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## Upcoming Dates

- ◆ Lone Star Healthy Streams March 4, 2016
- ◆ MG Spring Gardening Seminar March 5, 2016
- ◆ Private Applicators Training March 12, 2016
- ◆ Beef & Forage Committee Meeting March 15, 2016
- ◆ 2016 Generation Next:: Business Insurance Needs March 21, 2016
- ◆ Beekeepers School April 16, 2016
- ◆ 2016 Generation Next:: How To Set up Grazing & Wildlife Lease Agreements April 18, 2016
- ◆ 2016 Generation Next:: Shaping your Own Future Using Social Marketing May 16, 2016
- ◆ Beef 706 May 17, 2016
- ◆ Beef 706 June 6-7, 2016
- ◆ 2016 Generation Next:: Ecotourism June 20, 2016
- ◆ 2016 Generation Next:: Alternative Ranching Operations July 18, 2016

# Ag

# Newsletter

March 2016

## News from our County NRCS Office

Howdy! Trey Bethke here again, Waller County District Conservationist for the USDA-NRCS. This month I am continuing my discussion of grass planting topics as we enter grass planting season. In this post I will discuss selecting the right grass.

First, assess whether you have a remnant stand of desirable grass that can be restored before deciding to start from scratch with a grass planting project. Working to restore the existing stand will always be cheaper than starting from scratch. If you're unhappy with the existing grass stand, consider what happened to damage the existing grass that is or was there. I guarantee you that you can trace the stand's decline to soil acidity issues, overgrazing, or lack of soil fertility or weed management.

Know why you are planting the new grass. If you plan to simply graze the new grass, I usually recommend seeding common bermudagrass or bahiagrass, depending on the location. Bahiagrass tends to be somewhat more acid soil and shade tolerant than bermudagrass. In my experience land managers usually do not intensely manage grazed land with fertilizers and weed control. All things being equal under these low intensity management conditions, these seeded grasses will perform similarly to the hybrid bermudagrasses, plus they are readily available, require less rigorous seedbed preparation, and can be mixed and applied with fertilizer.

Consider hybrid bermudagrasses only if you plan to produce high quality hay and/or you are willing to manage these plants with regular fertilizer and weed control as needed. Most land managers are planting either Jiggs or Tifton-85 hybrid bermudagrasses these days. These grasses are not planted from seed, but from either sprigs (dug up plant roots) or tops (cut tendrils of grass).

Tifton-85 will produce more volume and is a very palatable hay product for livestock, however if not cut in a very timely manner can become very stemmy. Conversely, Jiggs bermudagrass is a much finer stemmed grass than Tifton-85 and therefore offers a larger window of time to cut the hay when it is most palatable to livestock (before it become rank as they say). For this reason, I do not recommend Tifton-85 to landowners wanting to produce hay if they do not operate their own hay equipment.

In trying to keep these articles to a manageable length, I've already run out of room for this month's post. So I will continue next month with more thoughts about what the land manager should be considering as they actually get to the grass planting operation.

Like always, if you have questions or thoughts of your own, I'd be interested in visiting with you. Call me at (979) 826-2448 extension 3 or email me at [emil.bethke@tx.usda.gov](mailto:emil.bethke@tx.usda.gov).



## Master Gardeners News

WCMG Debbie Cates introduced the Town and County 4H club members to container gardening at their February 22nd meeting. Each member planted 3 corn seeds and 2 sunflower seeds in a clear cup and will water them over the next few weeks before bringing them back at the next meeting to see how well they grew. If you'd like a Master Gardener to speak or lead an activity at your club meeting (we'd like a few weeks' notice if possible) please email us at wallermgardener2013@gmail.com or call the extension office at 979-826-7651 and someone will get back with you.



