



LaSalle County Spring 2014 Ag. Newsletter

Quail Program

In September of 2013, The Texas Agrilife Extension Service was awarded funding from the Texas Legislature for the "Quail Initiative". A large portion of the effort will be increased outreach efforts via 3 venues:

- Texas Quail Index (multi-county demonstration effort);
- Quail Appreciation Days (6-hr field days on quail management); and,
- A state-wide quail symposium (tentatively scheduled for Sept. '15 in Ft. Worth).

The TQI (Texas Quail Index) involves various counts and measurements to demonstrate to landowners (a) how to monitor quail dynamics on their property, and (b) appreciate how their management impacts quail abundance. **We are looking for landowners to be a part of the initiative so if you would like to know more about this program or even become involved with it, PLEASE let me know.** I will be assisting the Chaparral Wildlife Management Area with the program there.

In support of this initiative, there will be a "Quailmasters" training for interested individuals. The dates for the QuailMasters 2013 management workshop series spearheaded by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service have been set, according to organizers.

The four sessions will focus on bobwhite and scaled quail, and participants should plan to attend all four of the three-day workshops slated for March through October, said class coordinator and instructor Dr. Dale Rollins, AgriLife Extension wildlife specialist at San Angelo.

Rollins will be joined in the series instruction by San Antonio-based Helen Holdsworth with the Texas Wildlife Association.

Sessions and locations are:

- March 24-26, Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch at Roby.
- May 5-7, to be announced.
- July 7-9, to be announced.
- September 15-17, Kingsville.

The series is co-sponsored by AgriLife Extension and the Texas Wildlife Association.

Rollins said the workshops are not for the casual quail proponent.

“The workshop topics, exercises and homework will be rigorous, thought-provoking and taught at a college-senior level,” he said. “The target audience is landowners interested in quail management, quail hunters, agency biologists, Master Naturalists and college students seeking up-to-date quail information.” Hands-on exercises and a mix of lectures and field trips will round out the curriculum, Rollins said. Students will also build plant and seed collections from their own properties and learn how to evaluate management practices.

“Our goal is to make the students quail experts,” he said. “We want graduates to come away from the series with the knowledge to speak comfortably on quail biology, ecology, technology and sociology. Students will see some of the best quail ranches in the nation and learn firsthand how proper management can enhance quail numbers.”

The series is limited to 35 participants, so early sign-up is advised. Individual tuition is \$400, which includes several meals and educational support materials.

Three hours of graduate college credit are available for an additional charge through Texas A&M University’s wildlife and fisheries sciences department.

For more information, contact Rollins at 325-653-4576, d-rollins@tamu.edu or Holdsworth at hholdsworth@texas-wildlife.org.

Online registration is available at <http://www.texas-wildlife.org/resources/events/quailmasters-2013-session-i>.

Well Water Screening

We held our well water screening on April 21st and 22nd, 2014. Screening was for salinity, Nitrates, Fecal Coliform, and Hydrocarbons. If you turned in samples, come by the Extension office for your results. Screening in Frio and Atascosa counties will be on April 23rd and 24th.

TSCRA Meetings

The Texas Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association holds monthly lunch meetings on the 3rd Thursday of the month in Dilley. Lunch is dutch treat, and the meetings begin at 11:30 at Pacho Garcia's café right off of I-35. Programs are *very* informative.

Pesticide Applicator Training

The next Private Applicator License Training in LaSalle County will be held on October 16th here at the extension office. Registration will start at 8:00 AM with training beginning promptly at 8:30. As of the printing of this newsletter, TDA will NOT be present to administer the test. You will be given all information needed to take the test. Tests are administered at a TDA office once per month.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

There will be a meeting of the ANR committee of LaSalle County on Tuesday May 27th. This committee meets three times per year, once to give me input on educational agricultural programs that you would like to see, once to help with the program and once to evaluate the programs that were held. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please let me know.

