

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION



Volume X, Issue III

Jackson County Agri-News

July 2015

Important Dates

- July 30—Clean Rivers Program—LNRA Headquarters
- Aug 3-5—TAMU Beef Cattle Short Course—College Station.
- Aug 10-11—Beef 706 @ College Station
- August 12-13—Beef 706 @ College Station
- August 13—Private App. Training—Services Bldg. Kitchen
- Sept. 12—Jackson County Wildlife Management Association
- September 19—Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale.

2015 TAMU Beef Cattle Short Course

The Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (BCSC) has a rich tradition and historical place in the programs emanating from the Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M University. The 61st annual BCSC is August 3-5. Dating as far back as 1942, Professor John K Riggs started the first in a series of Beef Cattle Short Courses held on the campus of Texas A&M College to discuss the results of beef cattle research from the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station with Texas beef producers. This historical beginning and purpose is still the standard today for the Beef Cattle Short Course held at Texas A&M University. Today the highly respected TAM Beef Cattle Short Course is nationally and internationally recognized as the largest attended beef cattle educational program of its type in the world. It has gained the respect from organizations, associations, Land Grant universities and agencies alike as the focal point for beef cattle educational information. Sessions are designed for everyone, from the newest member of the industry to the most seasoned producer. Additionally, over 125 agriculture related businesses and trade show exhibitors annually attend the course and attest to the fact that it is the most highly attended activity of its kind anywhere in the United States.

The short course is the premier beef educational event in Texas, attracting more than 1,400 attendees annually. It features 20 sessions covering basic practices, new technologies and other important industry topics. These sessions provide participants with an opportunity to choose workshops based on their level of production experience and the needs of their ranch.

Concurrent workshops will feature information on introductory cattle production, forage management practices, range management, nutrition and reproduction, record keeping, genetics, purebred cattle, and much more.

There will be demonstrations on fence building, chute-side calf working, cattle behavior, penning, brush management, and beef quality. These provide an opportunity for ranchers to see beef cattle production practices put to use.

The goal of the short course each year is to provide the most cutting-edge information that is needed by beef cattle producers. Participants can earn at least 10 Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide continuing education units if they are already licensed. And the famous Texas Aggie Prime Rib Dinner is always a highlight of the short course.

Registration is \$180 per person before July 30 or \$220 afterwards. It includes educational materials, a copy of the 600 page Beef Cattle Short Course proceedings, trade show admittance, admission to the prime rib dinner, lunches, breakfasts and daily refreshments. Registration information and a tentative schedule were mailed to previous participants in May, but also can be found on the short course website at www.beefcattleshortcourse.com

Producers can also register at the website or by contacting Cleere's office at 979-845-6931.



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Texas Farmers Qualify for Flood Relief

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced the Farm Service Agency (FSA) will make disaster emergency loans available to farmers in 79 Texas counties who suffered losses caused by severe storms, tornadoes and flooding during the month of May that resulted in crop destruction and damages to other agricultural operations.

Calling the wettest month on record in Texas both "a blessing and a disaster," USDA officials estimate farmers across the state are facing either flooded or inaccessible fields that could result in unharvested wheat or low-quality grain crops later this year. While the state received as much as 35 trillion gallons of rainwater in May, effectively ending a multiple year drought across the state, continuing moisture from the Gulf of Mexico, combined with unstable air aloft, has flared a number of serious thunderstorms in June already, compounding concerns that the 2015 growing season could represent a challenging year for farmers and ranchers across the state.

According to FSA officials in Texas, farmers may be eligible for emergency loans of up to 100 percent of their actual losses, or operating loans they may need to continue their agricultural operations this season, whichever is less. For farmers unable to obtain credit from private commercial lenders, the interest rate for the emergency loans could be as low as 3.375 percent.

"It is important for producers to report crop and livestock loss and damages as soon as the loss or damage becomes apparent," says FSA Farm Loan Manager Roel Garza in Alice. "We encourage farmers to get their applications in early rather than waiting. The longer they wait the more chance there is for loan delays." FSA officials say farmers who have lost at least 30 percent of their production or suffered physical losses due to violent weather in May are eligible for the loan program.

In addition to crop losses, FSA says floods can result in loss of livestock, feed or forage. FSA's Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) pays producers for the death of commercial livestock due to flooding and other natural disasters. FSA's Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides financial compensation for livestock feed and grazing losses. It also covers some livestock deaths not covered by the Livestock Indemnity Program.