Thanks to a last minute surge in registrations at the January 19th Extension Office Open House, the 2016 WCMG Intern class started on January 21st with 11 interns, our largest class to date! The interns have completed over half of their classroom training and are starting to volunteer across the county. Planning will be starting soon for our 2017 class so if you'd like information or have any questions or suggestions, email us at wallermgardener2013@gmail.com or call the extension office at 979-826-7651.



## WC Spring Seminar

### Garden Helpers

*Master Gardeners are asking if you enjoy gardening and would like to help others in their garden please let them know. Several individuals have approached them as they need younger labor to help with their gardening chores. Also in turn if you need help in your garden from time to time to let them know as well.*

Last call to register for our Spring Seminar scheduled for March 5 from 10AM-4PM at the Waller County Road and Bridge Building in Hempstead. Four great speakers and topics including Paul Eyre on Vegetable Gardens, Herman Auer on Fruit Trees, Trey Bethke on Soils and Pam Romig on Bees. Lunch is included in the \$25 per person registration fee. Door prizes! Garden items and veggie transplants available for purchase. Register by March 3rd please. Come see what you should be planting now! See Flier in the back of the newsletter for more details.

## Using Expected Progeny Differences in Buying Bulls by: Joe Paschal, Livestock Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

When looking for a new herd sire, many bull buyers get lost in all the data and acronyms that go along with selling purebred bulls today. In the past, most buyers evaluated bulls just by looking at them or by comparing them with other bulls in the pen. Today bull breeders have a lot more data to offer buyers who want it in addition to those who still like to just look.

Initially that data included birth, weaning and yearling weight, adjusted for the sex of the calf; since males are heavier, and for the age of dam, due to the influence of milk production - higher in older cows, lower in younger ones. Similarly records on other traits such as carcass, fertility, longevity and docility were also collected.

About 40 years ago it was realized that bulls and females could be evaluated for their actual genetic value in these traits. Each animal in the breed could be selected on their true genetic merit. These values were called Expected Progeny Differences or EPD. The EPD is calculated for each trait and for each animal in the breed. The EPD is reported in the units of the trait measured, for example pounds for weight. Each EPD also has an accuracy value that tells you how close the EPD really is to the animal's true genetic value. It has made accurate selection to improve performance very easy.

Recently, using DNA, beef cattle geneticists have been using genetic markers to improve the accuracy of the EPDs from young animals, especially young bulls, so that they can be selected earlier for traits of importance. They are called Genomic EPD or GE-EPD. Now even young animals can be selected and used reliably to improve our genetics. This earlier selection also reduces bull development costs since the better bulls are identified earlier and more average and below average bulls are culled. Selecting younger bulls will improve selection success by reducing the amount of time between when a bull is selected for breeding and his calves actually hit the ground.

## Name that Plant? Allthorn, Crown of Thorns

### Description

Allthorn is a native, warm-season, perennial shrub that can reach heights up to 23 feet. It is a thick, green, mass of thorns that remains leafless throughout most of the year. Allthorn will, however, after rain, sprout small, alternating leaves for a short period of time.

The fruit of Allthorn consists of 4-8 small, black berries which are preceded by tiny greenish-white flowers with 4 petals.

The new growth of Allthorn is highly palatable and is grazed by cattle and wildlife. When the plant matures it loses its value

for cattle and can actually cause punctures and tears to the skin. The wildlife value remains good throughout the plant's growth.

### Habitat

It is found on most soil types, from gravelly to sandy, throughout the Trans-Pecos and Rio Grande Plains.



**Calling anyone who is interested in being on the Waller County Beef & Forage Committee! We will have our first meeting in several months on March 15, 2016 at 6pm at the Extension office. If you plan on attending please call to RSVP. 979 -826-7651**

## BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) Tip-of-the-Month

Give all intramuscular (IM) injections in the neck and give subcutaneous (SubQ) in either the neck, dewlap, or elbow pocket, as shown below. This will eliminate injection-site lesions in more valuable carcass cuts while still effectively utilizing animal health products.



