

# ERATH COUNTY AG PRODUCERS NEWS

erath.agrilife.org

Volume 2 | Issue 1

February | 2013

## Pond Vegetation Workshop Pond & Lake Management

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Erath County will be hosting a Pond Vegetation Workshop on **March 12th** at the **Stephenville Club Lake** located off Hwy 281 in Stephenville.

**Registration is \$10.00** per participant, and will begin at 9:30 a.m. The program will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at noon.

Steven Bardin with Texas Pro Lake Management will discuss pond vegetation and control options. During his discussion we will provide a demonstration on the proper ways to make herbicide application to pond vegetation.

Participants are encouraged to RSVP by Friday, March 8th so that we can have an accurate count for program materials. You can RSVP at <http://erath.agrilife.org> or 254-965-1460.

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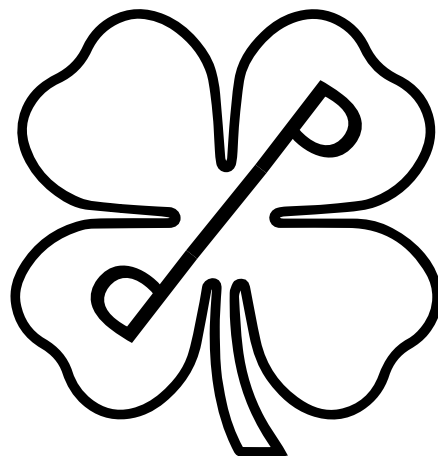
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**TUESDAY**

**12**

**MARCH 2013**

### UPCOMING BEEF PROGRAMS



**From the Pasture to the Packer Program -**

**MARCH 7th & MARCH 29th**

See page 2 & 3 for details.


**Texas Beef Quality Producers Program -**

**MAY 3rd**

See page 4 for details.

### FROM THE PASTURE TO THE PACKER

#### A LIVE MARKET CATTLE AND CARCASS QUALITY EVALUATION PROGRAM



**ERATH COUNTY  
PASTURE TO PACKER**

**RSVP by March 5th**  
at [erath.agrilife.org](http://erath.agrilife.org)  
or 254-965-1460  
or [erath-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:erath-tx@tamu.edu)

**FROM THE PASTURE TO THE PACKER**  
A Live Market Cattle and Carcass Quality Evaluation Program

**March 7th**  
12 noon  
at TX A&M AgriLife  
Research & Ext. Center

- Sponsored meal
- Classroom discussion by Dr. Jason Johnson & Dr. Randy Harp
- Evaluate live steers at TSU Ag Farm

**March 29th**  
12 noon  
at TSU Ag Farm

- Sponsored meal
- Dr. Jason Sawyer will provide discussion on each carcass of cattle that were evaluated on March 7th

**Registration fee: \$15**  
(covers both days)

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Erath County will host "From the Pasture to the Packer", a Live Market Cattle and Carcass Quality Evaluation Program on March 7th and March 29th.

Over the past 150 days, eleven Erath County 4-H members have been busy feeding out a commercial steer for the new Earth County Pasture to Packer Program. This program started with the goal to educate youth on all facets of producing beef from the financial requirements, to the selection of feeder steers, to nutritional

requirements, and will wrap up with evaluating the carcass traits of their steers and marketing the beef to the consumer.

This program provides an opportunity to bring in beef cattle producers to view the live cattle and return later to evaluate the carcass traits of those steers.

The event will be a two part program taking place March. The first program, held on March 7th will begin at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at noon with a

sponsored meal followed by classroom discussion.

Dr. Jason Johnson, Extension Ag Economist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will discuss the current beef cattle market trends and volatility in the current market followed by Dr. Randy Harp in the department of Animal Science at Tarleton State University who will discuss evaluating live cattle and current trends in livestock marketing.

