

Which tomato grows best in EAST TEXAS?

Find out at **East Texas Horticultural Field Day**, June 26, Overton (near Tyler) at the AgriLife Research Center.

Quite a few of our master gardeners have attended this open house and recommend it. Overton is about 2 hours north of Jasper. You get to see hundreds of varieties of bedding plants -- geraniums, begonias, petunias & more -- that are on trial to see how they hold up to East Texas growing conditions. This is an industry that has meant more than 500 million dollars to the region, according to Dr. Brent Pemberton, Texas Agricultural Experimental Station horticulturalist.

This year — *for the first time* — trials include vegetables, a collaboration between Texas A&M Agrilife & Kilgore College. It includes 30 varieties of tomatoes, five varieties of peppers, cantaloupe and strawberries. Vegetables include pole beans, bush beans, cucumbers and squash.

They also tested fungicide and pruning trials on watermelon, trying to find out what works best on powdery mildew, downy mildew and gummy stem blight. If you've ever experienced these problems, you know we need better solutions.

The day begins at 8:30 am with an outdoor tour of the North Farm site and/or Kilgore College. Lunch is at the headquarters building about 11:45, followed by an inside presentation on vegetables by Dr. Karl Stedham of the Overton Research facility and horticulturalists from College Station.

The center and North Farm site are north of Overton on Farm-to-Market Road 3053. For driving directions and map, go to <http://flowers.tamu.edu/field-day/> or call 903-834-6191.

Kilgore College Demonstration Farm can be reached from downtown Overton by going north 2 miles on Highway 135.

The event is FREE, even including the barbecue lunch.

Read more at: <http://flowers.tamu.edu/field-day/>

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County website:
Jasper.agrilife.org

Highlights inside:

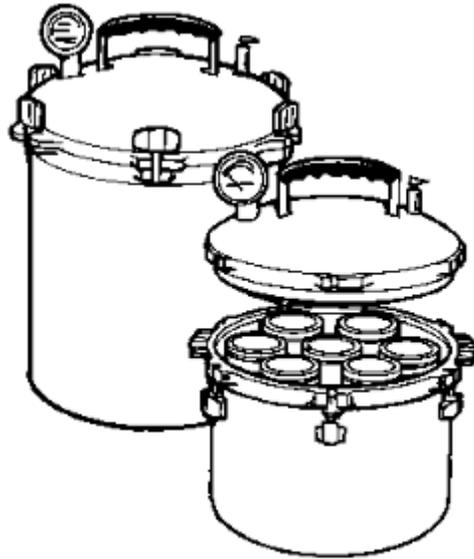
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Canning & Preserving Class

June 21, noon to 4 pm, Roganville

You asked, FCS agent Cindy VanDevender listened. We are at the peak of the fruit and vegetable harvest season for Jasper County, so it's time for another canning class.

At Farmers Market in June you can expect to find tomatoes, blueberries, beans, squash, potatoes onions and more.



Canning has become something of a lost art that is regaining popularity for a number of reasons. Economically, the cost of preparation, jars, equipment, time and energy may not save money. The reason, then, for investing in food preservation would be to control the quality and ingredients, and to avoid the chemical additives used in commercial food preservation.

Modern research has shown that some of the old canning methods that grandma used may not be safe in this world of superbugs and global contaminants. Some of the advice and recipes printed in popular magazines (or handed down by your favorite aunt) don't hold up to safety trials.

This canning class will cover the best scientific research available on how to safely and best preserve farm fresh produce for your family, whether you use water bath, pressure canning or freezing.

Class will be held at Roganville Baptist Church and guided by Jasper County FCS agent Cindy VanDevender with the help of several experienced "Foodie" club members who do canning and freezing.

A limited number of seats will be available to the public for this canning class for \$20. We also hope to have copies of the "So Easy to Preserve" book for an additional \$15.

Please call our office, 409-384-3721 for questions or to reserve a seat.

East Texas events

May 29, 7 pm — last Thursdays lecture series at the **East Texas Conservation Center** (old Fish Hatchery); speaker will be Texas Parks & Wildlife's Bob Baker on **how to build nest boxes for wildlife**. Call their office at 409-384-6894 for questions or directions.

The GIS/GPS program that was originally scheduled for May has been postponed until last Thursday in July.

