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September 20, 2016  
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## Montgomery County Agricultural Resources Newsletter for Livestock, Equine & Forage Producers

### What About Our Water!

The Montgomery County Beef Improvement Association and Montgomery County Farm Bureau will sponsor this most informative meeting. The educational program and business meetings will be held on Thursday evening, September 22, beginning at 6:00 pm. The program will feature Jim Bundcho speaking on rainwater harvest systems and design. Bob Dailey will give an update on aquifers and the effectiveness of conservation. The evening activities will include a meal, the educational programs and business sessions. The program will be held at the Montgomery County Extension Office located at 9020 Airport Road. The evening activities are open to everyone, we just need you to call and reserve a seat so we might better prepare for the meal. The Montgomery County Farm Bureau is sponsoring the evening meal. Please RSVP by September 15. Call 936-539-7822 or email [m-heimer@tamu.edu](mailto:m-heimer@tamu.edu) to get registered.

### Private Pesticide Applicator Training

The training will be held on Tuesday morning, September 27, at the Montgomery County Extension Office. The training program will begin at 9:00 AM and last about 4 hours. Study material must be purchased ahead of time to assist with preparation (included in the registration fee). The study guide is actually utilized during the training portion of the program. There is \$50.00 cost for the training to cover program materials, and related costs. The registration fee can be paid when reserving your seat. Contact the Montgomery

County Extension Office to reserve a seat at the September 27<sup>th</sup> training. Documentation will be provided at the conclusion of the training to be used in securing a test date.

### **Forage Testing to Promote Cost Effective Feeding!**

The Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District is offering this program at **no cost** to assist forage and livestock producers with determining the nutritional value of the hay they have produced or hay acquired to be fed to their livestock. The forage analysis provides the information needed to determine the level of supplementation necessary to keep horses and livestock in the best possible body condition, reproductive condition, for the least number of dollars.

The samples need to be submitted to the Montgomery County Extension Office by **Thursday, September 29, 2016.**

The samples results will be discussed on Thursday evening, **October 13**, at the program **“Understanding Forage Quality!”**. This program is being held at the Montgomery County Extension office.

### **Understanding Forage Quality!**

A piece of paper comes in the mail from the Texas A&M Soil and Forage Testing Lab. This piece of paper has a variety of numbers reflecting the nutritional value of the hay sample submitted to the lab. How do I understand what the information means? On Thursday evening, October 13, Dr. Tony Provin from the Texas A&M Lab will be on hand to walk you through the testing process and what those numbers mean. Mike Heimer will discuss those results and apply those to your feeding program. Regardless of whether your animal's are out on winter pasture or in stalls, we need to feed the hay on hand according to its nutritional value. The program will begin at 6:30pm and be held at the Montgomery County Extension Office. Call 936-539-7822 or email [m-heimer@tamu.edu](mailto:m-heimer@tamu.edu) to get registered.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Southeast Texas Grounds Maintenance Conference**

This conference is designed to provide anyone involved with novice or professional landscape maintenance and management with the latest in skills and knowledge. The conference will provide presentations on Insects that Vector Diseases, Turf Grass Management, Soil Fertility for Optimum Growth, Equipment Calibration and Application Techniques, and an update on current pesticide regulations. There will be 5 hours of CEU credit for TDA and SPCS license holders. Check our website for more information or Call 936-539-7822 or email [m-heimer@tamu.edu](mailto:m-heimer@tamu.edu) to get registered.

### **Establishing Cool Season Annual Grasses**

Three methods for establishing cool-season annual grasses include planting into a prepared seedbed, the light disking method and overseeding or sodseeding into undisturbed soil. Planting annual grasses into a **prepared seedbed** involves destroying the existing vegetation by disking and then rolling (packing) the ground to provide a firm surface for planting and moisture retention. Plant cool-season grasses into prepared seedbeds from mid-September to early October. It is best to plant just before rainfall is expected.

For best results, have the soil tested to assess the need for limestone, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, or other nutrients.

- ◆◆Phosphorus and/or potash fertilizer can be applied before or at time of planting.

- ◆◆Nitrogen fertilizer is usually split-applied, and depending on soil test recommendations, may require one to three split applications at 50 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre. Delay initial nitrogen application until after the grass emerges.

The **light disking** method is for use on bermudagrass and bahiagrass stands and involves grazing, harvesting, or mowing the pasture to less than 4 inches tall, then turning the soil 1 to 2 inches deep. This reduces competition from the warm-season grass and provides loose soil to cover seed. For this method plant cool-season annual grasses 4 to 6 weeks before the average first killing frost, which usually occurs in November.

- ◆Plant seed with a drill or broadcast then use some type of pasture drag to cover seed.

- ◆Apply phosphorus and potash according to soil test recommendations. These may be applied at or before planting time, or 2 to 3 weeks after the grass emerges.

- ◆◆Delay initial application of nitrogen fertilizer until after the cool-season grass is established and cool temperatures have reduced warm-season grass growth.

- ◆◆The need for nitrogen fertilization will depend on the soil test and may be split into one to three applications of 50 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre.

**Overseeding or sodseeding** into undisturbed sod requires only that warm-season grass be grazed, harvested or mowed to less than 4 inches high. Broadcasting onto an undisturbed sod is usually limited to annual ryegrass and small seeded clovers such as ball or white clover.

Use a sod seeder (no-till drill) or a fertilizer truck if planting small grain. If broadcasting cool-season grasses, increase the seeding rates 25 to 30 percent. The planting date for overseeding/sodding is several weeks later than other methods to reduce competition from warm-season grasses.

- ◆◆Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer until after the cool-season grass is established and lower temperatures have reduced warm-season grass growth.

- ◆◆Nitrogen fertilization may be split into one to three applications of 50 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre.

- ◆◆Apply phosphorus and potash fertilizer according to soil test recommendations.

## The Fall Armyworm

Two species of armyworms attack forage and field crops in north Texas. The fall armyworm is most abundant during August through early November in north Texas and feeds primarily on bermudagrass, wheat and rye grass, although it attacks many other crops. The true armyworm is common during April and May when it attacks wheat, rye grass, winter pastures, and seedling corn and sorghum. Both caterpillars can occur in very large numbers, can consume a crop almost overnight, and will move in large masses or armies to adjacent fields in search of food. Armyworms attack many different kinds of plants and when food is scarce, they can feed on plants not normally attacked.

The fall armyworm apparently does not overwinter in north Texas. Moths fly north from south Texas each year to re-infest the area. Outbreaks often occur in late summer and fall and follow periods of rain which create favorable conditions for eggs and small larvae to

survive. Irrigated fields are also highly attractive to moths for egg laying, especially during drought conditions.

The key to managing fall armyworms is to detect infestations before they have caused economic damage. Fall armyworm larvae feed primarily during the night and during cloudy weather. During the day, look for armyworms under loose soil and fallen leaves on the ground. The presence of chewed leaves can indicate armyworms are present. Small larvae chew the green layer from the leaves and leave a clearing or a window pane effect and consume only a small amount of foliage. For this reason, infestations can go unnoticed unless the field is closely inspected.

### **Upcoming Master Gardener Plant Sales:**

**Fall Plant Sale:** Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> - Presentation at 8:00 a.m. with sale from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Open Garden Day / Vegetable & Herb Sale:** Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. For more information, visit [www.mcmga.com](http://www.mcmga.com).

Sincerely,



Michael E. Heimer,  
County Extension Agent, Agriculture

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