

News From Your County Agent
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What a way to wake up on Sunday morning with lightening, thunder and rain. The threat of hail was there but we were spared of such a devastating event, but the rain was good. Reports varied on the amount received but on average most folks received at least an inch of rain across the county. As I make site visits across the county everything is lush and green giving us a true feeling of a good moist spring. Hope these conditions remain for a while but we all know how quick things can change in our area. Greetings to all of you and thank you for reading this week.

4-H Families Needed As Host Japanese Youth

Texas 4-H will again partner with Texas Global Education and Cultural Exchange to offer 4-H families the opportunity to host a Japanese youth for four weeks this summer. The youth, ages 11-15, are enrolled in youth educational organizations and programs in their home country.

To host, the family should have a child/youth of the same gender and similar age. There are not statewide activities, it is a truly immersive experience. The Host Family provides a bed and three meals a day, treating the Japanese delegate as 'one of their own'. There are no expectations of 'entertaining' the delegate, though many families will visit a Texas tourist destination. Where there are county 4-H programs during the four-week homestay, we encourage families to involve their Japanese delegate.

The Japanese delegation will arrive at DFW on July 21. Families will receive their delegate on July 22 and return them on August 17. This is the only time we are together as a group. Host Families that live three or more hours from DFW (as is the case for 4-H families in Zavala County) we can have the delegate flown to a closer airport such as San Antonio International airport. The program will coordinate a direct flight from Dallas Love to the airport of choice. If you are interested in serving as a host family for these youth please apply online at <https://fs4.formsite.com/state4h/hostfamily/index.html> and for more information contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

Protect Your Family and Pets-Vaccinate Against Rabies

Rabies is a preventable viral disease of mammals most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal like raccoons, skunks, bats, and foxes, or by an rabid dog or cat that was not vaccinate against the disease. The most important global source of rabies in humans is from uncontrolled rabies in dogs. Children are often at greatest risk from rabies. They are more likely to be bitten by dogs, and are also more likely to be severely exposed through multiple bites in high-risk sites on the body.

Rabies is a preventable disease. Keep vaccinations current for all dogs, cats, and ferrets. This is important not only to keep your pets from getting rabies, but also to provide a barrier of protection for you, should your pet be bitten by a rabid wild animal. **A countywide rabies vaccination drive will be held from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday April 12, 2017 at the La Pryor Volunteer Fire Department building in La Pryor.** Be sure to bring your pets to this event and do your part to protect your pet and family against this disease. The cost for the rabies shot for your pets will be \$12.00 per pet. For safety reasons please have you pets on a leash when you approach the vaccination site. This event is a collaborative effort between the La Pryor Volunteer Fire Department and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. For more information contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

Tip of the Week: Controlling White Grubs in Texas Turf

A Zavala county resident was doing some work on their turf and discovered as he described it “an ugly white worm with a black head”. After visiting with him on how he came upon such an ugly creature it was obvious that it was a white grub probably enjoying the tender roots of his now green lawn. White grubs are the immature stages of May or June beetles, commonly called “June bugs.” There are more than 90 species of scarab beetles in Texas that are considered to be white grubs or May and June beetles. Their biologies are similar, but they differ in distribution, habitat preference, length of life cycle and seasonal occurrence.

Common white grub species are particularly common in Texas on bermudagrass, St. Augustinegrass and tall fescue. The southern masked chafer and the green June beetle are other species within the white grub group. The Japanese beetle has recently been detected in some Texas counties. White grubs are whitish, C-shaped larvae (up to 1-inch long) with brown head capsules and chewing mouthparts. They have three pairs of legs (one pair on each of the first three segments behind the head); this separates them from larval hunting billbugs (weevils), which they otherwise superficially resemble.

White grubs feed on the roots of many plants including turfgrasses, weeds, vegetable transplants and ornamentals. Severely damaged turfgrass dies and can be rolled up like a carpet because of the lack of roots. Heavily infested lawns are attractive to moles, raccoons, skunks and armadillos, which dig through the surface to feed on the grubs. Larvae develop mainly during the fall and spring. During extreme environmental conditions (cold, drought), the larvae burrow deeper into the soil. In Texas pupation occurs mainly during the spring. Adults of many May and June beetle species begin emerging in February. However, peak emergence of turf-infesting species usually occurs during late April and early May in South Texas.

Peak adult emergence is important because approximately 5 weeks later eggs laid by mated females will hatch. This is the best time for insecticide treatment to prevent white grub damage where there is a history of white grub problems. Insecticides are most effective when the turf is watered thoroughly just before and after treatment. Turfgrasses that are highly fertilized and frequently watered have a thick thatch layer and/or are grown in highly organic soils are most vulnerable to attack. The need for insecticide treatments also can be determined by sampling for white grubs. One proposed action level is four grubs per square foot. Applying insecticide while white grubs are still small prevents unnecessary damage to turf and increases the chances that the chemical will be effective in controlling the grubs. White grub control products can be purchased over the counter at any garden center or home improvement centers. Bayer Advanced 24 Hour Grub Killer Plus Granules, Scotts Grubex Season Long Grub Control and Ortho Grub control are all products available to control this pest. These product bags all have a picture of a grub on the front of the bag. **The information given herein is for informational and educational purposes only and no discrimination is intended to other products providing the same or similar products nor an endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or this news media is implied. Have a wonderful week. M.V.**

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