We will then travel to Tarleton State University Ag Farm and evaluate a

## FROM THE PASTURE TO THE PACKER CONTINUED

set of live steers provided by the Erath County 4-H Pasture to Packer Program that are scheduled to be harvested the following day. The program should conclude by 3:30.

The second program will be held on March 29th at the Tarleton State University Meats Lab located on College Farm Road at the TSU Ag Farm. A meal will be offered at noon followed by the program. Dr. Jason Sawyer with Tarleton State University Meats Lab will provide discussion on each of the carcasses of the cattle that were evaluated

on March 7th.

The registration fee is \$15.00 and covers both the March 7th and March 29th programs. Meals provided by local sponsors.

**Please RSVP by March 5th** so that we can have an accurate count for the meal and any program materials provided.

**RSVP at 254-965-1460 or**  
**erath-tx@tamu.edu or**  
**<http://erath.agrilife.org/fp2p>**

**Anyone interested in learning more about the Erath Pasture to Packer Program or interested in purchasing beef from one of the 4-H youth participants, please contact Whit Weems at the Extension Office at 254-965-1460 or [w-weems@tamu.edu](mailto:w-weems@tamu.edu).**



Erath County 4-H Pasture to Packer participants on fieldtrip to Cattle Empire in Kansas.

## economics of ESTROUS SYNCH & TIMED AI

A total of 582 suckled beef cows at 8 locations in 2 regions were synchronized using the CO-Synch + CIDR protocol followed by timed artificial insemination. At the same locations, 615 cows were exposed to natural service without synchronization to serve as controls. Cows were of British, Continental, or British-Continental background. Both groups were exposed to bulls, 12 hours after the last cow from the treatment group had been Aled, for periods of 42 to 69 days depending on the location.

Calf crop percentage (calves weaned/cow exposed to breeding) averaged 84% for the Aled group and 78% for controls. Average calf weaning weight was 38 lb heavier for the Aled group. (The authors presumed this was at least partly due to higher genetics for weaning weight for the AI sires, but no data were available.) Costs for the Aled group were lower due to fewer bulls required for cleanup, compared to bulls needed for the control group. Calves were valued at \$121/cwt. Overall, the Aled group returned \$49.14 more per exposed cow.

*From TAMU Beef Cattle Browsing Newsletter, Dr. Steve Hammack (J. Animal Sci. 90:4055; Univ. of Minnesota, Mississippi St. Univ., Univ. of Florida, North Dakota St. Univ.)*





## I'll bet the beef is good.

**It had better be. The Texas Beef Quality Producer program is all about the food.**

The TBQP program was developed to assist cattlemen in producing a safer, more wholesome food product. Better beef management practices help deliver a better meal for the all-important consumer. Get ready to participate in an upcoming Texas Beef Quality Producer training near you.

The TBQP program is built upon a proven system of Best Management Practices. This half-day session allows producers to become BQA trained. You should get your seat reserved now because producers are finding the benefits go well beyond the ranch gate... through the livestock market, to the feedyard and most importantly, all the way to the consumer.

Our nation's Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) programs are vital. They help cattlemen give the consumer a wholesome eating experience – even with market cows and bulls. And a good eating experience with beef brings the consumer back for more.

Call or go online to RSVP for your seat.

Stacy Fox, TSCRA, [sfox@tscra.org](mailto:sfox@tscra.org)

**800-242-7820 • [www.texasbeefquality.com](http://www.texasbeefquality.com)**

**A collaborative effort of:**



### **Next Event: Stephenville, Texas - May 3, 2013**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Research and Extension Center

1229 N Hwy 281

Stephenville, TX 76401

Registration - 9:30 a.m.

Program - 10:00 a.m.

Program should conclude around 3:00 pm

Lunch is included

Sponsored by



Please RSVP to:

TSCRA at 800-242-7820 or the Erath Co. Extension Office at 254-965-1460



Training programs cover Beef Quality Assurance, industry updates, record keeping, environmental stewardship and proper management practices associated with genetic selection, cattle handling, culling, vaccination, drug use and more.



