

JANUARY 2014

**TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION**

Beef/Dairy & Forage Newsletter

Northeast Texas Cattlemans Conference

The Northeast Texas Cattleman's Conference will be held on Wednesday, **January 29, 2014** at the Winnsboro City Auditorium. Please RSVP by **January 23rd** to 903-473-4580.

The program is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Counties of Wood, Rains, Titus, Camp, Upshur, Van Zandt and Delta/Franklin.

Registration begins at 7:45 A.M. and the Program will start promptly at 8:30 A.M. The cost for registration is \$20.00 per person, which includes lunch, refreshments, handouts and CEUs.

Topics for the program include: Issues Affecting Landowners - Lease agreements, Minerals and Water; Changing Stocking Rates to Prepare for Drought/Restocking options, Issues Affecting Beef Cattle Industry, Short term cattle profit strategies and Basic Herd Health Management and External Parasite Control.

3 CEUs for TDA Private Applicator License will be given.

EAST TEXAS FORAGE CONFERENCE

On **February 28, 2014** an East Texas Forage Conference will be held at the Rains County Fairgrounds (Highway 276), Emory, Texas, for all beef, dairy and forage producers in the area.

Registration starts at 9:00 A.M. and the program will begin at 9:30 A.M. and last until 4:00 P.M. Topics include Gopher Control, Legume Management and Herbicide Timing; Forage and Pasture Systems for Niche Markets, Hay Testing to Maximize Efficiency and Nutrition and Pasture and Hay Meadow Insecticide Update. Registration fee of \$20.00 per individual includes lunch and refreshments. 3 CEUs will be given, as well as DOPA Credits for Dairy Producers. **Please RSVP by February 24th for an accurate meal count.**

This program is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Offices in Wood, Rains, Delta/Franklin, Upshur and Van Zandt Counties.

**P.O. Box 278
Emory, TX 75440
903-473-4580
rains-tx.tamu.edu**

**Stephen Gowin, CEA - AG
Rains County**

The information herein is for educational purposes only.

References to commercial products or trade names are made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended or no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied. Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

The Texas A&M University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

I will be conducting two demonstration projects in the County/Area this year: Green Briar and Fence Row.

Once the demonstrations have been tested and are complete, I will have results available.

If you have any questions regarding the research, please call me and I will be glad to share our findings.

UPPER SABINE COW-CALF CLINIC

The Upper Sabine Cow-Calf Clinic will be held on March 28, 2014 at the Farm Bureau in Canton. This program is provided by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Offices in Rains, Van Zandt, Wood, Kaufman, and Rockwall Counties.

The cost of the clinic is \$ 25.00 per person and includes a rib-eye steak sandwich lunch. CEUs will be given.

Registration: 8:00 - 8:45 A.M. Topics will include: Issues Affecting Landowners (lease agreements, water and mineral rights), Basic Herd Health Management, and Pregnancy Testing Cattle via Blood Test. We are waiting on speaker confirmation for other topics; once details are finalized, the information will be provided in my news article in the Rains County Leader. **Please RSVP by March 24, 2014.**

WARM SEASON GRASS ESTABLISHMENT

Since the most recent drought many forage producers are wanting to plant new stands of warm season grasses. I am often asked what is the best thing to plant. That is really a million dollar question. In my opinion it depends on many variables.

1. What are your goals? (Hay production, grazing, or both.)
2. What type of ground is it? (Upland , bottom land, etc.)
3. How committed are you to a long-term fertility program.
4. And the **BIG** question, How much are you willing to spend?

If you are looking at hay production only, I would consider sprigging improved Bermuda Grass varieties such as Coastal, Jiggs, Alicia, or Tifton 85. But you must then consider question #4.

How much are you willing to spend? All of these varieties are more expensive than seeded varieties. Yet, they are higher yielding than most seeded varieties on the market. During normal rainfall years, yields can be expected to be very good.

Hybrid Bermuda Grass such as Tifton 85 or Coastal takes a long-term commitment by the producer. Producers must keep a very close eye on forage fertility program. Hybrid Bermuda Grass takes higher amounts of fertilizers than that of your seeded varieties. In time of extremely high fertilizer prices this must be a major consideration factor.

If you are planning to only graze the forage then there are some much cheaper options. In my opinion there are two excellent grazing forages that have been standard for many years. These are Common Bermuda Grass and Bahia Grass. Yes, I said Bahia Grass. Although many producers work to get Bahia Grass out of hay meadows it works very well in a grazing situation. Bahia Grass along with Common Bermuda respond very well to grazing pressure.

However if you are possibly wanting to graze and cut the forage for hay, these two grasses are probably not the answer. Common Bermuda Grass is relatively drought tolerant and can stand high traffic (cattle pressure) but it is substantially lower yielding than other Bermuda Grass varieties. As for Bahia Grass, it is not as drought tolerant and it can be extremely hard to cut in a hay meadow.

Now when it comes down to it dollars and cents are the major consideration factors in determining what type of grass you want to put in the field. Below is a list of last year's prices along with the recommended seeding or sprigging rate.

- Tifton 85 - 30 - 35 bushels per acre - Cost of \$165/acre sprigged.
- Coastal - 30 - 35 bushels per acre - Cost of \$160 /acre sprigged.
- Jiggs - 30 bushels per acre - Cost of \$165/acre sprigged.
- Common bermuda grass - 8 - 10 lbs/acre - Cost of \$9.00/lb.
- Bahia grass 20 pounds/acre - Cost of \$9.00 /lb.

Hopefully this information will give forage producers and those wanting to plant grass some considerations when deciding what to plant.