Animal Issues Committee

Texas Agrilife Extension is tasked with operating an "Animal Issues Committee" for the Emergency Management Committee for the home county. The next meeting for this committee will be held on Wednesday, May 28th at the LaSalle county Emergency Operations Center at 6:00 PM. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact me.

Signup for Farm Service Agency (FSA) Disaster Assistance programs begins

- **LFP** provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on publicly managed land. An eligible livestock producer must own, cash lease, or be a contract grower of eligible livestock during the 60 calendar days before the beginning date of the qualifying drought or fire in a county that is rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as D2, D3, or D4.
 - **LIP** provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible livestock includes beef cattle, dairy cattle, bison, poultry, sheep, swine, horses, and other livestock as determined by the Secretary.
 - **ELAP** provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- Visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

BEEF CHECKOFF REFERENDUM

Upon request of the Texas cattle industry, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) will conduct a referendum on the establishment of a refundable assessment on cattle sales or ownership transfer in Texas.

Only an individual or legal business entity who has owned cattle any time in Texas from June 6, 2013 to June 6, 2014 is eligible to vote in the referendum.

Eligible Texas producers of cattle will vote to determine if a refundable maximum assessment of \$1.00 per head of cattle will be collected at each point of ownership transfer. The Beef Promotion and Research Council of Texas (BPRCT) will set the assessment rate each year, not to exceed the maximum assessment rate. The assessment will be used for promotion, marketing, research and educational efforts regarding beef and beef products. The referendum will be held by physical balloting. Ballots will be available at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service county offices beginning June 2, 2014. Eligible producers may vote at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service county offices June 2-6, 2014 during each office's regular business hours. If an eligible producer is unable to access a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service county office, beginning May 19, 2014, a ballot may be requested from TDA until no later than June 2, 2014.

Voting packets will be mailed by May 19, 2014, to all Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension offices. All ballots are to be mailed to TDA in Austin (return envelope will be provided), and the results will be released after June 19, 2014.

Other Dates

Ranch Field Day and Tour

The upcoming Ranch Tour encompasses an area that early Spanish explorers described as “a fine rolling prairie, which extends as far as the eye could reach.” However; until recently, not unlike much of South Texas, this area has been dominated by thick brush stands. The Donnell family has been successful in recreating such a scene with methodically planned use of chemical herbicide applications and mechanical brush control practices. Followed by range seeding and proper management, wildlife habitat and grazing land production has improved substantially throughout the Dull Ranch. If you are curious to see real world results of a ranch’s realized potential, or are looking for ideas to improve on your own hunting or ranching acreage, you don’t want to miss this tour.

Topics to be Covered

- Wildlife Habitat Evaluations and Plant Identification
- Why, Where, When and How?- Chemical and Mechanical Brush Control
- Livestock Management for Range and Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Forage Seeding and Establishment
- Post Management -Do’s and Dont’s

Speakers: James Donnell Jr.- Landowner
Garry Stephens- NRCS Wildlife Biologist
Frank Baca- NRCS District Conservationist
Isaac Cavazos- Agrilife Extension Agent
Benny Martinez- Dow AgroSciences
Dr. Wayne Hanselka- DuPont Crop Protection

The tour will begin @ 8:30 AM on May 16, 2014 at the Dull Ranch Lodge, located 7 miles West of Fowlerton on HWY 97. Lunch will be provided. Please contact Frank Baca at the Tilden NRCS Office @ 361-274-3221 by May 9th to RSVP. Due to limited space, only the first 50 RSVP’s will be accepted.

Call or Write to be Included on the Extension Mailing List

I will be sending out a semi-annual newsletter pertaining to agriculture in LaSalle County. Please send us your mailing address or your email address if you would like to continue receiving this newsletter. You can email me at: ljperez@ag.tamu.edu or you can send us the following form to: 247 Mars Dr. Cotulla, Texas 78014

Please add me to the LaSalle county extension ag mailing list:

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____