture and rangeland grass may be used for grazing or cut for forage 0 days after application. Do not cut grass to be dried and harvested for hay until 7 days after the last application. Restricted use insecticide. Labeled for small grains.

Sevin 4F, Sevin XLR, Sevin 80S, Generic Carbaryl. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. When applied to pastures, there is a 14 day waiting period before grazing or harvesting. Labeled for small grains.

Malathion 57% and Malathion ULV. Fall armyworm and grasshoppers. Zero days to harvest or grazing**.** No small grain label for armyworms.

Intrepid 2F. Fall armyworm (not grasshoppers). Begin applications when first signs of armyworm feedings appear. Use higher rates for heavier infestations. Do not harvest hay within 7 days of application. No pre-harvest interval for forage. 0 days to grazing. Labeled for small grains.

Tracer. Treat when armyworm eggs hatch or when larvae are small. Use higher rates for larger larvae. Do not graze until spray is dry. Do not harvest hay or fodder for 3 days after treatment. Do not allow cattle to graze until spray has dried. Labeled for small grains.

Comanche County

Upcoming Programs

Central Texas Irrigation Summit

This program will be held on December 12th, location and time are to be announced. This will be an in-depth irrigation program and modest trade show. Topics covered will include: precision irrigation, site specific irrigation, center pivot control systems, variable rate injecting, subsurface drip irrigation advantages and disadvantages, drip irrigation components, crop requirements, and more. While we do not yet have all the details ironed out, we do have several excellent speakers scheduled to cover these topics. If you irrigate or ever plan to irrigate you will want to get this program on your calendar.

Southwest Dairy Day

We are fortunate to be hosting the Southwest Dairy Day (SWDD) at Wildcat Dairy here in Comanche County this year on October 18th. The SWDD is an excellent opportunity to showcase not only the dairy industry, but also Comanche County. This is a big event that should fill the hotels and eating establishments. Even if you have nothing to do with the dairy industry I would encourage you to come out and tour the dairy, and learn about the importance of the dairy industry in Comanche County and Central Texas. We will have more information coming up.

Comanche Cow-Calf Clinic

We are going to change things up a little for this year's clinic. Rather than have a night program and go late and miss all the football games we are going to try an afternoon program on November 9th at 12:00 until 3:00 or so. The program will be held at the Comanche Community Center. Currently we have Dr. Sonja Swiger scheduled to talk about parasites and Range Specialist James Jackson talking about brush and weed management. We will have a sponsored meal. It looks like we will be offering 2 CEU's. Please watch for more information in the next couple of months.

Farm and Ranch Program

The Texas Pesticide Law requires that a person may not use a restricted-use or state-limited-use pesticides or regulated herbicides unless licensed or certified by the Texas Department of Agriculture. All applicators must obtain continuing education units (CEU's) to renew their license.

Private Applicators License must obtain 15 hours of CEU's every five years to renew/recertify their license. These hours must be from 2 hours of Laws and Regulations, 2 hours of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), and any mix of these and General hours to equal the required 15 hours of CEU's. Licensed commercial and non-commercial applicators are required to recertify every year by obtaining five continuing education credits; with one credit each from two of the following categories: laws and regulations, integrated pest management or drift minimization.

Once again we will be offering the opportunity to get a lot of CEU's in one day. The program will be held on Thursday, December 7th, 2017. We do not have the final agenda completed, but you can expect 7 or 8 CEU's, with IPM, law & regulation and general hours being offered. Commercial and non-commercial license holders will be able to obtain all of their needed hours for license renewal with the first 5 hours of the program.

Annie's Project: Risk Management, Decision-Making Focus of Program

New U.S. census data indicates the number of Texas women managing farms has grown by 10 percent since 2007, and a nationally awarded workshop series is scheduled for Stephenville to help empower them through shared experiences, according to an expert. Annie's Project is an educational program dedicated to strengthening women's roles in modern farm and ranch enterprises, said Dr. Jason Johnson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service economist, Stephenville. The series will be offered in six sessions, from 6-9 p.m. each Thursday evening beginning Sept. 7 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 1229 N. U.S. Highway 281, Stephenville. The class will meet on Sept. 7, 14 and 21, and Oct. 5, 12 and 19. Cost of the program is $50 per person for the entire series, and class size is limited to 30 to facilitate discussion among participants, he said. Registration slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Meals and refreshments will be provided at each session. The conference is sponsored by AgriLife Extension, with program support provided by Farm Credit Bank of Texas.

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, women now manage 15 percent of the nation's farms and about 38,500 farms in Texas. "The program is based on the experiences of farm women who spend their lifetime learning how to be an involved business manager or partner with their farm husbands and other family members," Johnson said. "The reality is that over 90 percent of farm women usually end up managing their personal and farm business finances at some point in their lives as a result of death, divorce or disability." Speakers will include a variety of local professionals, practitioners and experts from AgriLife Extension, Texas Farm Bureau, the U.S. Department of Agriculture -Farm Service Agency and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service including an agricultural attorney, family financial management specialist and a registered investment advisor. Participants will receive training in critical decision-making and information addressing the management of production risks, marketing risks, financial risks, personnel risks and estate planning.

Interested participants can request a brochure and registration form by contacting Johnson at 254-968-4144 The registration form is also available at http://stephenville.tamu.edu by clicking on the Annie's Project link.

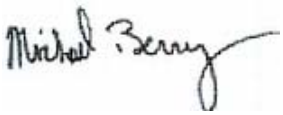
Additional information about the program and how other farm women nationally have benefitted is available at: http://www.anniesproject.org.

"Often farming women do not feel comfortable in the coffee shop network that is so familiar to farm and ranch men," Johnson said. "Annie's project provides a place where farm women can learn both from the perspectives of local agricultural professionals as well as the experiences of other workshop members without the pressure of sales pitches or solicitations."

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

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

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



Michael Berry
County Extension Agent
Agriculture/ Natural Resources
Comanche County

Small Grains Workshop

We are fortunate to have Clark Neely, Texas AgriLife Extension Small Grain Specialist, and Daniel Hathcoat, Small Grain Research Associate, speaking at this program. Topics covered will include: small grain varieties for grazing, silage and harvesting. Nutrient management, and diseases issues and options will also be discussed. We now have several years of small grain grazing research here in the county. We will be sharing that information to help you make planting decisions. The program will be on Friday August 25th at the Comanche Community Center and will run from 12:00 noon until 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be sponsored by our excellent local agriculture businesses. 2 CEU's will be offered.

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