Rolling Plains Quail Appreciation Day set May 1 in Stamford

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STAMFORD – The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service offices in Jones and Haskell counties will conduct the 2015 Rolling Plains Quail Appreciation Day from 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. May 1 at the Bunkhouse, located west of U.S. Highway 277 and Farm-to-Market Road 2834, Stamford.

The program is one in a series of Quail Appreciation Days being held across Texas this spring for landowners, naturalists and others interested in actively stopping the decline of wild native quail through proper quail management, organizers said.

“This program will cover a wide array of quail-related topics tailored to our area,” said Jason Westbrook, AgriLife Extension agent in Haskell County. “Our goal is to instill an appreciation and understanding of the factors contributing to maintaining a healthy wild quail population. We also want attendees to understand what they can do to implement these ‘quail friendly’ land management techniques on their own places to give the birds the best chance possible to survive.”

Program topics and speakers will include:

– Jones/Haskell Texas Quail Index Update, Westbrook, Steve Estes, AgriLife Extension agent in Jones County, and Roger Clark, AgriLife Extension QuailMaster and Master Naturalist, Stamford.

– Getting to Know Your Quail, Dr. Dale Rollins, retired AgriLife Extension wildlife specialist and current executive director of the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch at Roby, and Becky Ruzicka, AgriLife Extension wildlife associate at Dallas.

– Scoring Quail Habitat, Rollins.

– Research Updates, Ruzicka.

– Operation Idiopathic Decline, Rollins.

– Bobwhite Brigade/QuailMasters presentations, Clark.

Following a catered lunch sponsored by Capital Farm Credit, the afternoon tour narrated by the day’s speakers will start.

Tour Stop 1 topics will be Assessing Quail Nesting Cover, Dummy Nests, Interpreting Nest Depredation Evidence and Assessing Predator Trends.

Stop 2 topics will be Evaluating Quail Habitat, Estimating Quail Abundance and Key Plants for Quail.

Two Texas Department of Agriculture continuing education units in the general category will be offered.

Individual registration is $10 due upon arrival. For more information and to RSVP by April 29 call the AgriLife Extension offices in Haskell County at 940-864-2658 or Jones County at 325-823-2432.

All the Quail Appreciation Day programs will have similar agendas, but each will be tailored to fit the area where that particular appreciation day is set.

More information on specific programs in other areas is available through the AgriLife Extension offices in the respective hosting counties. Dates and the counties conducting the other workshops include:

– May 21, Roberts County.

– May 28, Garza County.

– June 2, Knox County.

– June 3, Wichita County.

Westbrook said the Quail Appreciation Day series is one component of AgriLife Extension’s Reversing the Decline of Quail Initiative. Other components currently being implemented include a series of research projects; the Texas Quail Index, a large-scale demonstration; and QuailMasters, a series of continuing education workshops for serious “students of quail.”