FSA's low-interest Emergency Loan Program may be used to restore or replace essential property, pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year, pay essential family living expenses, reorganize the farming operation and refinance certain debts. In addition, FSA's Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by floods and other natural disasters. The program includes replacing conservation measures such as fencing along a stream.

Additional assistance may be available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP), which provides funding to project sponsors for such work as clearing debris from clogged waterways, restoring vegetation, and stabilizing river banks. The measures that are taken must be environmentally and economically sound and generally benefit more than one property owner. Also, farmers may qualify for assistance through the Rural Development's (RD) Home Repair Program, which can help people with damaged homes that need rehabilitation and repair. In an emergency, USDA can also help rural residents manage payments on existing loans or get new loans for needed repairs.

USDA says while crop insurance will give many farmers the chance to start over next year, it will not cover all of their losses from this season. But emergency loan programs like the one available in many Texas counties could provide needed funds to help farmers and ranchers salvage their current operations.

For more information about the loan program and how to apply, officials say farmers in the designated counties should contact their nearest FSA office.



Jackson County Wildlife Management Association News

September 12th at 10:00 a.m. Jackson County Services Building in Edna. The JCWMA will hold its annual Fall Pre-harvest meeting. All members are encouraged to attend and participate.

Meeting Agenda:

TPWD Biologist will discuss current population surveys as well as 2014-15 harvest data and important MLDP changes coming for the 2016-17 hunting season.

Program on nuisance Alligator control from Texas Parks and Wildlife;

Alligator Program Biologist Amos Cooper

Catered meal from Mustang Creek BBQ

Business Meeting for each Association

Lease license information

Co-op Representatives

Lavaca River

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312 Woodridge
Victoria, TX 77904
361-582-0886

Sandy Creek

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Herd composition data should be collected between July 15th and September 1st. The fawns have become a part of the herd by this time, yet they are small enough to be easily distinguished from adult deer. Observations outside this period may result in inaccurate data. Observations may be collected any time during the day. However, the first and last hours of daylight are often the most productive for deer seen per hour of effort. Observations should not be collected at night because it is too difficult to correctly identify sex and size.

All deer recorded should be viewed through binoculars or a spotting scope. Small antlers are easily overlooked without optical aids. Fawns whose spots have started to fade are also hard to distinguish when they are observed alone. Be sure to look at the hips of deer that you think could possibly be fawns because the hips are the last place to lose spots.

When observing deer in herds it is important that each deer be identified. If a herd of six deer is seen but only four are positively identified, do not record any of the deer. If there are two bucks, three does, and one fawn in a herd, you may easily identify the bucks but may not be sure of the other four unless they are all individually identified. When a herd is seen, quickly get a total head count, then go back and positively identify bucks first because they are easiest, then identify fawns, and finally, identify the does making sure not to miss small antlered bucks.

Collect as many samples as you can. If possible, a larger sample size is desirable to strengthen the data and increase the confidence in the harvest recommendations. Observations can be made during routine ranch operations or as a special effort. Observing the same deer recorded on a previous survey is a concern if surveys are conducted too close together (less than 2-3 hours apart). If a conscientious effort is made to record accurate data, a small amount of duplicate recording should not affect the ratio. All deer should be recorded as a buck, doe, or fawn.

Herd Composition data due: September 1st 2015

Beef 706

A Hands-On Seminar about Beef Quality Excellence in Texas @ Texas A & M University ~ College Station, Texas

REGISTER TO ATTEND BEEF 706

Aug 10-11 or Aug 12-13, 2015

Register online at: <http://texasbeef.org>

Call us at 800-846-4113. Email: jhodgkins@txbeef.org

Beef 706 teaches producers how cattle are graded on the hoof; the processing operation; fabrication of meat; how to determine profits and losses on individual animals; and understanding what the consumer will experience. In one intense short course, it shows the effect of everything producers do and how it will affect the final consumer so we can help provide a good eating experience for the final consumer. It will give you information that you can use to improve your operation.

Beef 706 is a Beef Checkoff funded program available to you! You can learn about beef quality and safety issues and how they affect your operation. By attending Beef 706 you will have a unique opportunity to not just see, but to experience the quality challenges facing the beef industry. You will learn what factors affect beef's palatability and get information to help you utilize your herd's genetics, feedyard performance, and carcass characteristics.

Here's what last year's participants said:

- 100% said that as a cattle producer they shared the responsibility for customer satisfaction of beef products.
- 80% planned to stop an old practice based on what they learned at BEEF 706.
- 90% planned to adopt a new practice based on what they learned at BEEF 706.
- 92% of producers said they would make or save money based on what they learned, with an average of \$37/head of cattle.



Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale—September 19, 2015

The Jackson County Master Gardeners will be holding their semi-annual plant sale on **September 19, from 8 a.m. until Noon** in the Jackson County Services Building Auditorium. There will be a good selection of roses, grasses, and many perennials to select from. There will be several varieties of Master Gardener grown plants too.

Proceeds from the sale will go toward the expenses of the Texana Educational Garden (TEG) being built at the corner of Cypress and Ed Linn, around the Historical Jail House, and to other projects the Master Gardeners currently support and our Come Grow With Us Seminars. In the TEG, they have recently installed a bulb garden, ginger garden and are working on an ornamental grass garden. Come and support the Master Gardeners at our plant sale and help us to make the Texana Educational Garden a reality.

Fall is the best time of year to plant fruit trees, it gives the roots time to get established before the new growth of leaves and fruit start to set in spring. Buying trees that have the right root stock for this area is very important. They are more cold hardy and suited for the soils in this area. The Jackson County Master Gardeners will be taking orders for fruit and citrus trees starting **September 1 thru September 19, 2015**. We will be taking orders at the fall plant sale for fruit and citrus trees also. Citrus trees available are: orange, grapefruit, calamondin, kumquat, lemon, lime, mandarin, pummelo, Satsuma, tangelo and tangerine. We will also have fruit trees: apple, apricot, fig, jujube, mulberry, avocado, nectarine, olive, peach, pear, persimmon, plum, and pomegranate. To see the complete list and place an order, visit the Jackson County Extension Office at 411 N Wells. The trees will be ready for pick up on September 25, from 5-6 PM. For more information on the sale please contact Debbie at 361-648-6314 or Sarah at 361-782-3312.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a Master Gardener should contact Mike Hiller at the County Extension office at 782-3312. If you love to garden, different types of plants and get dirt under your nails along with people of like interest, you should consider becoming a Master Gardener.

Texas Floods Can Present Health Problems to Livestock and Pets

Livestock and pet owners should be on the lookout for potential animal health issues related to flooding throughout Texas in recent weeks, said a Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory expert. Insect-borne diseases, toxic forages and skin irritations are just a few potential hazards to consider when it comes to the health of beef cattle, horses and pets.

“When you have so much water, including standing water, you begin to see many health issues arise,” said Dr. Terry Hensley, assistant director of the laboratory and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service veterinarian, College Station. “When you have this much rain, it disturbs the soil and brings a host of bacterial spores, like clostridium, to the surface, which can then be washed from pasture to pasture.”

Foot issues can arise in horses and cattle, Hensley said. Horses in wet, muddy pastures have the increased chance of developing a hoof abscess. Hensley said horses that show signs of lameness should be examined by a veterinarian to determine the extent of possible infection.

Other potential problems from excessive rain for consecutive days without shelter can be crusty, scaly skin. Leptospirosis in cattle can be another issue faced by producers. Wet conditions increase the potential for leptospirosis exposure and can affect cattle, horses, dogs and wildlife, Hensley said. Once infected, animals will shed the disease-causing organism through urine and contaminate the environment, providing other source points of infection for animals.

Leptospirosis can be prevalent in the city as well, affecting dogs and cats. Fever, vomiting abdominal pain and refusal to eat are just a few clinical signs to watch for, Hensley said. “Something folks in the city don’t think about it, but you can take a dog to the park or even be in a moist area of the yard where a rodent or raccoon has urinated in a puddle,” Hensley said. “A dog can drink from that puddle of water and be at risk.”

Leptospirosis can be a cause of abortion in cattle and horses. There are no obvious clinical signs that livestock are infected with the bacteria. With young beef cattle, clostridium diseases can occur with excessive moisture. Hensley said blackleg, red water disease and other clostridial infections can result from soil-borne infections. These bacterial spores can be in the soil for many months. Excessive rainfall can disturb the soil and bring the spores to the surface making them accessible to grazing animals.

The lab offers diagnostics tests for those livestock diagnosed with clostridial infections. However, livestock producers are encouraged to vaccinate to protect against some clostridial diseases, like Blackleg. “Livestock owners are encouraged to check pastures to make sure there hasn’t been any hazardous trash washed downstream,” he said.

