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Sutton County Agriculture/Horticulture Newsletter

Upcoming Programs

AgriLife Research Station at Sonora Hosts “Neighbor Meeting Neighbor”

Heritage, Homestead and Habitat will be the theme of the upcoming Neighbors Meeting Neighbors field day at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station at Sonora from 9 a.m.-3 p.m on April 22. The station is on Texas Highway 55 between Sonora and Rocksprings.

The day will include a variety of ranch-related educational offerings, commercial and educational booths, demonstrations, a chuckwagon lunch and the second-ever Super Juniper Eating Meat Goat Sale, according to Dr. Doug Tolleson, associate professor who oversees the station's daily operations.

Morning topics will be offered in a 30-minute revolving format so all can attend each one. Topics will include plant response to fire, an introduction to Edwards Plateau wildlife, and lamb cooking, followed by an hour for participants to visit exhibitors and watch sheep shearing and working dog demonstrations before going to the chuckwagon lunch.

The afternoon will begin with the sale of the Super Juniper Eating Goats, followed by a range tour with stops featuring prescribed burn sites and a drone demonstration.

The Neighbors Meeting Neighbors initiative was started several years ago at the station by area landowners and Texas A&M AgriLife personnel as a way for new landowners or those returning to the ranch, to get to know their neighbors in a relaxed educational setting. While it's not billed as an annual event, its success and popularity have led to this, the third edition.

Many properties across the Edwards Plateau, commonly called the Texas Hill Country, are changing hands, either through being split up and sold as smaller parcels to newcomers or through inheritance. These new landowners often want help, but don't know where to find it. The goal of this field day is to introduce them to the station, which has been conducting range research for over 100 years now, and to other helpful agencies and sources, not the least of these being their longtime native ranch neighbors.

There is no charge for any of the day's activities including the chuckwagon lunch, though organizers said contributions would be appreciated.

Preregistration by April 14 is requested for an accurate meal count. As an incentive, the first 25 preregistrants will have their names added to a door prize pot.

To preregister, go to: <http://sonora.tamu.edu/events/heritage-homestead-habitat/> or call Phyllis Bengé at 325-657-7333. For more information, call Tolleson at 325-387-3168.



Predator Management Workshop

For any interested in trapping feral hogs, keep May 2 in mind. AgriLife Extension will offer a Feral Hog Trapping Workshop at the Sonora Experiment Station. Topics will include:

Mobile Control Hog Traps; Do-It-Yourself Hog Traps; Baits For Feral Hog Traps; Feral Hogs Riparian Damage; Feral Hogs As Disease Vectors.

CEU's (2 IPM and 1 General) will be given to those with Pesticide Applicators License.

For more information or to register, contact Sutton County Extension Office at 325-387-3101.

Brought to you by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service -Edwards & Sutton Counties.

Current Topics

Tick Time

With spring upon us, moisture and warm temperatures will soon increase pest activity. There are many pests which are troublesome to animals and people. A particularly pesky one is the tick. And you've probably seen quite a bit of coverage regarding the cattle fever tick and quarantine zones down in south Texas.

Ticks are harmful to livestock and wildlife due to the blood loss that can occur when a large number of ticks feed. They are also serious vectors of human and animal disease agents. Ticks are known to transmit numerous protozoan, viral, bacterial and fungal pathogens.

Ticks have four stages of their life cycle: egg, larvae, nymph and adult. All stages are exclusively parasitic. Ticks can survive for more than a year without feeding.

Ticks find their victims by sitting on the edges of grass and shrubbery and climbing on passing people or animals. They do not drop out of trees. Brushy areas are the best places for ticks.

Historically the way to control ticks and their diseases was to use acaricides (pesticides). Acaricide choices are mostly limited to pyrethroids, carbaryl and avermectins. Dipping vats have been an effective way to treat cattle by making them walk through the acaricide baths, but recent years have shown a decrease in this method except along the border for cattle fever ticks. Dust rubs as well as applying liquid products with a high pressure sprayer or pour-ons are other options. However, many ticks are becoming resistant to the commonly used pesticides.

People can protect themselves and make it harder for ticks to enter clothing by tucking shirttails inside pants and wearing long pants and shirts. Tucking pants legs inside our socks is also effective. Also, avoid sitting on the ground or on logs in brushy, tick-infested areas.

Early removal of attached ticks is important in minimizing the risk of contracting tick-borne diseases. To remove ticks, grasp the tick as close to the head as possible with tweezers. Remove it with a firm, slow pull without twisting. Do not touch it or crush it with your bare hands because you may pick up germs. Apply an antiseptic to the skin after removing the tick. Hot matches, grease and other substances will not cause them to let go and may actually increase the risk of infection.

Around the home, keep tall grass and weeds cut. When treating yards, spray the siding of the house, fences, trees and other hiding places as well as the lawn. When using pesticides, follow label directions carefully and do not apply more than is recommended. Tick insecticides can be dangerous to pets and children if misapplied.



For more information contact the County Extension Office at 387-3101.

Landowner Survey

Texas has over 142 million privately-owned acres and thousands of landowners, each having their own objectives in managing their property – their private rural working land.

Below is a link to a landowner survey. The survey was developed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Private Lands Advisory Committee in partnership with Texas A&M University Institute of Renewable Natural Resources.

This questionnaire is for those who own or manage private lands.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to better understand private landowner needs, preferences and concerns regarding the management of their operations and natural resources. Your participation in this questionnaire and your individual responses will remain confidential - your responses will not be associated with you or your property and will only be presented in aggregate form.

The questionnaire is divided into 4 topic areas (Land Management, Landowner Concerns, Land Loss/Fragmentation, and Landowners) and should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BNPNBXR>

The survey will be open until May 12.

April Horticulture Tips

PLANT:

Transplants of warm season vegetables such as tomatoes and peppers can be set out now. Any transplant must be acclimated before being planted into the garden. The way to acclimate your transplants is by moving the plants outdoors, out of the direct sun and wind for a few days. Next, move them into partial shade. Complete these steps gradually over the course of a week, then move them into full sun.



FERTILIZE:

Roses have high fertilizer requirements. Use a complete fertilizer for the first application just as new growth starts. Then use ammonium sulfate every 4 to 6 weeks, usually just as the next growth cycle starts following a flowering period.

Apply a 2-1-1 or 3-1-2- analysis fertilizer to your warm season grasses. Use the same high nitrogen fertilizer for shade

trees, evergreens and ground covers. Add iron later this month for plants that show chlorosis (yellowing leaves with dark green veins). Sweep iron products off any surface that could be stained.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT:

- Continue to spray rose varieties susceptible to black spot using a spray containing a general fungicide. Use as directed on the label.
- Check new tender growth for aphids on annuals and perennials.

MISCELLANEOUS CHORES:

- Flower and vegetable seeds left over after planting the garden can be saved for the next season by closing the packets with tape or paper clips and storing them in a sealed glass jar in the refrigerator until needed.
- Check garden hoses and replace them if they're leaking. Sharpen garden tools, oil pruners and loppers.

Parting Thoughts..... Paraprosookians

"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending." *Maria Robinson*

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." *Walt Disney*

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