



# Parker County Forage News

## Winter Pasture Management Seminar - September 21

Some of you may have planted your wheat, oats, or ryegrass already for winter grazing. However, we have the opportunity to hear Extension Agronomist Dr. Todd Baughman speak on "Winter Pasture Management" Tuesday, September 21 here in Parker County.

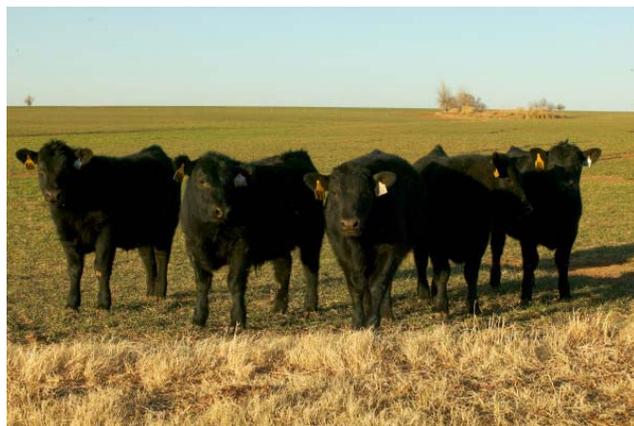
Planted or not, this will be an excellent opportunity to hear about the different forage varieties, winter pasture fertility, armyworm and insect control, weed control, and grazing management practices.

Winter pastures can be a source of high quality grazing for livestock in the

late fall, winter and spring. Many times the performance of cattle allowed to graze winter forage will exceed that of those only given hay and supplement. Come and learn how to better manage winter forages from Dr. Baughman.

**The program starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension office meeting room at 604 North Main in Weatherford.**

One CEU will be offered to private applicators.



## Range & Pasture Field Day—September 23, 2010

The County Extension Ag. Committee, Extension office, and NRCS office are sponsoring a Range & Pasture Field Day, Thursday, September 23, hosted by Bear Creek Ranch. The event will start at 1:30 p.m. and conclude around 3:30 p.m.

This is going to be an excellent opportunity to observe quality native pasture management and hear from the ranch manager on how they are accomplishing their goals.

Bear Creek's pasture rotation system, water management, and utilization of hair sheep to compliment their cow-calf operation is impressive.

Our guest speaker will be Dr. Charles Hart, off Stephenville who is Extension Program leader for Ecosystem Science and Management. Also, Bill Donham, NRCS District Conservationist will conduct a tour identifying native grasses and forbs.

Bear Creek Ranch is located in southeast Parker

County at 2701 Bear Creek Road. From Weatherford, take Hwy. 171 south, turn left (east) onto Bear Creek Road. Go approximately 10.8 miles on Bear Creek Road to gate on right, follow signs to the field day site.

There is no charge for this event and it is open to area livestock producers.

One CEU will be offered to private pesticide applicators.

### Inside this issue:

Fall Armyworms	2
Fall Armyworms (cont)	3
Water Well Screening Day	3
Ag Waste Collection Day	3
Pesticide Training	4

# The Fall Armyworm—Pest of Pasture, Hayfields and Small Grains

Be on the watch for fall armyworms which could attack forage and field crops in our area. The fall armyworm is most abundant during August through early November in north Texas and feeds primarily on Bermuda grass, wheat and rye grass, although it attacks many other crops. 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 like we’ve experienced lately which create favorable conditions for eggs and small larvae to survive.

## Life Stages of the Fall Armyworm.

**Eggs.** Eggs are laid in masses of up to 50 eggs on the grass leaves and are difficult to find. The eggs are covered with the grey scales from the moth’s body, giving the egg mass a fuzzy appearance. Eggs hatch in 2-3 days.

**Caterpillar.** Fall armyworms are green, brown or black. A distinct white line between the eyes forms an inverted “Y” pattern on the face. There are four black spots aligned in a square on the top of the 8th segment near the back end of the caterpillar. Armyworms are very small at first, cause little plant damage and as a result infestations often go unnoticed. Larvae feed for 2-3 weeks and full grown larvae are about 1 to 1½ inches long. Armyworms consume 80% of their total food intake during the last few days of development. Given their immense appetite, great numbers, and marching ability, armyworms can damage entire fields or pastures in a few days. Once the armyworm completes feeding, it tunnels into the soil about an inch and enters the pupal stage.

**Pupa.** The full grown armyworm tunnels into the soil and transforms to the pupae, an inactive, non-feeding stage. In 7-10 days, the moth emerges from the pupa and repeats the life cycle.

**Moth.** The fall armyworm moth has a wingspan of about 1½ inches. The front pair of wings are dark gray with an irregular pattern of light and dark areas. Moths are active at night and common around lights at night. A single female can deposit up to 2000 eggs.

Development from egg to adult requires about 4 weeks during the summer and is longer during cool weather. There are several generations a year. Development ends with colder weather in November.

## Management.

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 “window pane” effect and consume only a small amount of foliage. For this reason, infestations can go unnoticed unless the field is closely inspected.

Once larvae are greater than 3/4 inch, the quantity of leaves they eat increases dramatically. During the final 2-3 days of feeding, armyworms consume 80% of the total foliage consumed during their entire development.

For this reason, extensive feeding damage can occur in a few days.

The density of armyworms sufficient to justify insecticide treatment will depend on the stage of crop growth and value of the crop. Seedling plants can tolerate fewer armyworms than established plants. Infestations of 2-3 armyworms per square foot may justify treatment.

Hot, dry weather and natural enemies limit armyworm populations. Insect parasites such as wasps and flies, ground beetles, and other predators help suppress armyworm numbers. Diseases such as insect viruses and fungi can also be important. However, these natural enemies can be overwhelmed when large numbers of migrating moths lay thousands of eggs in a field.

