

**News From Your County Agent**  
**by Marcel Valdez, CEA-ANR**  
**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**  
**Zavala County**

A rather nice start of August as some scattered rain chances were found across the county late Saturday evening, with some folks even receiving much needed rain and if not, at least a good cool down was most welcomed. If you have not followed the weather professionals the tropics are heating up with tropical depressions that can develop into tropical storms and then possible hurricanes. For the sake of folks living on the coastal regions let us hope that they don't get a hurricane but a good tropical storm that can make its way towards us and bring us some rain would be good. Greetings to all of you and thank you for reading this week.

**Extension To Host 2017 Master Marketer Program In Castroville**

I join my Extension colleagues in putting together a good marketer program for agricultural producers in Zavala and surrounding counties across the region. This national-award winning program is for agricultural producers and agribusiness leaders seeking to develop the skills and learn the tools to manage price and production risk in today's uncertain economic climate. Registration is open (and space is limited) for the 2017 Master Marketer Program in Castroville, Texas. The sessions are offered in two-week intervals:

Monday, September 18, 2017: Leveling Workshop (Optional): Basics of Futures and Options Markets

Tuesday, September 19 - Wednesday, September 20, 2017: Session I: Review of Market Basics (budgets, break evens, seasonality, and the importance of a marketing plan), and Climate and Weather Outlook, Policy

Monday, October 2 - Tuesday, October 3, 2017: Session II: Wildlife Management, Legal Issues, Livestock Fundamentals, Crop and Livestock Insurance

Monday, October 16 - Tuesday, October 17, 2017: Session III: Technical Analysis and Cotton and Grain Fundamentals

Monday, October 30 - Tuesday, October 31, 2017: Session IV: Working with a Broker, Working with a Lender, Vegetable Market Outlook, and Tying It All Together.

The registration deadline is September 15, 2017. You can register online at: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu>. Click on Events and click on the word "Next" until Castroville 2017 Master Marketer Program appears in window.

You may also complete the registration form and mail or fax to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Conference Services. For more information about registration or payment options, you may call 979-845-2604 or email [agriliferegister@tamu.edu](mailto:agriliferegister@tamu.edu).

For more information and registration assistance contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or contact Mark Welch, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Economist in College Station Texas, at 979-845-8011, or my E-Mail at [jmwelch@tamu.edu](mailto:jmwelch@tamu.edu)

**Reminder Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board Election and Referendum Now Underway**

Being certified by the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Texas, Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board, P.O. Box 886, Uvalde, Texas 78802, will hold its biennial election and

referendum on August 31, 2017, on whether or not Spinach producers in Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, Medina, Uvalde, and Zavala counties shall be assessed, on a refund basis, at a maximum amount of \$0.03 per crate or \$1.00 per ton on Spinach, to be collected at the first point of processing, under the provisions of the Texas Commodity Referendum Law, Chapter 41, Texas Agriculture Code.

The Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board will also hold an election which will be held by mail balloting to fill two positions. Spinach producers in Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, Medina, Uvalde, and Zavala counties will receive their ballots by mail approximately two weeks prior to the established August 31, 2017 election date. All ballots must be postmarked no later than August 31, 2017. Any person who produces spinach, and would be required to pay the assessment within the counties listed for commercial purposes, is eligible to vote.

Any person qualified to vote in the election may place his/her name in nomination for election to the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board by application to the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board, signed by him/herself and at least ten other persons eligible to vote in the election. Such applications must be received by August 1, 2017, to have his/her name placed on the ballot. A board nomination form can be obtained upon request by contacting your local AgriLife Extension Office or the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board at P.O. Box 886, Uvalde, Texas 78802. Any person qualified to vote that does not receive a ballot 15 days prior to the election, may obtain a ballot from one of the locations listed below: Atascosa County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-569-0034, 25 East Fifth Street, Leming, Texas 78050; Dimmit County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-876-4216, 539 Industrial Boulevard, Carrizo Springs, Texas 78834-3801; Frio County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-334-2752, 400 South Pecan Street, Pearsall, Texas 78061-3136; Maverick County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-773-5064, 2350 East Main Street, Eagle Pass, Texas 78852; Medina County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-741-6180, 1506 Avenue M, Hondo, Texas 78861-1754; Uvalde County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-591-9046, 122 Veterans Lane, Uvalde, Texas 78801 and Zavala County, AgriLife Extension Office, 830-374-2883, 221 North First Avenue, Crystal City, Texas 78839-3503.

