Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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ERATH COUNTY AG PRODUCERS NEWS

erath.agrilife.org

Volume 5 | Issue 1

Spring 2016

Cross Timbers Brush Management Symposium

Offering 3 CEUs to licensed private applicators

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will host a symposium on May 12, 2016 to bring the latest information in the science & practices of brush management on rangeland to the Cross Timbers area.

TOPICS :

- Rangeland Herbicides - Where we go in the future
- Changing Dietary Habits of Livestock to Improve Use of Unwanted Plants
- Brush Management Economics
- Brush Management with Fire and Keeping Wildlife in Mind
- Dow AgroSciences Brush Management in Texas
- Weed and Brush Management from Bayer Crop Sciences

3 CEUs for private and commercial applicator license holders will be offered.

The symposium will be held in Erath County at City Hall, 1907 E Washington, Stephenville, TX 76401.

The cost of registration is $40, which includes lunch. Sign-in will start at 8:30 AM with program to follow at 9:00 AM. Booths will close and the symposium should end by 4:30 PM.

Please pre-register by Tuesday, May 10th!

Call **254-965-1460** or send email to **erath-tx@tamu.edu**

IN THIS Issue

Quality Silage
--- from harvest to feed

March 17, 2016
12 pm - 4 pm

Dublin Rotary Building
Highway 6, E & N Grafton Street

2 DOPA credits

Guest speaker: Dr. Chuck Grimes
- Dairy Nutrition & Forage Management consultant

FREE lunch & program

Agenda

12 - 1 pm : Lunch & Sponsor Updates

1 - 2 pm : Planting the right crop to harvesting and handling

2 - 3 pm : Storage and feeding to insure a quality product

3 - 3:30 pm : Producer Panel (Frank Brand, Comanche; Jay Procter, Lingleville; Dr. Chuck Grimes)

3:30 - 4 pm : Wrap-up

Guest Speaker:

- Dr. Chuck Grimes - *Dairy Nutrition/ Forage Management Consultant based in Southwest Kansas - over 35 years of experience helping producers make and feed the highest quality silage possible*

2 DOPA Credits offered

Lunch & program provided to you at no cost by our sponsors

No registration required.

Hosted by:

Comanche, Erath and Hamilton Counties
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

CROSS TIMBERS

Brush Management

SYMPOSIUM

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Bringing the latest information in the science and practices of Brush Management on Rangeland to the Cross Timbers Area

This event will highlight where the future of the industry is headed, economics of brush management on rangelands, brush management for wildlife, industry updates and alternative management practices.

Agenda

8:30	Registration
9:00	Rangeland herbicides where we go in the Future
9:45	Changing Dietary habits of live stock to improve use of unwanted plants:
10:15	Break/Booth Visitation
10:45	Brush Management Economics
11:45	Lunch
1:00	Brush Management with Fire and Keeping Wildlife in Mind
1:45	Dow AgroSciences Brush Management in Texas
2:45	Break
3:00 from	Weed and Brush Management Bayer Crop Sciences
4:00	Evaluation and Wrap up
4:30	Booths Close

Date and Time:

May 12, 2016—
9:00am—4:30pm
Registration will begin at 8:30

Location

City Hall
1907 E Washington
Stephenville TX

Registration

Registration Fee is $40/person

Information Available at your Local County Extension Office

Pre-Registration Encouraged
Lunch will be provided

CEU's

3—Agriculture

2—General, 1—IPM

Texas Agritourism Act

Rio Grande River near Presidio, TX. Sept. 2014. Canopy dieback & tree death due to repeated feeding during 5 years by saltcreek beetles. (photo by A.M. Hilscher)

As was briefly mentioned in this prior legislative recap post, Texas now has a new statute offering liability protection for agritourism operations. The Act, carried as SB 610 and now codified as Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code Chapter 75A, offers important protections of which landowners need to be aware.

The statute provides that an "agritourism entity" is not liable to any person for injury or damages to an "agritourism participant" if: (1) the required signage is posted; or (2) a written agreement containing required language is obtained.

