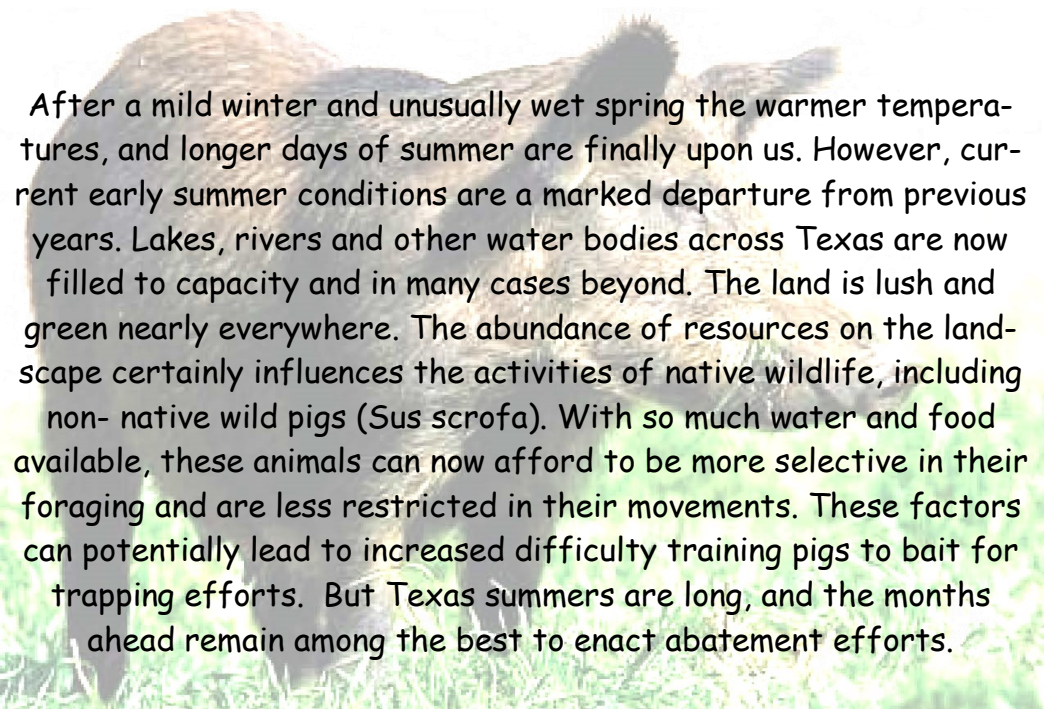


Agriculture/Horticulture Newsletter

July 2016

Seasonal Spotlight: The Hog Days of Summer By:

Josh Helcel, Extension Associate, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



After a mild winter and unusually wet spring the warmer temperatures, and longer days of summer are finally upon us. However, current early summer conditions are a marked departure from previous years. Lakes, rivers and other water bodies across Texas are now filled to capacity and in many cases beyond. The land is lush and green nearly everywhere. The abundance of resources on the landscape certainly influences the activities of native wildlife, including non- native wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*). With so much water and food available, these animals can now afford to be more selective in their foraging and are less restricted in their movements. These factors can potentially lead to increased difficulty training pigs to bait for trapping efforts. But Texas summers are long, and the months ahead remain among the best to enact abatement efforts.



- Feral Hogs
- Beef Cattle Studies
- Sheep and Goat Program
- Pecan Management

Rainfall Impacts Wild Pig Agricultural Damage

By early summer Texas agricultural production is in full swing, and each year many producers incur crop loss and other damages from wild pigs that target crops. Wild pig rooting behavior, consumption of crops and newborn livestock is estimated to cause at least \$52 million in damages each year in Texas alone. The good news for this year is that research conducted in Texas over a 12 year period (1995 - 2006) on "feral hog damage management" observed the least activity/damage during years with the highest rainfall (Muir and McEwen 2007). While high food resource availability can translate into reduced trapping success, it can also mean reduced crop damage for producers. The majority of a wild pig's diet consists of vegetation, and with more natural vegetation present, less damage is observed on agricultural crops.