## Central Texas Beef 706– Its not to late!

The Texas Beef Council (TBC) and Texas AgriLife Extension Service have teamed up to present a special Beef 706 program, a three-part series of hands-on sessions focusing on beef quality management and marketing opportunities. This program is available to beef cattle producers from Austin, Colorado, Fayette, Lee, Waller, and Washington counties.

The checkoff-funded program is designed to help producers maximize profits and have a better understanding of the production process after their cattle enter the feedyard. Session 2 will be held May 17, 2016 at OD Butler Jr. Animal Science Complex in College Station. During this session producers will get an inside look into the feeding industry and see the progress of their feeder calf chosen in the first session. Producers will also learn more about factors impacting feedyard performance.

For more information see flier attached in back. If you missed the first session you may still attend the 2nd and 3rd, the cost is \$50/ participant for the series.





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## **Lone Star Herbicide Resistance Screening Program**

**Not detecting resistance early enough can be a costly mistake! We test the samples as a complementary service at no cost to you! Just ship the seed to us and we will send you the results.**

**Please include the following details with the shipment:**

Weed species collected\*: *pigweed, etc.*

Crop in which the weed was found: *cotton, corn, wheat, etc.*

Location of the field: *county, specific address/intersections or GPS location if possible*

Suspected resistance: *to which herbicides*

Management history: *the crop rotation and herbicide program, if known*

Contact details: *your name, phone number and e-mail*

*\*collect seed from about 10-15 plants within the suspected resistant patch, put them in a paper bag (avoid ziplocs if you can) and dry them as much as you can before you ship*

**Ship your samples to:**

Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan, Texas A&M University, 370 Olsen Blvd - Mail stop 2474, College Station, TX-77843-2474

**Contact:**

Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan | Office: 979-845-5375 | Cell: 479-387-1674 | E-mail: [muthu@tamu.edu](mailto:muthu@tamu.edu)

# Generation Next

## Our Turn to Ranch Webinars

### Join us for a 12-Webinar Series Agricultural Business Start-Up School

- ✓ Gain ideas for operations you can add to an existing ranch
- ✓ Learn options for setting up grazing & wildlife leases
- ✓ Discuss business types, tax info, & insurance needs
- ✓ Exposure to all the latest land management tools & techniques
- ✓ Taught by professionals in each field and topic

**GENERATION  
NEXT**  
*Our Turn to Ranch*

*One Monday of every Month  
during the noon hour  
January-December 2016  
Watch from your computer!*

Course Includes: 12 webinar classes of Expert Instruction and  
a Generation Next School Completion Certificate

Registration Fee: \$120

To Register: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/GenNextWebinar>

Or call 979-845-2604

Contact: Megan.Clayton@ag.tamu.edu or 361.265.9203

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## **2016 Generation Next: Our Turn to Ranch**

### **Webinar School – noon to 1 pm**

**January 11<sup>th</sup>** (early because of MLK day)

- Setting up a New Agriculture Business

**February 15<sup>th</sup>**

- Understanding Business Taxes 101

**March 21<sup>st</sup>**

- Business Insurance Needs

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**

- How to set up Grazing and Wildlife Lease Agreements

**May 16<sup>th</sup>**

- Shaping Your Own Future Using Social Marketing

**June 20<sup>th</sup>**

- Ecotourism

**July 18<sup>th</sup>**

- Alternative Ranching Operations

**August 15<sup>th</sup>**

- Understanding Market Fluctuations

**September 19<sup>th</sup>**

- Planning Land Use and Surveying Your Resources

**October 17<sup>th</sup>**

- Agricultural Apps for Smartphones and Tablets

**November 21<sup>st</sup>**

- Land Management Toolbox

**December 19<sup>th</sup>**

- Targeted Wrap-Up Session

# LONE STAR HEALTHY STREAMS

<http://lshs.tamu.edu>



The Lone Star Healthy Streams program educates Texas livestock producers and landowners on how to best protect Texas waterways from bacterial contributions associated with livestock production and feral hogs. There is no cost to attend.