Let's break this statute down to discuss each requirement.

Summary and Key Take Home Points

(1) This statute offers free limited liability if the requirements are met. Any Texas landowner or occupant who allows persons to make recreational or educational use of their property should carefully review the statute and ensure its protections apply. The broad language of the statute's definitions of "agricultural land" and "recreational activity" will likely cover a number of operations. Importantly, this protection will apply to persons injured while hunting on property.

(2) Agritourism entities should comply with at least one (if not both) of the requirements regarding signage and written agreements. There are potential advantages to both. The signs could be useful if additional persons are on the property who did not sign the waiver form. For example, if your neighbor signs the required release form but then brings his wife along to hunt, the signs would be very important if the wife were injured and had not signed the form. On the other hand, the wavier form specifically states that it applies to minors, whereas the signs do not. The most prudent course would, obviously, be to have both signs and the signed document.

Agritourism

CONTINUED

(3) This statute expressly states that it is in addition to other limitations of liability. Thus, protections of other statutes such as the Farm Animal Liability Act (read about that here and here) or the Recreational Use Statute (read about that here) will still apply. Again, the most prudent course would be to ensure any and all statutes that could potentially apply do apply.

(4) This statutory protection is not unlimited and may not prevent an entity from being sued. Lawsuits can certainly still be filed by agritourism participant making claims that at least one of the exceptions listed above applies. For example, an injured person could certainly file suit and argue that his or her injuries were caused by a dangerous condition of which the landowner knew. This type of allegation would likely be sufficient to allow a lawsuit to proceed into the discovery phase. Because of this, it is important that all landowners, particularity those engaged in agritourism activities, obtain liability insurance that covers the specific activities on the land.

For more information and breakdown of the law go to our Extension Ag Law Specialist, Tiffany Dowell blog at: http://agrilife.org/texasaglaw/2016/02/01/texas-agritourism-act/

CowPoopAnalyzer

This new app is available to help cattle producers estimate forage quality for livestock on pastures and maintain records. After taking a photo of the "typical" fecal pat in a pasture, pat can be compared to several different stock photos to determine the approximate crude protein and digestibility of forage cattle are consuming. You'll never look at cow poop the same again! This information can be saved with a title and pasture name and a date will automatically be assigned for future reference. This mobile app is based on the Extension publication (E-541) 'Forage Quality Photo Guide' by Drs. Lyons, Machen, and Stuth - still available on the bookstore website.

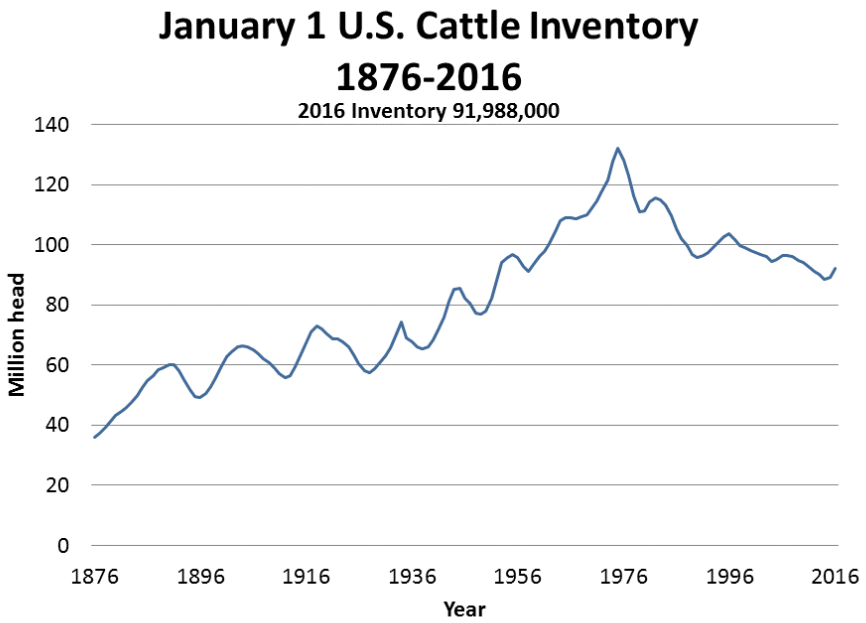
Android version: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.poopanalyzer

