

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office*



PHOTOS BY **Southeast Texas Olive**



**April 13, 2016**



Dr. William Johnson is a horticulturist with the Galveston County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Visit his website at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>.

*News column printed in the Galveston Daily News, The Post, and other Galveston County Newspapers.*

**A new oil industry is sprouting in what may bring Texas producers cash and Texas consumers a local, edible choice — olive oil. Randy Brazil will provide a presentation on Saturday, April 16, on Growing Olives in Texas. Randy and his wife, Monica Ann Brazil, own and operate Southeast Texas Olive which produces extra virgin olive oil from their olive trees located in Liberty County.**

The Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office will be offering a variety of horticulture-related educational programs for Galveston County residents this week as follows:

**PECAN GRAFTING WORKSHOP SET FOR APRIL 14**

Miracles still happen all across Texas during this time of the year because it's pecan grafting time.

The miracle is a person being able to take a native pecan tree or a tree that just does not produce quality nuts and turn it into a wonderful paper shell variety pecan tree through the use of a sharp knife and a stick of grafting wood.

Whether you're a seasoned pro or a novice beginner, being able to suc-

cessfully graft a pecan tree then watching the new graft "take" never loses its thrill. Wouldn't it be neat if you could learn how to actually create such miracles with your own two hands? Well, not only can this happen, it will happen tomorrow. On Thursday, April 14, from 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., you can attend the



Pecan Grafting Workshop activities at 7851 Winding Trail Way in Santa Fe to learn first-hand the techniques for successful pecan grafting. Pre-registration is not required to attend this program.

Graftwood collected from several varieties of pecan trees will be made available at the field day. A donation of \$1.00 per stick of graftwood is requested.

Funds will be used to support future educational programs. Graftwood needs to be kept moist and cool at all times until it is used; so, if possible, bring a cooler and several gallon-sized "zip lock" plastic bags.

For further information, contact the County Extension Office (281-309-5065 or visit my website provided in the byline of this column for more information and a downloadable map (click on the Extension Educational Programs link). Come out to learn the techniques of grafting so you can make and nurture your own creation that you can be personally proud of for many, many years to come.

#### **Seminar of Tawny Crazy Ants**

When an invasive ant species has "crazy" as part of its common name, you would likely suspect that such an insect can pose problems. The tawny crazy ant is an invasive species that came into Texas a little over 14 years ago in the Houston area and has been a problem in some residential areas there since that time. It has spread into Galveston County and many homeowners (and local beekeepers) are dealing with this insect pest.

The tawny crazy ant was formerly called the Raspberry Crazy Ant after Tom Rasberry, a pest management professional from Pearland who in 2002 first realized he was dealing with a new ant species. The accepted common name for this ant has been changed to tawny crazy ant.

They are called crazy ants because they don't trail like other ants species in Texas, but erratically move in all kinds of directions. Tawny crazy ants are so competitive and develop such huge populations that they will displace established colonies of red imported fire ants and that's saying something.

Tawny crazy ants do not have a single nest where the queen stays, but rather have multiple nests and queen areas essentially forming a super colony made up of a lot of smaller colonies.

To learn more about tawny crazy ants, an educational program will be provided 9:00 a.m. on Saturday (April 16) at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St. in La Marque). Pre-register by e-mail ([GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net)) or phone (281-309-5065).

The program will be presented by Dr. Paul Nester, a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Entomologist, who has conducted extensive research studies on tawny crazy ants.

#### **Best Olives to Grow in Texas**

Texas has been known for its oil production for one and a half centuries. Move over crude oil. A

new oil industry is sprouting in what may bring Texas producers cash and Texas consumers a local, edible choice — olive oil.

Olive trees, native to the Mediterranean region, have been documented on almost 800 acres in the state and many affiliated with the new industry believe the acreage is closer to 2,000, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service horticulturists.

For some growers, the new crop represents a niche that can be marketed to a consumer base that is seeking healthy foods produced locally.

Randy Brazil will provide a presentation on Growing Olives in Texas. Randy and his wife, Monica Ann Brazil, own and operate Southeast Texas Olive which produces extra virgin grade olive oil from an orchard of 34,000 organically grown olives trees located in Devers, Texas (between Dayton and Beaumont).

The Growing Olives in Texas seminar will be conducted from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 16, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St. in La Marque). Pre-register by e-mail ([GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net)) or phone (281-309-5065).