**March 4, 2016: 10:00am-3:00pm**

Hempstead Movie Theater  
740 12th Street  
Hempstead, TX 77445

**\*\*3** General CEUs available for pesticide applicators\*\*

Workshop presentations will focus on the watershed health and will discuss basic watershed function, water quality, and specific best management practices that can be implemented to help minimize bacterial contamination originating from beef cattle, horses, and feral hogs. Please RSVP by March 2nd.

For more information and to RSVP for the workshop contact the Waller County Extension Office at  
979-826-7651  
or by going to:

<http://lshs.tamu.edu/workshops>.



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**LONE STAR HEALTHY STREAMS: AGENDA**  
FRIDAY – MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2016  
HEMPSTEAD MOVIE THEATER  
HEMPSTEAD, TX 77445

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9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	<i>Sign-In/Registration</i>
10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.	<i>Lone Star Healthy Streams What is a Watershed?</i>
10:50 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<i>BREAK</i>
11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	<i>Best Management Practices to Reduce Bacteria Contamination from Beef Cattle</i>
11:50 a.m. – noon	<i>Questions</i>
Noon – 12:45 p.m.	<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>
12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	<i>Best Management Practices to Reduce Bacteria Contamination from Horses</i>
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<i>Best Management Practices to Reduce Bacteria Contamination from Feral Hogs</i>
2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	<i>Questions/Discussion</i>
2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	<i>Evaluations</i>

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**Speakers:** Larry Redmon: Professor and State Forage Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
Jennifer Zoller: Extension Program Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
Mark Tyson: Extension Associate, Wildlife and Fisheries, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
Matt Brown: Extension Program Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Waller County Master Gardeners Association is proud to host our

## Spring Gardening Seminar

Saturday, March 5, 2016



**Time:** 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Lunch Included  
**Where:** Waller County Road & Bridge Annex Bldg.  
775 Business 290 East  
Hempstead, TX 77445  
**Fee:** \$25.00 per person Pre-registration only—  
closes March 3. Mail or drop off at:  
Waller County AgriLife Extension Office  
846 6th St.  
Hempstead, TX 77445  
Checks payable to WCMG Association  
**CEUs:** Master Gardeners Only  
**Questions:** Call the Extension Office at 979-826-7651  
M-F, 8AM-5PM or  
Email [wallermgardener2013@gmail.com](mailto:wallermgardener2013@gmail.com)

### Featuring:

- ▶ Paul Eyre - Vegetable Gardens
- ▶ Herman Auer - Fruit Trees
- ▶ Trey Bethke - Soils
- ▶ Pam Romig - Bees

**\*\*\*Lunch Included\*\*\***

Plants & Garden Items  
for Sale

**\*\*\*Door Prizes\*\*\***

*Individuals with disabilities who require auxiliary aide service or accommodations in order to participate in Extension programs are encouraged to contact our office to discuss specific needs 5 days prior to program dates.*

Facebook—Waller County Master Gardeners

[www.txmg.org/wallermg](http://www.txmg.org/wallermg)



## TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.*

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



TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION

# CENTRAL TEXAS BEEF 706

Austin, Brazos, Burleson, Fayette, Lee, Waller, Washington

## For More Information Please Contact:

### Travis Gonzales

Austin County  
(979) 865-2072

### Dusty Tittle

Brazos County  
(979) 823-0129

### John Grange

Burleson County  
(979) 567-2308

### Scott Willey

Fayette County  
(979) 968-5831

### Keeton Ehrig

Lee County  
(979) 542-2753

### Stacie Villarreal

Waller County  
(979) 826-7651

### Kara Matheney

Washington County  
(979) 277-6212

The Texas Beef Council (TBC) and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service have teamed up to present a special Beef 706 program, a three-part series of hands-on sessions focusing on beef quality management and marketing opportunities. This program is available to beef cattle producers from Austin, Brazos, Burleson, Fayette, Lee, Waller, and Washington counties.