Apple version: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/

Cattle Numbers Increase

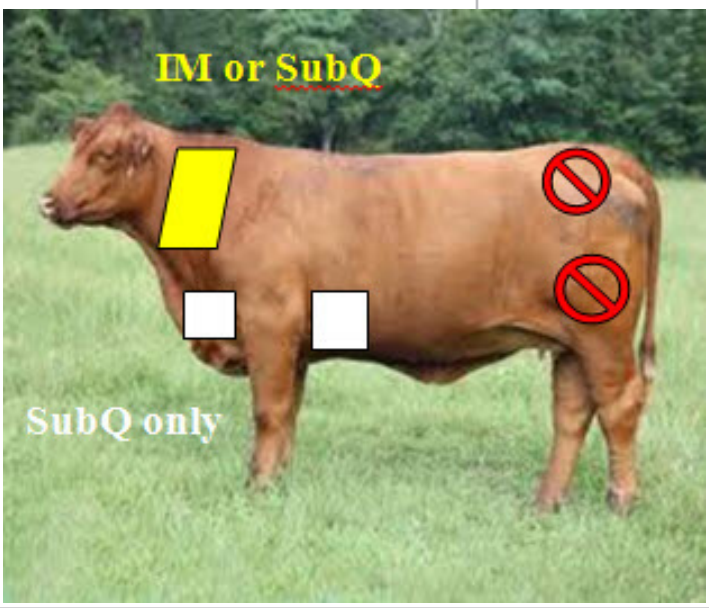
March 25, 2015

According to the USDA, total cattle numbers in the U. S. on January 1, were 92 million head, up 3% from a year ago. As the graph below shows, cattle numbers increased over 100 years, reaching a peak of 132 million head in 1975. Over that period, numbers increased and then declined in about a 10-year cycle. Also, peak numbers in a cycle were always higher than the previous high, and low numbers were never as low as the previous low. That changed in 1975. Since then, peak numbers in a cycle have not reached the previous high and low numbers have been less than the previous low. Beef cow numbers were 30.3 million, up 4% from last year. Experts predict numbers will increase for several years. How much, for how long, and with what effect remains to be seen.



USDA-NASS
1-29-2016

BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) Tip of the Month



Give all intramuscular (IM) injections in the neck and give subcutaneous (SubQ) in either the neck, dewlap, or elbow pocket, as shown below. This will eliminate injection-site lesions in more valuable carcass cuts while still effectively utilizing animal health products.

Bermudagrass Stem Maggot

A BIOLOGICAL CONTROL AGENT FOR PRICKLY PEAR BECOMES AN INVASIVE PEST IN NORTH AMERICA - by Allen Knutson

The bermudagrass stem maggot (BSM) is a new pest of bermudagrass hay fields and pasture. The larva or maggot feeds in the top shoots of the bermudagrass, causing the top 2-3 leaves to turn brown or white. This damage gives the field an appearance of being frosted. The BSM was first reported from Texas in 2013 in Van Zandt, Comanche and Lavaca counties and since then it has been reported from many areas in east and central Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast. The bermudagrass stem maggot is native to south Asia and was first reported in the United States in Georgia in 2010. This pest only infests bermudagrass and stargrass (*Cynodon* spp.).

The adult stage of the BSM is a small, yellow fly, which lays its eggs on the stem of the bermudagrass plant. Once the egg hatches, the maggot moves to the last (top) node on the stem, burrows into the shoot and consumes the plant material within the stem. This stem damage results in the death of the top two to three leaves while the rest of the plant remains green. As a result, damaged fields appear frosted. Cutting open the stem just below these dead leaves will reveal the tunnel created by the maggot and possibly the maggot.