Forages, like Johnsongrass and sorghum species, should also be monitored for problems such as prussic acid and nitrate levels. Johnsongrass can grow quickly due to excessive moisture, and when extreme heat follows after excessive moisture, nitrates can build up in grasses. Producers baling hay are advised to obtain hay samples. The lab can also test forages and hay for high levels of prussic acid or nitrate. Information on how to send samples can be found at <http://tvmdl.tamu.edu/shipping>. For more information, the agency has a fact sheet available at http://tvmdl.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TVMDL_FloodHealth.pdf.

Hurricane Preparation

With the possibility of tropical storms and hurricanes hitting the Lone Star State during hurricane season, experts from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are reminding Texans their agency has a number of useful publications specific to protecting households, farms and ranches. There are hurricane preparation materials available through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension bookstore website and the Texas EDEN website. One way people can prepare for disaster is to be informed and suggested Texans check out the AgriLife Extension publications available through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Bookstore website, <https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/> or the Texas Extension Disaster Education Network website, Texas EDEN, <http://texashelp.tamu.edu>.

Fly Control for Beef Cattle

“What is the best thing for flies?” I have had this question quite a bit this year, as the flies seem to be worse than normal. There isn’t really a “best thing” for flies. What works in one herd may not in another. The producer with 20 cows may have more time to devote to the herd than a producer with 200. There are many control programs and all can be effective. Each producer should consider the options and choose the one that is best for his individual situation.

Horn flies are probably the most important economic fly pest on the list. They are called horn flies because they tend to congregate at the base of the horns on horned cattle. In this area we typically find them on the shoulders, down the backs, and on either side of the tail head on cattle. As the population gets larger, they will spread down the sides onto the legs. Horn flies feed on blood and tend to feed continuously while on the animal. Five hundred horn flies will remove a pint of blood each day from the host animal. While a cow is a large animal with a fairly large blood supply, it won’t take many days to become anemic losing this much blood each day. In the middle of summer, it is not uncommon to find as many as 2,000 flies on an untreated cow and 4,000 to 5,000 on untreated bulls. Horn flies remain on the host animal all the time. This fact aids in our efforts to control them.

Face flies, houseflies, and lesser house flies do not feed on blood but cause problems by pestering the cattle and spreading certain diseases. These flies feed on the secretions from the eyes and nose of the host animal. Obviously, this would be a source of constant irritation to the animal. There is also evidence that these flies help spread pinkeye in the herd. All three of these fly species tend to move from animal to animal, never spending much time on any individual, which makes controlling them more of a challenge.

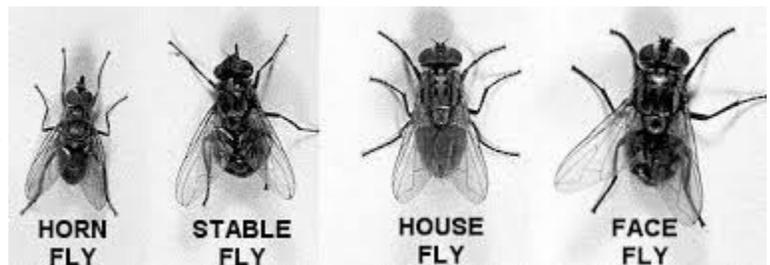
Stable flies are blood feeders like horn flies but their feeding pattern is like that of the face and houseflies. They tend to move from animal to animal feeding on each as they go. Stable flies have been implicated in the transmission of anaplasmosis in cattle. Anaplasmosis is a blood disorder in cattle that is on the rise in southern herds. These flies can be effectively controlled by cleaning up old hay piles around feeding sites so that they have no place to lay eggs.

So what can we do to control these pests? Two insecticides are on the market that can be fed to the animals through various carriers, the most common being a mineral supplement, which are then excreted in the manure. The flies lay eggs in the manure for the developing larvae to feed on. The insecticide in the manure stops the larval development and therefore eliminates the emergence of adult flies. These insecticides have no effect on adult flies. Since the adults only live for 2 to 3 weeks, control is achieved after this first generation dies. However, if a neighboring herd (within 2 to 4 miles) is not under a fly control program, there can still be large numbers of adult flies present. This would dictate using an additional control method or a completely different strategy.

Other control methods include insecticide ear tags, back rubs, dust bags, and hand-applied sprays, dusts, and pour-ons. The insecticide ear tags, also called fly tags, offer very effective control by killing flies present on the animal and repelling flies that may come at a later date. Fly tags should not be applied until there are approximately 200 flies per animal present and should be removed in the fall to help prevent pesticide resistance in the fly population. To further prevent the pesticide resistance, producers should rotate tags used by active ingredient. Use an organophosphate tag for two years followed by a pyrethroid tag for one year. Most fly tags on the market offer protection for 4 to 5 months.