### **Tip Of The Week: Tips on Selecting A Good Goat Project to Show**

The deadline for 4-H members to purchase a goat project for the upcoming show is quickly approaching. Goats must be owned by the exhibitor by Saturday September 23, 2017 and have these animals validated with a county tag also on this date. Selecting a goat project is really not as difficult as providing the goat project with the proper nutrition, management and care. When considering a livestock project there are a few things to keep in mind. This is an incredibly rewarding experience that takes commitment. Don't forget to identify financial matters, such as; funding sources available for the animal, feed, equipment, and facility purchase or upkeep. First find a reputable show goat breeder in the area and make time to take a look at what they have to offer, however, you and the family need to have an idea of what to look for when shopping for goat projects. So, what do you look for? All you need to do is focus on the following 4 selection key points.

**Weight:** It might seem odd that the first thing you would consider in selecting a goat project is weight since you have not even started to feed your goat. However, the finish weight of meat goats is the first consideration for 3 reasons: 1) not all animals can be fed to the same finished weight

because differences in frame size, 2) the breeds of goats and their crosses impact the amount of muscle and the finished weight of the goat, and 3) goats are marketed in the commercial market at a variety of different finish weights. The Zavala County show has a minimum weight of 60 pounds; and a maximum weight of 120 lbs. Goats will typically gain approximately 2-3 pounds per week with a proper nutrition program. So, buy goats that will make these weight by January 11, 2018. Be sure to ask the breeder for information about the birth date, castration date, dehorning date, vaccination schedule and types, deworming schedule, feed type and amount, and confirmation of the name and telephone number of the breeder. Write this information down in your records and store it in a place you can refer to. Once you find a goat of the right age now we go into the actual selection of a goat project. The following 3 tips will help you find the right goat project.

**1. Structure correctness:** Structure refers to how the goat's skeleton, or bones. Emphasis should be placed on the feet and legs, top line, rump and shoulders. The goat should stand and travel wide on both front and rear legs. The legs should be straight with strong pasterns. The top line, back and loin region, should be relatively level from the top of the shoulders to the hook bones (hip). The rump should be long and square with a slight slope from the hooks to pins area. The shoulders should be smooth, blending into the neck and the fore rib.

**2. Muscle:** Muscle is very important in a meat goat projects, because it impacts the quantity of meat harvested from the animal. General muscling in the animal is identified by handling and viewing the muscle quantity and definition in the loin and hind legs. The loin should be broad and thick. The goat should have a deep expressive rump and leg muscle. Wider standing and walking goats are generally heavier muscled. The goat should also be wide through the chest floor with a defined, large forearm.

**3. Balance:** Balance is described as "eye appeal" or the goat's overall appearance. This is a subjective measure that is different for each judge. Generally, it is interpreted by how well the body parts (neck, shoulder, rig cage, loin, rump, and leg) blend together. The parts of the body should flow smoothly into each other. A balanced goat holds it head erect. Typically, a well-balanced goat is one that catches your eye when you first enter the pen.

Finally remember that each judge has their own definition of the ideal meat goat and the amount of emphasis they place of each of the selection criteria. Remember, the participation in a youth meat goat project should not be for just purple ribbons or the sale of the animal. This is an opportunity to learn about the production, feeding, and management of a meat goat and develop valuable life skills. For additional information or help in selecting a goat project or assistance in locating a goat project contact the Zavala county office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883. Have a wonderful week. M.V.

August 7-11, 2017