The full-grown maggot is yellowish and about 1/8 inch long. Once the maggot completes feeding, it drops to the ground and enters the pupa stage. The adult fly later emerges from the pupae. It is difficult to find the maggot as they often complete feeding and leave the stem before the upper leaves turn white or brown.

The life cycle from egg to adult fly requires about 3-4 weeks, and there are several generations a year.

The shoot stops elongating as a result of the maggot's feeding damage.

In response, the plant may grow another shoot from a lower node of the damaged shoot. The impact of maggot feeding on yield loss seems to be dependent on growing conditions as well as the point during regrowth when the flies lay their eggs. If there are good growing conditions with good soil fertility and moisture, damage from the maggot seems to have minimal impact on dry matter yield. However, if forage production is limited by poor soil fertility and dry soil conditions, maggot damage has a greater potential to reduce yields.

Observations in Georgia suggest that damage is more common in finer-stemmed cultivars, such as Coastal, Alicia, Russell, and common Bermuda. Infestations in coarser-stemmed varieties such as Tifton 85 appear to be less damaging. The stem maggot is usually not a pest of grazed pastures because livestock consume the eggs and maggot with the grass, thus preventing an increase in the fly population.

Management. Management recommendations developed in Georgia and Alabama suggest that if damage is found, proceed to harvest the crop as soon as weather conditions allow. Once the damage becomes apparent, the crop is unlikely to add a significant amount of yield. The damaged crop should be cut and baled and removed from the field as soon as weather conditions allow. Leaving the damaged crop in the field will only compete with any attempts by the plant to regrow and decrease the opportunity that the next cutting will have time to accumulate dry matter. Maggots feeding in the stem will die once the crop is cut and dried for harvest. However, flies will emerge from pupae in the soil and re-infest the field. To protect the regrowth from infestation, apply a pyrethroid insecticide about 7 days after cutting to kill adult flies. A single application is usually sufficient. There are yet no effective methods for sampling BSM fly or larvae or guidelines for when an insecticide treatment is needed.

MARE & FOAL WORKSHOP

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is holding a Mare/ Foal Workshop on

March 29th

starting at **5:30 PM**

at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 1229 North US HWY 281 in Stephenville.

All horse owners are welcome to attend, but topics are targeted toward those who have broodmares or those raising foals. Subjects which will be discussed include overall health care programs, feeding and nutrition, breeding management, parturition and foal care.

Pre-registration fee is only $20 and includes handout material and refreshments. Registration at the door will be $30.

For more information, contact Heidi Nivens, 254-968-4144 Heidi.Nivens@ag.tamu.edu or Dr. Dennis Sigler dsigler@tamu.edu.

TDA PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE FEES INCREASED

The TDA announced increases in all license fees that will take effect in January 2016. New license fees are as follows:

Private - $100

Certified Private - $0

Commercial AG - $200

Non-Commercial Ag - $75

Structural Applicator (all) - $125

Structural Business License -$300

Retain your Certificates of Completion obtained from participating in CEU courses. Although some commercial trainers may provide duplicate certificates, there is no recourse for lost certificates from the Extension Service. No single source provides cumulative tracking of all the CEU's that you acquire. It is up to the individual to keep their certificates on file so they can be accessed if you are subject to a TDA audit.

Shortly before your license or certificate expires, you will receive an application for renewal from the Texas Department of Agriculture. Be sure to notify TDA if your address has changed. After you submit the application for renewal, your license or certificate should arrive within a few weeks. Keep your Certificates of Completion for one year following renewal.

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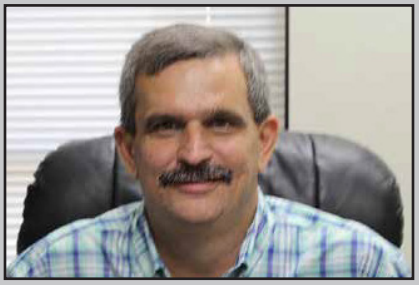
For more information on any of the articles or activities listed in this newsletter, please contact the Erath County Extension Office at 254-965-1460 or visit us on the web at: erath.agrilife.org



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