GENETIC EFFECTS ON CALVING DIFFICULTY



animalscience.tamu.edu

Data were analyzed from first-calf heifers of 10 breeds which have EPD for calving difficulty (Angus, Brangus, Charolais, Chiangus, Gelbvieh, Hereford, Limousin, Maine-Anjou, Red Angus, and Simmental). Heritability estimate for calving difficulty was higher for direct genetic effects (0.29) than for maternal genetic effects (0.13). Calving difficulty was lowest in calves sired by Angus, Brangus, Gelbvieh, and Hereford and highest from Charolais, Chiangus, and Limousin. However, maternal calving difficulty was lowest in Charolais, Limousin, Maine-Anjou, and Simmental dams and highest in Chiangus, Gelbvieh, and Red Angus.



(J. Animal Sci. 94:1857; U. S. Meat Animal Res. Ctr.)

EFFECT OF IMPLANT STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE AND CARCASS

A series of three trials was conducted to evaluate growth implant strategies. Exp. 1 included 1,405 heifers initially averaging 620 lb; Exp. 2 included 1,858 steers averaging 550 lb; Exp. 3 included 1,408 steers averaging 671 lb. In all three studies, initial implanting was with either a low-hormone level product (Revalor®-IH or IS), moderate level product (Revalor®-H or S), aggressive level product (Revalor®-200) or highly aggressive level product (Revalor®-XS). All were re-implanted using an aggressive or highly aggressive product.

- In Exp. 1, there was no significant effect on feed consumption, ADG, feed efficiency, carcass weight, or ribeye area. Percent Choice quality grade was significantly higher when the initial implant was the low level.
- In Exp. 2, there was no significant effect on feeding performance or carcass traits, except ribeye area was significantly larger from the aggressive and highly aggressive initial implants.
- In Exp. 3, there was no significant effect on feeding performance, carcass weight, or marbling score. The combination of highly aggressive level initially followed by the aggressive level resulted in significantly larger ribeyes and less fat cover. Using either the aggressive level or highly aggressive level initially followed by the aggressive level resulted in significantly lower percent Choice.
- The authors concluded "using greater initial-dose implant strategies may not affect gain or efficiency but appears to increase leanness".

(Prof. Anim. Sci. 32:53; Univ. of Nebraska)

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

AgriLife agencies plan sheep and goat double-header in San Angelo



August 19-20

Writer: Steve Byrns, 325-653-4576, s-byrns@tamu.edu

SAN ANGELO - Plans are fast coming together for a Texas A&M AgriLife sheep and goat doubleheader featuring two events that planners tout as this year's premier educational events for Texas sheep and goat producers wishing to stay abreast of their industry. For the second time in as many years, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M AgriLife Research have teamed up to produce back-to-back educational programs for sheep and goat producers on Aug. 19-20 in San Angelo.

The events will feature live animal demonstrations, new technology and techniques tempered with plenty of fun, food and camaraderie, said Marvin Ensor, AgriLife Extension regional program leader at San Angelo. The first event will be the 43rd Annual Texas A&M AgriLife Sheep and Goat Field Day, whose theme this year will be "Precision Production Practices." The event will be conducted by and on the grounds of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, located just north of San Angelo on U.S. Highway 87. That event will start with registration at 7:30 a.m. followed by the program from 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. The second event is the 2nd Texas Sheep and Goat Expo, which will follow the field day on Aug. 19, and again on Aug. 20 at the San Angelo Fairground's Wells Fargo Pavilion.

"The idea is for folks to first attend the field day, eat a great lunch at the center and then leisurely migrate to the San Angelo Fairground's Wells Fargo Pavilion where registration and exhibits will open at 1 p.m. followed by the program from 2-8:30 p.m." Ensor said. "Though last year's events were both major successes, planners this year were very cognizant of the need for new topics, demonstrations and speakers to maintain the high level of interest the previous programs generated. I'm pleased to say both events will more than meet that goal." Dr. John Walker, AgriLife Research resident director at San Angelo, said the center field day will be dedicated to Dr. Charles "Butch" Taylor, who recently retired after 45 years with the agency, 32 years of which he served as superintendent of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station at Sonora.