The checkoff-funded program is designed to help producers maximize profits and have a better understanding of the production process after their cattle enter the feedyard.

Session one will be held **January 19, 2016** at Cattlemen's Livestock Auction Center in Brenham, TX. Here industry experts will discuss factors effecting feeder calves. Producers will then choose a calf to monitor through the production system at the following two sessions.

Session two will be held **May 17, 2016** at the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Research Farm in College Station, TX. During this session producers will get an inside look into the feeding industry and see the progress of their feeder calf chosen in the first session. Producers will also learn more about factors impacting feedyard performance.

Session three will be held **June 6-7, 2016** at the meats lab at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX. This two-day session will allow producers to see their finished cattle and participate in a hands-on exercise that takes their chosen fed cattle from session one through the harvest, grading and fabrication process. In the final session, industry experts will discuss the cattle's value highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of marketing cattle on a grid versus a live basis.

Beef Quality Assurance Credits will be offered over the course of the program to all interested participants. **The cost of the program will be \$50.00/participant and can be paid at the first session on January 19th.**

**To RSVP and Register for this program, please contact your local County Extension Office.**

For more information on this and other checkoff-funded programs, please visit [www.TexasBeefCheckoff.com](http://www.TexasBeefCheckoff.com) or call 1-800-846-4113.

## **Session #1 - January 19, 2016**

### **Cattlemen's Livestock Auction - 2405 Highway 105, Brenham, Texas**

#### ***Feeder Cattle Evaluation and Management***

- 5:30 Dinner provided by Texas Beef Council  
6:15 Welcome  
Factors that impact the value and marketability of feeder calves  
View Feeder Cattle  
Auction - groups purchase feeder calf for the remainder of the series  
Panel of Experts - will discuss the value of each feeder calf and answer questions from participants  
Overview of remaining sessions in the series  
9:00 Adjourn

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## **Session #2 - May 17, 2016**

### **OD Butler Jr. Animal Science Complex 7707 Raymond Stotzer Pkwy, College Station, Texas**

#### ***Feeder Cattle Performance Evaluation***

- 12:30 Lunch Provided by Texas Beef Council  
1:15 Welcome to OD Butler Jr. Animal Science Complex  
View Video from Cattlemen's Livestock Auction of Sale Cattle  
Review Cattle Health and Performance Data  
2:00 Cattle Feeding Performance  
Live Evaluation of Finished Cattle  
Tour of OD Butler Jr. Animal Science Complex Facilities  
Overview of FINAL 706 Session in College Station at Rosenthal Meat Science Center  
3:00 Adjourn

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## **Session #3 - June 6-7, 2016**

### **Rosenthal Meat Science Center - College Station, Texas**

#### ***Day 1***

- 9:00 Morning Session at Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center  
Review of Carcass Evaluation  
Review Video of the Market Finished Steers  
Carcass Grading and Grid Marketing Demonstration  
Harvest Floor Demonstration/Meat Cutting Instructions  
Noon Lunch  
1:00 Afternoon Session at Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center  
Carcass Fabrication  
6:00 Leave for Dinner at Beef Center at Od Butler Jr. Animal Science  
Complex and Live Cattle Handling Demo  
8:00 Adjourn

#### ***Day 2***

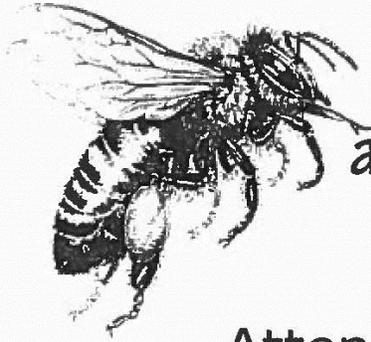
- 9:00 Beef Quality Management Genetics and Selection  
Taste Panel - Factors that Impact Beef Eating Quality  
12:30 Lunch  
1:30 Wrap-Up Review - Feedyard, Carcass, Boxed Beef Data  
2:00 Adjourn