## REMINDER: New TX ID began JAN. 1, 2013

Beginning January 1, 2013, by virtue of a Texas Animal Health Commission ruling, all adult cattle in Texas must have an approved form of permanent identification in place **at any change of ownership**. This includes sexually intact beef cattle 18 months older and above, and Mexican-origin event cattle. Not included are nursing calves, steers, spayed heifers, bulls, heifers under 18 months (unless they are about to calve), and cattle moved directly to slaughter.

### Forms of official identification that are currently approved by TAHC for this purpose:

- USDA alphanumeric National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags (USDA silver metal ear tags)
- USDA brucellosis calfhood vaccination tags (USDA orange RFID and alphanumeric metal ear tags)

- o 840-prefix RFID tags (if premises location is registered)

- o 840-prefix non-RFID tags (if premises location is registered)

- A commercially produced cattle-style clip, flap or button tag (if owner and individual animal is identified)

Tattoos and brands that are not part of breed association registration procedures are not approved forms of ID. A database of official ID numbers assigned will be maintained by TAHC, but there will be no tracking required of individual changes of ownership.

For those preferring to use USDA metal tags, TAHC will provide free tags and pliers. They may be obtained from local TAHC field staff or USDA-APHIS

**For more info contact Texas Animal Health Commission at (512) 719-0710 or visit [www.tahc.state.tx.us](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us)**

- Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) tags, including 9-digit American ID number
- Official breed association registration tattoo (unique to the animal)
- Official breed association registration freeze or fire brand (unique to the animal)
- USDA approved 15-digit Animal Identification Number (AIN) tags including:
  - o 900-series RFID tags if traceable to herd owner
  - o USA prefix RFID tags

Veterinary Services representatives. Some interested veterinary practitioners will also have tags available. In addition, tags and pliers will be available from most Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension offices.

For more information contact Texas Animal Health Commission at (512) 719-0710 or [www.tahc.state.tx.us](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us).

## THANK YOU — TO OUR — PASTURE TO PACKER SPONSORS

### Platinum Sponsors



### Gold Sponsors

**ADM Nutrition**  
**Elanco Animal Health**

### Silver Sponsors

**Hay & Feed Ranch**  
**Cornerstone Animal Hospital**  
**Pfizer Animal Health**  
**Beverly Gifford | Bar L Ranch**  
**Joe Paul & Mark McCullough**  
**Cattle Empire | Texas Beef Council**

### Bronze Sponsors

**Erath County Farm Bureau**  
**Gorman Milling**  
**Mid Texas Veterinary Associates, PC**

### Supporters:

**ABS Global**  
**MultiMin USA**

## IS YOUR DIRT RICH? THE VALUE OF SOIL SAMPLING

By Ashlee Krebs,  
Ag Extension Intern at TSU

As spring approaches and we prepare for the crops to be planted, many new additions will arrive in our livestock herds and the hopes of a good yield grow. The question arises if you have done all that is needed for that harvest. While today's economy gets harder for many, farmers and their families feel the burden of finding ways to keep the green in their fields and their wallets. Farmers may be concerned about what the drought will mean to their pastures, crops, and hay production. One method that is easily forgotten that can save time and money is soil sampling. Some may have never sampled their land, while others do so religiously.

Soil sampling is one facet of agriculture that tends to go unnoticed by many today, even though the knowledge gained from it can make a huge difference in crop production, while it takes such little time and investment. Soil is one of the most important aspects of agriculture, no matter if one is growing forages, row crops, or livestock. It all starts from the ground – up!

Soil samples determine what nutrients and minerals are in the soil by taking many samples throughout the field, and it takes only a matter of days for the results to come back. There are many types of soil analysis that can be done, with prices ranging from \$10 to \$74. The routine soil test, which is a broad test that is used to develop a soil program, is only \$10. That's quite a small investment compared to the potential gain from using the soil recommendations that are given in the soil analysis report. Without a soil test, a person can only guess at the type and amount of fertilizer their land needs, and most likely they will either over or under-apply.