"Honoring Dr. Taylor will be a great source of pride for me and I'm sure for many of the people attending these two events," Walker said. "He has been a mainstay in the sheep and goat industry and has long been the driving force in the use of prescribed fire for improving range management for both livestock and wildlife throughout our area. In that capacity, he has also been the key figure responsible for organizing the highly successful Edwards Plateau Prescribed Burning Association, which serves as the keystone for many similar associations now found across the nation."

Walker said the center field day will feature a five-stop tour of sheep equipment, feed supplementation, range management practices, herding animals with a drone, and work being done with livestock guardian dogs. The remainder of the program will be indoors and will include results of a five-year goat marketing study, a Texas A&M University Animal Science update and drought scenario planning. The expo will begin with a general session on the current sheep and goat markets followed by a mock auction where marketing tips will be presented using live animals. The afternoon will then break into three concurrent sessions on internal parasites, cooking lamb and predation before reconvening for dinner and an address by Dr. Dennis Stiffler, chief executive officer for Mountain States Rosen.

The first day's activities will conclude with a stockmanship demonstration.



A chuckwagon breakfast will be one of the highlights awaiting those attending the 2nd Texas Sheep and Goat Expo held in conjunction with the 43rd Texas A&M AgriLife Sheep and Goat Field Day on Aug. 19-20 in San Angelo. (Texas A&M AgriLife Communications photo by Steve Byrns)

"August 20 activities will start bright and early with a chuckwagon breakfast prepared by the Cocklebur Camp," Ensor said. "The program will start with opening remarks and industry updates from 8:30-9 a.m., followed by four concurrent sessions broken among hair sheep, wool sheep, club lambs and meat goats, similar to last year. But the topics within each category will be new with only the class heading being familiar to last year's attendees." Ensor said the sessions will meet for lunch and the presentation, What is Going to Shape the Future of Animal Agriculture? by Dr. Ron Gill, AgriLife Extension livestock specialist at College Station. After the lunch break, the concurrent session will resume for a final time. The expo will conclude by 3 p.m., following a general session on consumer demands and a carcass quality evaluation presentation with representatives from various companies that market lamb products providing information on current and future opportunities. All the activities are open to the public. The center field day and lunch are free, while the expo has an individual registration fee of \$30 due by August 17 and \$50 thereafter. Register online for both events at <http://agrilife.org/westresults/registration/>. For more information on the Expo call Myra Marsh at 325-653-4576, Ext. 237. For information on the center field day, call Phyllis Bengé, 325-653-4576, Ext. 233.

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Texas Pecan Pest Management

Bill Ree, Extension Program Specialist III - IPM (Pecan)

INSECTS

Yellow Aphids: Treatment recommendations include rotating IRAC group numbered compounds and treat only problem areas or cultivars if possible. Recommended products can be found in the aphid section of the commercial pecan insect guide at:

<http://www.texasinsects.org/tree-crops.html>

In addition the products listed Sivanto, flupyradifurone (Group 4D) from Bayer is also labeled and recommended.



Figure 1 Blackmargined pecan aphids

Unfortunately we do not have a good means to monitor HSW activity so treatments are only recommended at half shell hardening (late July to mid-August depending on variety) at which time the nutlets will stay on the tree and represent a harvestable nut. A treatment at this time of year (June) is only a shot in the dark with damage already done. Treatment recommendations include those same products recommended for pecan nut casebearer.



Figure 3 Spittle bug spittle masses on nutlets

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Hickory shuckworm:

During this time of year there can be some drop due to shuckworm. The drop can be identified by the white stain on the shuck (not to be confused with dried up spittle bug spittle).

Figure 2 Nutlets damaged by hickory shuckworm



Spittle bugs: Spittle bugs are one of those minor nuisance pests which on occasion can cause issues. Activity is characterized by the white spittle masses created by the nymphs on nutlets and branch terminals. Feeding can cause nut drop and terminal die-back. There are no clear guidelines for treatments, however, some state Extension recommendation have treatment levels when 10 to 15% of clusters / terminals have spittle masses. An insecticide search in <http://pecan.ipmpipe.org> for insecticides with spittle bugs on the label yielded 71 records/products.