Back rubs and dust bags charged with pesticide are very effective in controlling flies if placed where animals will use them. Many older cattle will voluntarily use these but others must be forced to use them. Placing them so that cattle must go under them when accessing water or minerals or from one pasture to another can do this. The drawback to these devices is that they must be recharged every week or two. Many times we put them up and then forget to service them during the summer. The sprays, dusts, and pour-ons work well in most cases. The biggest problem associated with these is their need to be re-applied every 2 to 3 weeks. This becomes very labor intensive. Most of the pour-ons on the market now will provide longer control but still won’t last all season. One product now claims to have nine-week effectiveness, indicating that you can treat cattle twice during a year and have season long control.

Failure to implement a fly control program for your herd causes reduced performance and lost income. It is generally thought that every \$1 spent on fly control returns \$5 to \$10. Some producers think they can’t afford to control flies. Truth is, they can’t afford not to.

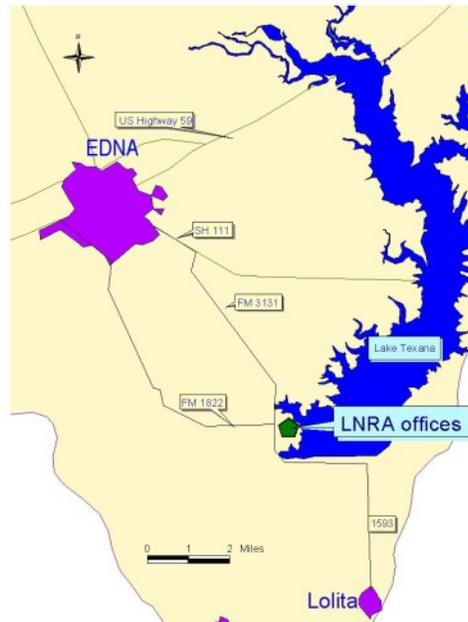


2015 CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM (CRP) ANNUAL MEETING

LAVACA BASIN

To be held at the LNRA headquarters at 4631 FM 3131, Edna, TX 77957
Thursday, July 30, 2015 at 1:00 pm

***PUBLIC INVITED*--Please join us**



AGENDA

Joe Martin, Aquatic Scientist with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Standards Group will speak about Recreational Use Attainability Analyses (RUAs) and how they can help to determine the appropriate bacterial standards for various streams and water bodies.

Nikki Dictson, Extension Program Specialist III, Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) will speak about the benefits of properly functioning riparian areas along Texas streams.

Texas Parks & Wildlife (TPWD) Inland Fisheries will give an update on fish populations and aquatic vegetation in Lake Texana.

Randi Belz, Project Manager at TCEQ Clean Rivers Program will speak about the 2014 Draft Integrated Report (Water Quality Assessment).

Please contact Sylvia Balentine at LNRA (sbalentine@LNRA.org or call 361-782-5229) with any questions.

Bring your interest and join us for an open discussion of water quality in Lavaca Basin. Refreshments will be served.

Agri-News Trivia

Did you know?

- *Consumers spend \$547 billion on food originating on US farms and ranches. Of each dollar spent on food, the farmer's share is approximately 23 cents. The rest are for costs beyond the farm gate: processing, marketing, transportation, and distribution.*
- *One in three U.S. farm acres is planted for export.*
- *China has 20% of worlds population, only 9% of worlds arable land. Last year the US exported \$14.7 billion of crops to China.*

Private Applicators License Training

If you plan on using a state limited use or state restricted use pesticide, such as Grazon P+D, 2 4-D, Weedmaster, etc., and need a license, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will be sponsoring a Private Applicator Training on **Thursday, August 13, 2015** at the Jackson County Extension Office. Books and study materials for the course need to be purchased ahead of time for \$50.00 at the Extension Office. The exam can be taken a location of your choice. If you complete the training portion and score a 70 or above on the examination, you will be eligible to apply for your Private Applicator License, which will allow you to purchase all state limited use and restricted use pesticides used in agriculture. To reserve your spot at the training, contact the Jackson County Extension Office at (361) 782-3312.



Real Learning for Real Life



Newsletter by E-Mail

Due to increased postage costs, we would like to make future newsletters and announcements available to you electronically. If you would like to receive future information by email send an email to mrhiller@ag.tamu.edu. Benefits of having your newsletter sent through e-mail are: pictures and graphs will be in color, easy to store on your computer, no papers to mess with, click-able links to other internet sites, and sooner access.

Mike Hiller, CEA-Ag/NR



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