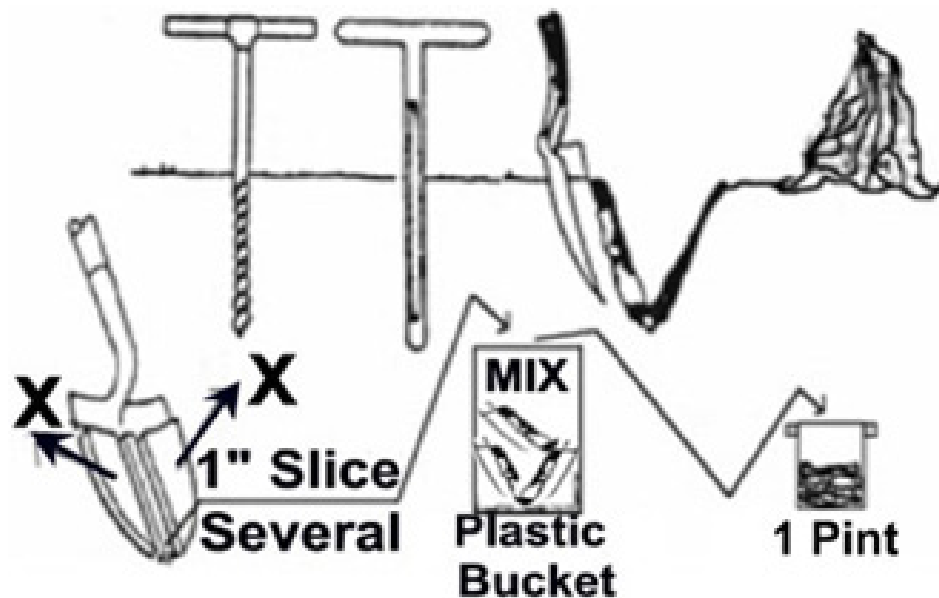


Figure 1

Here is how to correctly do a soil sample. First, a soil sample bag needs to be picked up from the County Extension Office. Then, correct tools are needed (trowel, spade, auger, or tube) to collect the sample. Whatever tool is used, it needs to be able to cut through the ground and slice 3 to 9 inches from the surface. Most ground that does not have limited rainfall, or top soil build up, can use the first 6 inches of the ground. The sample to be sent in for analysis needs to be 1 pint of soil composite, but at least 10-15 samples should be collected first. (See Figure 1). The more samples collected the better the report! The best way is to determine the field that is being sampled, and go in a pattern (zig zag, X, random, etc.) throughout your field. To get the best results stay away from the

fence, gates, or heavy traveled areas. Using a bucket to collect the samples first, and then mixing the dirt is the best way to get a composite sample. Once the core or slice of soil is collected, allow it to air dry. Then fill the soil sample bag with 1 pint of soil, and send it in!

In the soil sample results, it will give a breakdown of what nutrients are in the soil, what nutrients are not, and how to correct the soil for optimal soil fertility. If the soil recommendation is followed, then an increase in soil productivity and crop yield are to be expected. These practices make farmers better at managing their fertilizer programs, enhance their soil's fertility, and give them a better harvest.

**For more information on how to obtain a soil sample, come by the Erath County Extension Office, or visit <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu> for additional information.**



## APHIDS IN SMALL GRAINS

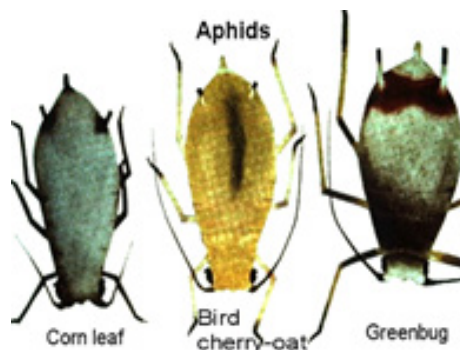
BY DR. JUSTIN TUGGLE  
CROP DOCS

**The problem we have this year is the aphids are transmitting Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus, and in this year the virus is very active and causing much damage... plus acts as a reservoir for other aphids to transmit the virus. - Dr. Justin Tuggle**