May 30, 10 am to 3:30 pm — Friday Newton Garden Club holds a **Trinkets & Treasures Sale** at the Train Depot Visitors Center in Newton. Proceeds benefit the maintenance of the Powell Hotel Gardens.

June 12, **STREET EATS** is back. This is a catered gourmet lunch offered on the courthouse square in Jasper on Thursday, June 12, 11 am to 1 pm. For \$12 you can choose a drink and either:

1. Crawfish boudain balls with a bowl of shrimp creole
2. Jalapeno jack wrapped chicken tenders with bourbon glaze and bell pepper slaw & beans.

Proceeds benefit Jasper County Historical Museum. Reserve your lunch box by calling 409-384-6666 or 489-6216.

June 21, **Purple Hull Pea Festival in Shanklesville** (Newton County); first time event. Newton FCS Agent Cathy Pearson will talk about planting, picking and preserving purple hull peas. The all-day festival will include music, food and everything to do with purple hull peas. Of course they have a website: <http://www.shanklesville.org/purple-hull-festival.html>

Chamber of Commerce news: It's never too early to start planning for the **4th of July parade** that starts at 10 am. Turn parade forms in to the Honor and Remember office at 332 Houston St. across from First National Bank in Jasper. Find out more at the Chamber's website: www.jaspercoc.org

STATE resources & events

Native Plants that Work for You

Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, June 12, 7 pm

Peter Loos, past president of the Native Plant Society of Texas, presents a talk on hard to find native plants, growing native plants, landscape design and wetland construction. This is part of the Les Reeves free lecture series held second Thursdays.

Future talks include:

JUL 10 – Paul Wilson, LSU retired, food technology consultant - “I came all the way from Louisiana to explain to you what real salsa is all about.”

AUG 14 – Ethan Kaufmann, Director Moore Farms Botanical Garden, Lake City, South Carolina - “Green Roofs, Green Walls.”

Lectures are held at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet Street, north of the SFASU campus.

Watson Rare Native Plant Preserve summer nature walks

Wildflower Walk with Joe Liggio, Saturday
June 21 starting at 9:30 am

Mushroom Walk with David & Patricia Lewis,
Saturday, June 28 starting at 10 am

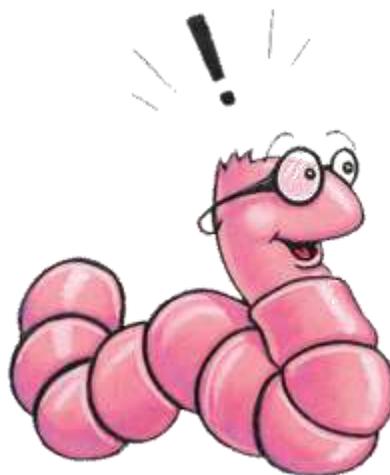
The Preserve is located near Warren and the Big Thicket in Tyler County.

<http://watsonpreserve.ning.com/>

Resources to find CEU classes:
ceusearch.texasagriculture.gov/
search by county or region
naturalresourcewebinars.tamu.edu/
also: agriliferegister.tamu.edu
“View all” to see classes. You don’t
need a degree to take advantage of
these classes, workshops and seminars that are
open to the public for a small fee.



Junior Master Gardeners



Teacher/Leader
Training, Aug. 14
in Conroe, TX

In Jasper County,
we think JMG
stands for *Jasper
Master Gardeners*,
but at the state level,
JMG equals Junior
Master Gardeners.

The JMG program is specifically designed for 3rd—5th graders (ages 8—10) but can be adapted for other ages too.

This is a program we have talked about introducing in Jasper County schools, but it’s a big commitment in terms of how much time schools can give to a year-long program. Sometimes it’s easier to go in at the end of the year and plant a terrarium for the kids to take home.

