



## OFF THE BEATEN PATH

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AGRICULTURAL NEWS FOR HALE COUNTY BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

### Beef Cattle Meeting

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service will be holding a multi-county Cattle Health Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be held at the Ollie Liner Center in Plainview. Dr. Ted McCollum, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist, will be the guest speaker. Topics covered will include; Trichomoniasis, preventative health management and quality assurance.

Trichomoniasis is a reproductive disease which results in infertility and occasionally abortions in cattle. The estimated annual loss to the beef industry is 650 million dollars. It is caused by *Tritrichomonas foetus*, a protozoan found only in the reproductive systems of bulls and cows. Once a bull or cow in your herd is infected the disease can quickly spread throughout the herd. When bulls are infected they are carriers for life and must be sold for slaughter as there is currently no known treatment. The purchase of bulls from sources with unknown herd history and the use of lease bulls are the two largest risk factors.

Regulations for the state of Texas will take effect in January of 2010 and it is important that producers understand these regulations and the impact they may have on how they do business. The most significant regulation will impact the sale of bulls. As of January bulls less than 24 months of age must be certified as virgin; and bulls older than 24 months must have tested negative. Testing may be done using a culture test or a PCR test. A single PCR test is considered adequate, but in the case of culture tests, three tests must be done at intervals of at least seven days. A more thorough explanation of the disease, its impact and upcoming regulations will be addressed at the meeting.

Dr. McCollum will also talk about preventative health programs for cow-calf and stocker operations, and briefly discuss quality assurance. The quality assurance program

addresses issues such as vaccination sites and how they impact carcass quality. Such issues should be a priority for all cattle producers as their impact on quality ultimately affects the value of their product. For more information contact your local Texas AgriLife Extension office.

## Deep Soil Sampling for Nitrogen

Historically, most soil samples are taken to a depth of about six inches. When using hydraulic probes, most soils can be sampled to a depth of 24 inches. When doing the deeper sampling, the 0-6 inch increment is used for routine soil analysis (pH, N, P, K, Zn, etc) and the 6-24 inch increment is tested only for residual nitrogen. Deep sampling by AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension of some producer fields is showing that many irrigated cotton fields in the High Plains have 30 or more lbs/acre of nitrogen in the soil profile. The Extension recommendation for nitrogen fertilization of cotton is 50 lbs/acre for each bale of yield goal. Extension highly recommends that cotton producers deep sample their fields for several reasons. The most obvious is the cost of fertilizer. If a crop has access to substantial residual nitrogen in the subsoil, a producer would do well to consider this and save on input costs. Over fertilization with nitrogen when high amounts are present in the subsoil may promote excessive late season growth, as well as aggravate aphid populations. Maturity delays due to excessive nitrogen could be a factor contributing to low micronaire, especially in cooler, wetter environments. Excessive nitrogen may contribute to increased verticillium wilt challenges. A review of the literature concerning this pathogen reveals that one of the recommended control measures is not to apply excessive nitrogen. Now exactly what they consider to be 'excessive' was not stated, but this is something to consider if you have a wilt problem.

With this in mind Extension has offered to deep sample 10 fields in Hale County in February or March, 2010. We would like to sample 7 center pivot fields, 2 drip fields and one dry land field. Three producers who attended our Cotton Turn Row Meeting in August have already expressed their interest in being part of the program but I am looking for other fields to be used in the study. There will be no charge for participation, but we will ask you to answer some questions pertaining to your normal fertility practices for the sake of comparison. This study is an incredible opportunity to gain insight into conditions on your farm and help provide meaningful data for producers in our county.

As we have a limited number of fields we can sample we will take applicants on a first come, first served basis. If you are interested in participating please call our office at 291.5267. *(Thank you to Dr. Randy Boman for his input on this article and his offer to deep sample fields for this study.)*

## Cotton Defoliation

It had been well documented that the use of harvest aids in preparing cotton for harvest is money well spent in most cases. What can be confusing is what type of product or combination of products to use and what the proper timing should be for optimal effect. Dr. Randy Boman has developed an excellent Harvest Aid Guide that he updates annually. You can access the complete guide at the following URL:

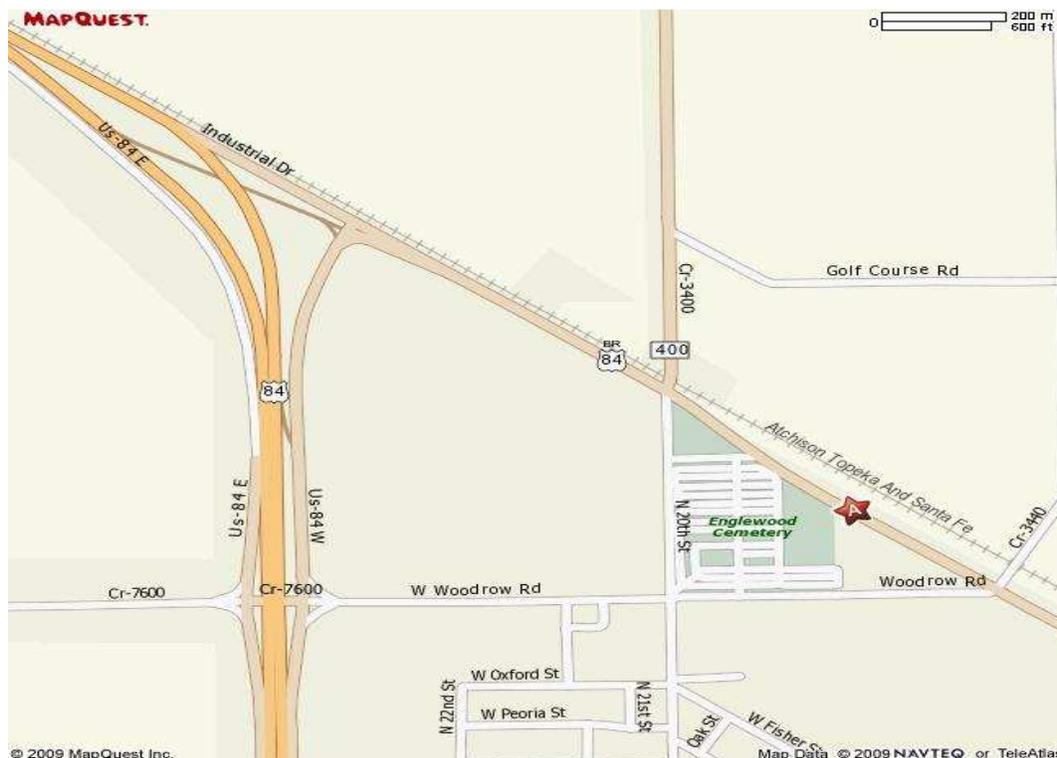
<http://lubbock.tamu.edu/cotton/pdf/2009HarvestAid.pdf>

If you do not have internet access, you can drop by our office on Austin St., two blocks south of HWY 70 to pick up a copy.

## Pesticide Disposal Day

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality will be holding a pesticide disposal day on Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in Lubbock County. It will be conducted at Crop Production Services, 880 Industrial Drive, in Slaton (marked with a star on the map below). A complete list of the items they will accept can be found at:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/admin/calendar/oct\\_2009\\_calendar.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/admin/calendar/oct_2009_calendar.html)



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