

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- Multi County  
CEU Program
- Effect of  
Drought on  
Perennial  
Grasses
- Texas Agricul-  
tural Sales  
Tax Number

**INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE:**

**Pecan Show 2**

**Selecting 2  
Show Pecans**

**Effects of 3  
Drought**

**TX Ag Sales 4  
Tax Exemp.**

# Erath Ag Update

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

NOVEMBER, 2011

## CEU—Program—8 hours offered

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 holders 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.

There will be Mass CEU Seminar hosted at ten locations across Texas AgriLife Extension District 8 on Thursday, December 8 2011. This seminar will offer eight (8) CEU's for the private applicator license and certificate holders. The approved credit hours are: five and one-half (5 ½) hours General, one and one-half (1 ½) hours Laws and Regulation, and one (1) IPM hour. 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.

Topics and speakers include: Pasture Management During and After the Drought-Dr. Larry Redmon, State Extension Forage Specialist; Feral Hog Control Update – Dr. James Cathey, State Extension Wildlife Specialist; Controlling Lice, Ticks and Flies in the Cow Herd – Dr. Sonja Swiger, District 8 Extension Entomologist; Disease Control Treatments on Drought Stressed Texas Trees – Dr. Dave Appel, Extension Program leader for Plant Pathology and Microbiology; Strategies for Weed & Brush Control on Rangeland During the Current Drought – Dr. Charles Hart, Extension Program Leader for Ecosystem Science and Management; Farm Pond Weed Control and Management During the Current Drought – Dr. Michael Masser, Extension Program Leader for Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences.

Persons interested in attending one of these programs on December 8 must register before December 5 by calling the location and corresponding County Extension Office listed below. You must pre-register to guarantee a spot in the program. The cost of registration is \$50, which includes lunch.

For more information and to register for the program contact the Erath County Extension Office at 254-865-1460.

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or other accommodation in order to participate in Extension sponsored events are encouraged to contact the County Extension office one week in advance to determine how reasonable accommodations may be made.

## Annual Pecan Show

The Comanche County Pecan Committee invites pecan producers as well homeowners in the surrounding counties with pecan trees to enter and participate in the 2011 Comanche County Pecan Show on Friday, December 2nd at 8:30 a.m. at the Comanche Community Center with judging beginning as soon as we complete the processing of pecans.

Entries will be accepted from pecan growers in Comanche and surrounding areas but the pecans must have been grown during this year and by the person entering.

Pecan entries need to be dropped off at the Comanche County Extension Office or the Erath County Extension Office by 5:00 p.m. on November 30th or at the Comanche Community Center between 7:45 and 8:30 a.m. on Friday, December 2nd so that we can begin processing the pecan entries.

A pecan entry must have a minimum of 45 nuts and be labeled with a variety name, exhibitor name, address, and phone number. Growers are limited to one entry of each variety but there is no limit on numbers of entries of seedling or native pecans.

Pecan entries will be processed starting at 8:30 a.m. and judging will take place as soon as we are finished processing on December 2nd at the Comanche Community Center. Pecan exhibitors and all others interested are invited and encouraged to help with this very important part of the Pecan Show. If you have any questions, please contact Whit at 254-965-1460.

## Tips for Selecting Pecans for Show

Here are some tips for selecting the best pecans for show:

Make selections from young trees because they usually produce heavier and bigger nuts than older trees. Pick nuts from trees with a light pecan crop to ensure an above average kernel percentage. Harvest immediately following nut drop to prevent pecan kernels from rotting when soils are wet and to preserve a light color. Sunlight darkens kernel color. Do not alter nut appearance by polishing or rubbing. Select nuts that are uniform in size because this is a judging criterion. Keep your samples refrigerated until the pecan show. Be sure your sample includes only nuts of one variety. Submit a minimum of 45 nuts. You wouldn't believe how many samples are thrown out for too few pecans to judge. It takes 40 for the county, 30 for regional and state when you crack 10 for display. We use the extra five locally to ensure the best samples on to regional.