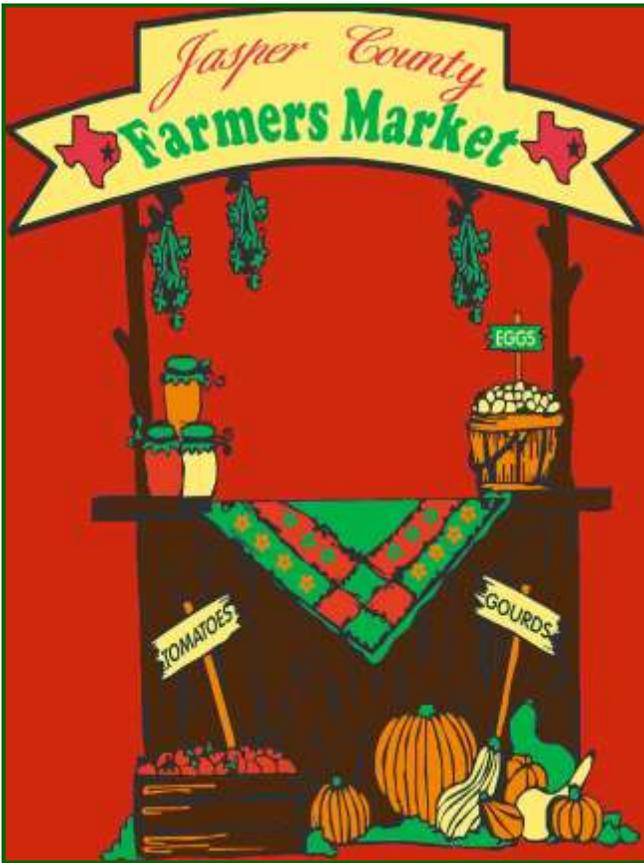
If you are a teacher or work with scouts, Sunday school classes or other youth organizations, this training is geared for public, private and home schoolers, 4-H leaders and of course master gardeners. Master Gardeners can receive CEUs for attending this class, and school teachers earn SBEC hours.

Class is \$60 and includes lunch, refreshments & training materials, plus the JMG Level 1 teacher guide. If two people want to attend and can share a teacher guide, the second person is only \$30. For questions, **call Montgomery County AgriLife at 936-539-7823.**

Deadline to register & pay: July 31

read more at www.jmgkids.us





Jasper County Farmers Market going strong in 5th Year!

Farmers Market is every Saturday, 8—11 am in the Tractor Supply parking lot at the intersection of 190 & 96, same as last year. Market runs now through the end of July, closes for August (*too hot!*), and reopens September through the middle of November. Expect to find farm fresh fruit, vegetables, local honey, herbs, crafts, flowers, artisan soap & more.

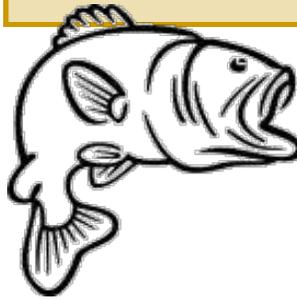
Market is open to local growers and for hand-crafted items and home-made goodies. Last market of the season is a Holiday Market with lots of unique gifts and local churches and clubs use this market for their bake sale fundraisers.

JCFM is a member of the Texas Certified Farmers Market Association. Contact our office at 409-384-3721 if you would like to become a vendor and help our market grow.

**2014 VENDOR PACKETS ARE ONLINE
only \$5 for vendors spots!**

jasper.agrilife.org

Keeping kids engaged for summer



FISH FLOP

A kid's fishing tournament for ages 3 to 12 at Martin Dies Jr. state park, 11 miles west of Jasper on Highway 190.

If fish meet the legal limit they can be kept. Smaller fish will be measured, photographed and released back into the lake. Every child registered will receive a goody bag full of fun outdoor gear.

3 age categories will receive a total of 9 trophies and prizes for longest fish, shortest fish and most fish. There is also a separate casting contest with prizes for furthest distance and most accurate cast.

Registration is 8 to 9 am at the Nature Center and fishing is from 8 to 11 am, anywhere in the park, from fishing piers or the shoreline. The awards are presented at 11:30 am.

Bring your own fishing pole and tackle, sunblock and hat, water and snacks. Bring a camera or cell phone with camera to verify your catch.

Entrance fees to the park are \$3 per person, 13 years and older, children under 12 free.

The complete schedule of nature events is available at http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/martin-dies-jr/park_events

Take your kids to public libraries this summer!

Wherever you live in Jasper County, there are public libraries in Jasper, Kirbyville and Buna, and they all have summer reading programs and educational events for kids.

Jasper Master Gardeners and the Jasper Library will team up to offer a terrarium program for youngsters June 24, 10 to 11 am at the Fire Hall on Water Street near the Arboretum.

Check with your local library, get a library card, and find out what the library has to offer for your kids and grandkids.

Crape myrtle tree in front of Jasper Library is safe...for now.