I wanted to let you know that we are seeing an aphid problem occurring up in northern Comanche and Erath counties. The problem is the Bird Cherry Oat Aphid for now. This is different than the aphid which we usually see which is the Russian wheat aphid (Greenbug).

There are thresholds for damage which occur for the aphid to justify treatment, but the problem we have this year is the aphids are transmitting Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus and in this year the virus is very active and causing much damage (yellows base of plants -wheat, triticale, oats, ryegrass, barley) first and then the virus spreads up the leaf in the plant plus acts as a reservoir for other aphids to transmit the virus. When it advances, the virus will yellow the tops of the plants and the lower leaves will turn brown and die.

The product used to control aphids is common, but there is a 14 day re-entry before harvest. We have some fields rapidly declining due to this problem.



Here is a picture of the aphids. They are about 1/32 of inch as babies so you have to get up close to plants to see them. As mature aphids they are about a 1/16 to 1/8 inch. You need to check four to five spots in two or three different places in the field to make sure you don't have a problem. They can show up in some fields and not in others. You have to be careful when pulling samples. to look at them as you can dislodge them by shaking the plants too much. Pull up a handful from the root base and closely examine the entire plants from base of soil up to top of leaf. The juveniles are sometimes translucent to opaque and hard to see as they are 1/32 to 1/16".

## ORCHARD Propagation & Management WORKSHOP

**Do you have an interest in growing fruit trees, pecans, or grapes?**

If so, this program is an excellent opportunity for you to learn more about management of pecans, fruits and grapes. Womack Nursery and Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service have teamed up to offer an Orchard Propagation and Management Workshop on

**April 17, 2013**  
at the Nursery in DeLeon, TX.

The program will cover propagation of plants including budding and grafting fruit and pecan trees along with discussions on management of grapes, pecans and fruit trees.

The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. at Womack Nursery located 2551 State Hwy. 6 between DeLeon and Gorman.

For more information or to register for the program contact the Erath County Extension Office at 254-965-1460 or Comanche County Extension Office at 325-356-2539.





Texas AgriLife Extension Service programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in Extension activities are encouraged to contact us at 254-965-1460 to determine how reasonable accommodations may be made.

## ERATH COUNTY GROUNDWATER SYMPOSIUM

AT MIDDLE TRINITY GROUDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Erath County and the Middle Trinity Groundwater Conservation District have teamed up to offer the  
**2013 Erath County Groundwater Symposium**  
on

**April 18, 2013.**

The groundwater symposium will begin with:

Registration at  
**1:15 p.m.**

and the program will begin promptly at  
**1:30 p.m.**

Topics covered will include:

- Current Trends in Aquifer Levels
- Water Quality Analysis
- Water Testing Options
- Current Laws and Regulations relating to active and inactive water wells
- Legislative Updates related to water
- Voluntary Metering Program

We ask that you please **pre-register** by contacting the Erath County Extension Office at **254-965-1460** or **erath-tx@tamu.edu** or register online at <http://erath.agrilife.org>



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*For more information on any of the articles or activities listed in this newsletter, please contact the Erath County Extension Office at 254-965-1460 or visit us on the web at: [erath.agrilife.org](http://erath.agrilife.org)*

**TEXAS WATER DAY AT THE CAPITOL 2013**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2013**

SAVE THE DATE



[cbaker@texaswater.org](mailto:cbaker@texaswater.org)

**JOIN US FOR EXHIBITS, WORKSHOP & LUNCH**



Whit H. Weems, Ed. D  
County Extension Agent  
Ag & Natural Resources