Armyworms often infest fields of volunteer wheat and weedy grasses in ditches and around field margins. Destruction of volunteer wheat and weedy grasses can eliminate these sources of armyworms.

## Labeled Insecticides for Armyworm Control in Pastures and Hayfields.

Always read and follow all label instructions on pesticide use and restrictions.

**Malathion**\_57% and Malation ULV. Zero days to harvest or grazing.

**Mustang Max** (9.6% zeta-cypermethrin). The first pyrethroid insecticide labeled on pastures and hayfields. Applications may be made up to 0 days for forage and hay, 7 days for straw and seed screenings. Labeled for a large number of insect pests, including armyworms and grasshoppers.

**Tracer.** Do not allow cattle to graze until spray has dried. Do not harvest hay or fodder for 3 days after treatment. There is no preharvest interval for forage. Treat when eggs hatch or when larvae are small. Use higher rates for larger larvae.

**Sevin 4F, Sevin XLR, Sevin 80S, Generic Carbaryl.** When applied to pastures, there is a 14 day waiting period before grazing/harvest.

**Dimilin 2L.** Wait one day until harvest. Label does not list a restriction on grazing. To be effective,

Cont. on page 3

## Fall Armyworms (Cont.)

Dimilin must be applied before larvae reach ½ inch or longer. Will not control larger larvae. Provides residual control for up to 2-3 weeks, as long as forage is not removed from field. Dimilin acts as an insect growth regulator.

**Intrepid 2F.** Do not harvest hay within 7 days of application. There is no pre-harvest interval for forage. Begin applications when first signs of feeding damage appear. Use higher rates for heavier infestations. Intrepid is an insect growth regulator.

**Lannate.** Bermudagrass only. Do not

apply within 7 days of feeding forage or allowing livestock to graze. Do not apply within 3 days of cutting for hay. Lannate is a highly toxic POISON and all label precautions must be carefully followed. A restricted use pesticide.

**Karate.** (and other lambda cyhalothrin products). Pasture and rangeland grass, grass grown for hay and silage and grass grown for seed. Pasture and rangeland grass may be used for grazing or cut for forage 0 days after application. Do not cut grass to be dried and harvested for hay until 7 days after the last application.

**Baythroid XL.** Pasture, rangeland, grass grown for hay and seed. Labeled for control of small (1st and 2nd instar) fall armyworms. Zero days to grazing or harvesting hay.

**Labeled Insecticides for Armyworm Control in Wheat and Small Grains include:** Baythroid, carbaryl, Lannate, Lorsban, Mustang Max, methyl parathion, Proxis and Tracer. Refer to label for restrictions on grazing and harvesting treated crops. Always read and follow pesticide label directions.

## Water Well Screening Day—October 20 & Seminar—October 21



A water well screening day will be held for area residents on Wednesday, October 20 at the Parker County AgriLife

Extension Office. Samples from private water wells will be screened for possible contamination from common contaminants including fecal coliform bacteria, nitrates, and high salinity. The cost is \$5 per sample.

You will need to pick up a sample bag and instructions from the County AgriLife Extension office or any of the County Commissioner Precinct Barns. It is very important that only these sampling bags be used and all instructions followed for proper sampling to ensure accurate

results. Water samples will need to be dropped off at your precinct barn or Extension office between 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. on Oct. 20.

A meeting explaining overall screening results will be held the following evening on Oct. 21 starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension office meeting room. It is extremely important to be at this meeting to receive your private results, learn corrective measures for identified problems, and to improve your understanding of private well management.

## Agriculture Waste Pesticide Collection Day - October 14, 2010

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service has planned a Pesticide Collection Day here in Parker County on **Thursday, Oct. 14, 2010 at the Parker County Sheriff's Posse Grounds from 8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.** This collection event offers you in the agriculture community the opportunity to anonymously dispose of unwanted pesticides or even banned pesticides, as well as other related agricultural items. If you have a storage facility or barn which needs to be cleaned of old herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, etc. which are no longer useful, this event is for you.

The event is free, open to citizens of Texas, and no personal information is required or collected. The goal of this program is to collect and properly dispose of unwanted or banned pesticide waste from farms and ranches to protect crop and pasture land, livestock, water sources, and the environment.

I hope you can take advantage of this great opportunity!

The Parker County Sheriff's Posse Grounds are located at 2251 Mineral Wells Hwy. (Hwy 180) just west of Weatherford.



# Private Applicator Training— Each Month

Many of you from time to time use pesticides, mostly herbicides, which are restricted use or state limited use products. As you know these products require you to have a TDA pesticide applicator license to purchase and use.

If you do not have a license and need one, a Private Pesticide Applicator Training Course is offered each second Monday of the month at the Parker County AgriLife Extension office starting at 9:00 a.m.

Applicator handbooks and Laws & Regs. Manuals should be purchased prior to the training. Come by or call the Extension office for more information.

## Email Addresses

If you would prefer newsletters from this office be sent to you by email and aren't already on the email list, just email [parker-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:parker-tx@tamu.edu) with a brief response stating "prefer email" and your name.

This will also help us reduce our postage costs.



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Improving Texas.*

**We're on the Web!**  
<http://parker-tx.tamu.edu>

*The Texas AgriLife Extension Service educates Texans in the areas of agriculture, environmental stewardship, youth and adult life skills, human capital and leadership, and community economic development. Extension offers the knowledge resources of the land-grant university system to educate Texans for self-improvement, individual action and community problem solving. The AgriLife Extension Service is a statewide educational agency and a member of the Texas A&M University System linked in a unique partnership with the nationwide Cooperative Extension System and Texas County Commissioners Courts.*

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