Crape myrtles are an East Texas tradition. Although not a native species (they are Asian in origin) they have been used for landscaping for so many decades that a stand of crape myrtles is considered a good indicator of where an old homestead might be.

Texas A&M AgriLife entomologist in Dallas, Dr. Mike Merchant reports that a new scale pest is attacking the bark of crape myrtle trees. This fluffy insect (looks like the head of a Q-tip) turns the bark an ugly black color.

"We are still figuring out the identity, but we believe it is *Eriococcus lagerstromemia*, a scale previously known only from Asia," said Merchant. "We've been referring to it as the crape myrtle bark scale."

Dr. Mengmeng Gu, horticulture specialist at College Station, had the chance to see the scale up close in its native China, and her interest in the pest comes from a trip she made there last year.

"It's not pretty," she said. "Crape myrtles we saw in Chinese gardens show the same symptoms as trees here in Texas."

Gu's horticultural contacts in other states revealed that the pest is not restricted to the Dallas area as was previously thought.

"As of today, scale infestations have been found on crape myrtles in North Texas, College Station, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and in the Memphis, Tennessee area," she said.

Merchant first discovered the scale on a commercial property at Richardson in 2004.

"We believe someone brought a cutting of crape myrtle that was infested with this scale into the country in luggage," he said. "It's a perfect example of why it's a bad idea to bring home undeclared illegal plant material from other countries."

Merchant said given the presumed scale's range in Asia, it's conceivable that it could spread wherever crape myrtle is grown. He said it's also been recorded infesting other plants.

"This scale pest is not limited to infesting crape myrtle," he said. "It's also been recorded on fruit trees like apple and pomegranate. But it's still unclear whether it will pose a significant threat to these other trees, or if crape myrtle is the main host."

Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/crapemyrtlescale>,

Merchant said he hopes that the public will be aware of and report sightings of the scale in new areas by visiting <http://citybugs.tamu.edu>.

VOTE HERE

Texas Beef Checkoff
 As allowed under the Texas Agriculture Code, cattle industry organizations have requested permission from the Texas Department of Agriculture to create a producer funded and managed, state-level beef checkoff program financed through a refundable assessment at each point of cattle ownership transfer in Texas.

Management
 The Texas Beef Checkoff program will be managed by a council appointed by the Texas Commissioner of Agriculture from producer nominees submitted by the Texas Beef Council.... read the entire article including Frequently Asked Question by clicking on the link on our website homepage:
jasperagrillife.org

The voting period begins Monday, June 2 through Friday, June 6, 2014. Ballots are available in our office at 103 E. Houston Street in Jasper, across from the southwest corner of the courthouse. We are open 8 am to 4:30 pm.

East Texas Cattle Price Trends
 are always available to you at this website from Overton:
http://overton.tamu.edu/topics-new/east-texas-beef-cattle-pastures/east-texas-cattle-price-trends-2/#.U34E0_IdVKc

If that's too much to type, go to our new FACEBOOK **Jasperagriculture** page & click the link



From the Garden by Brock Fry

Summer is almost here and it is time to look at water conservation and timely applications for the garden. First analyze your soil situation by becoming familiar with your garden's microclimates - areas of sun, shade, wind exposure, heat, and cold- as well as its soil type, drainage patterns, slopes, high and low spots, and moisture sources. Remember that these areas may change with each season.

Second, prepare your soil by making sure that your soil is a good mixture of organic matter and general a favorable pH for your plants to grow. Incorporating compost or other organic materials can help prepare the soil by offsetting a high or low pH. Often here in Jasper County it will be an acidic or low pH which limits the plants uptake of nutrients that are needed for plant growth. Improve soil drainage by breaking up compaction layers and areas with hardpan prior to planting.

Water efficiently by watering only as much as necessary. Adjust your schedule to reflect seasonal changes in temperature, wind, humidity, and rainfall. Some micro-climates even in a small garden can have major differences in the amount of sun, wind, and soil temperatures during the growing season, so alter your water pattern to adjust. Deep watering encourages deeper roots which helps plants tolerate soil temperature changes.

You may consider a mulch if evaporation rates are high; mulching with pine straw, hay, or wood chips around the base of the plants helps keep a constant soil moisture for your plant to grow. In your garden just be cautious because a too-moist and hot area is a good place for fungus to grow. This can be a downfall of mulching and over watering. Insects like this type of area as well.