## Effects of Drought on Plant Growth

As we all know the drought has a huge impact on forage availability. Plants need moisture to grow and develop, that is no secret but how does the drought and lack of moisture actually effect the plant?

First it is important to note that things such as soil type, temperature and vegetation type will all play a role in how the drought effects the plant. In addition each producers management plan for current and past grazing strategies will impact the severity of a drought. Keeping this in mind it is impossible to provide a one shot management plan that will fit everyone's needs so it becomes important for people to understand what is exactly taking place during drought conditions.

When we talk about warm season, perennial grasses such as coastal, Tifton or even native bunchgrasses we think of forages that will grow roughly six to nine months each year. These grasses will green up or break dormancy sometime in the early to mid spring and in an effort to do so they must draw upon energy reserves (carbohydrates) that were stored in the roots from the previous year. According to Dr. Larry Redmon, Extension Forage Specialist, "20 percent or more of the current year's growth will occur using these stored reserves before the plant stops using reserve, begins to fully photosynthesize, and maintain itself with mature leaves produced during the current season". This year plants are going into the fall/winter season with low energy reserves because of the stress placed upon them during the growing season. This will cause the plant to be at a higher risk for damage from diseases, insect pressure or grazing pressure.

Root development is the most crucial part of growing quality forages. Fifty to eighty percent of the plant actual lives below the ground so when excessive grazing, drought pressure, insect pressure or some other type of top removal takes place without the opportunity for quick and adequate top regrowth the root system weakens and begins to diminish. One good practice to follow is to take a sharp shooter into the field with you and dig down to look at the development of the root system. If you do not have healthy, bright white roots that are moving deep into the soil profile you are not receiving the full benefit of your forage plants and you need to begin developing a management plan to improve the root system.

### **Important factors for perennial grasses:**

- This past growing season was shortened due to lack of moisture. When growth begins this spring grass will be slow to respond based on reduced energy reserves.
- In addition to drought stress if plants were heavily grazed they will be even slower to respond once adequate moisture is present and depending on severity of overgrazing some plant loss could occur.
- If a cold, dry winter occurs we could see some plant loss occur because of the weakened and/or shallow root system.
- Annual forbes (weeds) can adapt easily to dry conditions by remaining in the seed stage until favorable conditions are present for emergence. Many of these annuals will be the first plants to emerge following drought conditions. Be sure and identify annual plants or determine if they are favorable or not. Annual forbes will compete with perennial grasses for available moisture and can delay the production of grasses. Chemical or mechanical control of these forbes may be needed.
- Drought conditions will play a role in the nutrient value of the grasses being produced for hay or grazing. Adjust supplemental feeding strategies to meet the maintenance requirements of the livestock feeding from the forage.
- Plants with a healthy root system will recover from drought conditions much faster than plants severely stressed or struggling to survive. Develop a fertilizer program based on soil test reports that will help develop a healthy root system.



### **Texas AgriLife Extension Service**

Erath County Courthouse Annex  
112 West College Street, Room 109  
Stephenville, TX 76401-4214

Phone: 254-965-1460  
Fax: 254-965-1472  
E-mail: [w-weems@tamu.edu](mailto:w-weems@tamu.edu)

### **NEW SALES TAX EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER OPERATIONS**

House Bill 268, passed during the 82nd Regular Legislative Session (2011), requires that a person claiming an exemption from sales tax on the purchase of certain items used in the production of agricultural and timber products must provide a registration numbers issued by the Comptroller of Public Accounts on the exemption certificate issued to the seller.

For more information visit:

[www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/ag\\_timber\\_exemption.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/ag_timber_exemption.html)

Or

[www.getreadytexas.org](http://www.getreadytexas.org)



#### **Texas AgriLife Extension Service**

Erath County  
Courthouse Annex  
112 W College St., Rm 109  
Stephenville, TX 76401