A block of hotel rooms has been reserved for Monday night, June 6th at:

**Ramada - College Station  
(979) 846-0300**

Group Name: Beef 706  
Group Rate: \$90/night

Room block/rate available until **April 14, 2016**. If you plan to spend the night please book early as this is the week of Texas State 4-H Roundup and area hotels will be full.



Learn How To Start Beekeeping  
as a hobby and make your own honey!!!

The Public is Welcome!

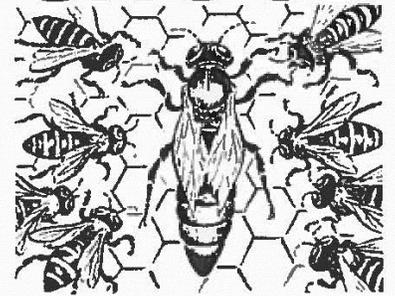
Attend the Eighth Annual Spring

# Beekeepers School

Saturday, April 16, 2016

8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Washington County Fairgrounds  
1305 East Blue Bell Road, Brenham

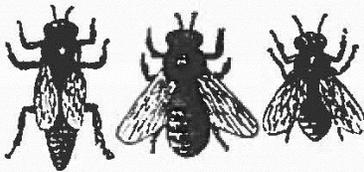


**Topics:** Learn the parts of the bee hive, proper clothing to wear to safely work bees, how to light a smoker, how to order and install bees, how to harvest and bottle honey, raising queens, splitting hives, ag exemption laws and more!

**Cost:** \$55 per person.

A catered Bar-B-Q meal is included in the cost.

**Register EARLY! Price increases after April 10!**



Queen

Drone

Worker

Please visit

[www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org](http://www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org)

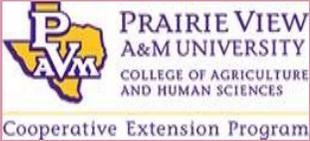
or call (979) 277-0411 for more information  
or to be added to our mailing list.

Visit us on Facebook at:

CentralTexasBeekeepersAssociationandFriends

Email us at:

[centraltexasbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:centraltexasbeekeepers@gmail.com)



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
Waller County Office & Cooperative Extension Program

846 6th Street  
Hempstead, TX 77445

Phone: 979-826-7651  
Fax: 979-826-7654

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

**We're on the web**  
<http://waller.agrilife.org/>

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# Private Applicators Licenses Training

**WHEN: SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2016 @ 9AM-1PM**

**REGISTER WILL BEGIN AT 8:30AM**

**WHERE: WALLER COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE,  
846 6TH STREET, HEMPSTEAD, TX 77445**

**979-826-7651**

**Training-\$10**

**Books - \$40**

**Please RSVP to reserve your spot, space is limited. Please mail checks or bring money by before the event. Checks payable: to Extension Program Council**

Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Waller County and Texas Department of Agriculture are offering certification and recertification training for private applicators license. The purpose of this training is to obtain a Private Applicator License from Texas Department of Agriculture. This license will enable the applicator to purchase and apply state limited use and federally restricted chemicals on his land or land he has control of for the purpose of production of agricultural commodities. All farm and ranch operators who do not have a Private Applicator's License to purchase "restricted use" pesticides (such as 2, 4-D, Grazon P+D, Tordon 22K, etc.) will need to attend this training. There are two manuals that can be purchased for \$40 that are used in the class. Having these manuals in advance will help you become familiar with pesticide prior to attending the training. If you are interested in obtaining a Private Applicator license, please contact the Waller County office at (979) 826-7651 to RSVP and to purchase the manuals.