Are you galled by little green marbles on your pecan trees? For whatever reason, we've had an exceptional number of calls this year. This is Phylloxera Gall, caused by a piercing insect *Phylloxera devastatrix*. In the spring, the adult insect pierces plants (primarily pecan and grape) to lay an egg. The plant forms a gall around this injury, so what you see is round balls up to an inch in diameter on twigs and leaves. Read best management practices on Brock's new FACEBOOK page: **Jasperagriculture**



NOLA Farm to Table International Symposium

Aug. 2-4, 2014

A good excuse for anyone involved in production, processing and distribution of locally sourced produce and protein to spend a couple of days in New Orleans. This includes anyone involved in growing a crop, selling at farmers market, producing beef...

This event is recommended by Rene Schmit, Louisiana Master Gardener Coordinator and LSU Ag Agent. She says: The Farm To Table International Symposium (F2Ti) offers ...discussions on the farm-to-table movement and examines the agricultural-culinary cycle. The symposium features an organic farm research project. Topics include best practices for urban farming, bringing products to market, sourcing locally, sustainability and the Food Safety Modernization Act.

The Symposium occurs in tandem with the Louisiana Restaurant Association's Annual Foodservice Expo. - See more at: <http://f2t-int.com/#sthash.fHGhuLH7.dpuf>



NEW From Jasper Ag/NR Agent Brock Fry:

Jasper County Agriculture has a new Facebook page dedicated to education and relevant posts about Agriculture in East Texas and Jasper County. I hope you will take time to visit this website and LIKE it so you will get updates on your Facebook page about important and relevant agriculture practice for Jasper County.

<https://www.facebook.com/Jasperagriculture>

New Links on the Jasper County AgriLife Website

Bookmark this website for resources for agricultural practices for East Texas and Jasper County. We want you to think about the Jasper County Extension Website as a resource first for your agricultural needs. If you haven't visited our website lately, please take a look at what's new under the Agriculture tab. You can click on the publication links and read (or download and print) many of our most requested publications, links to relevant resources you need.

<http://jasper.agrilife.org/>

Save the dates!

Saturday, Aug. 16, Dinner Tonight cooking expo, Lufkin

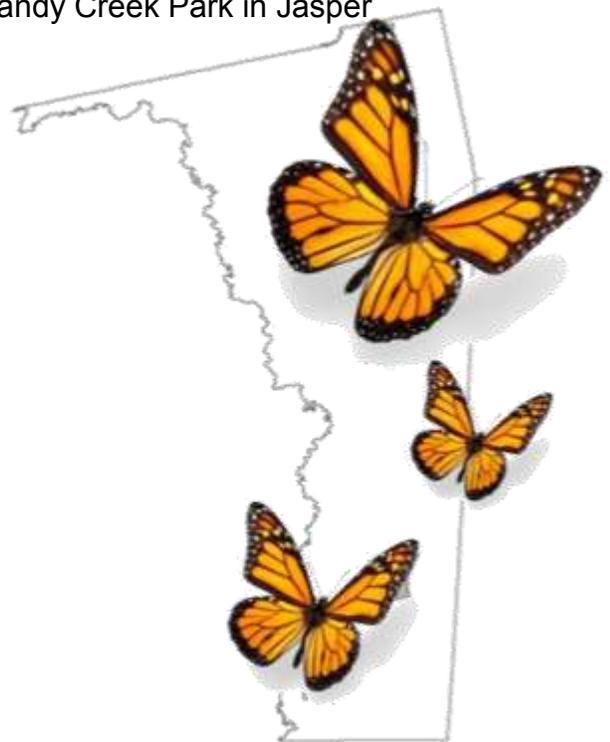
Saturday, Sept. 27, annual East Texas Child Care Conference for daycare providers and teachers, Woodville

Saturday, Oct. 4, Butterfly Festival and Fall Fest, courthouse square and Outdoor Learning Center in Jasper

Saturday, Nov. 6, Business EXPO by the Chamber of Commerce, Jasper

Saturday, Nov. 8, HOLIDAY MARKET last farmers market of the season & lots of fundraisers & special items on sale; extended hours

Saturday, Nov. 29, CHRISTMAS in the PARK, festival foods & handmade gifts, train rides and holiday decorations, Sandy Creek Park in Jasper



Jasper County,
Butterfly Capital of Texas