

News From Your County Agent
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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Zavala County

Monday morning temperatures had many of us scrambling to find a light jacket or sweater at least to be comfortable in the early morning hours until the day warmed up a bit. Of course this being southwest Texas we will be back to near 90 by the end of the week, however, another cool front will make its way by late over the weekend. At least cool mornings remind us that the smells of turkey and all the trimmings and other smells of the holidays are just around the corner. Greetings to all of you and thank you so much for reading this week.

Higher Assessment Rate For Zavala County and South Texas Onions Recommended

The South Texas Onion Committee recommended the \$0.015 higher assessment rate to fund marketing activities and strengthen reserves. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is inviting comments on a recommendation by the South Texas Onion Committee to increase the assessment rate prescribed under the marketing order regulating the handling of onions grown in south Texas. This action would increase the assessment rate for the 2017-2018 marketing year and subsequent marketing years from \$0.05 to \$0.065 per 50-pound equivalent of onions handled under the order. The committee recommended the \$0.015 higher assessment rate to fund marketing activities and strengthen reserves.

The proposed rule for this action was published in the Federal Register on September 19, 2017. Written comments must be received by this Thursday, October 19, 2017. All comments to this proposed rule submitted by the deadline will be made available for public review and considered before any increases to the assessment rate are finalized. Comments should be posted on Regulations.gov, or mailed to Docket Clerk, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; or faxed to (202) 720-8938. Copies of the proposed rule may be requested from the address above or viewed on Regulations.gov. More information about the marketing order for onions grown in South Texas is available on the [959 South Texas Onions](#) page on the AMS website.

Swine Validation Will Take Place On Saturday

It is very important that you remember that the deadline for you to get a hog project for the Zavala County Junior Livestock Show is this Saturday, October 21, 2017. If you are a 4-H family and have children who are planning to show a market hog or breeding gilt in the 2018 Zavala County Junior Fair in January you need to have these animals in your possession and ready to validate this Saturday. Validation for all county market hogs and breeding gilt projects for the local show will take place this Saturday, October 21, 2017 at the exhibitors hog project pens starting at 8:30 a.m. The swine validation committee will be coming by your property where the hog projects are located to officially validate these animals. There will be a \$20 dollar validation fee per family and a \$5 validation tag fee per animal that must be paid on validation day. For more information about the local validation process or for assistance in locating a hog project contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service, by calling 830-374-2883 or go to the Zavala County

AgriLife Extension Service Website at <https://zavala.agrilife.org/> . This information is also provided to you via 4-H newsletter, this newspaper and on Facebook and twitter.

Tip of the Week: To Overseed or Not-For a Green Lawn All Year Long

If you have a bermuda or zoysia lawn and you want to maintain a green lawn throughout the winter you might have to make a crucial decision whether to overseed your lawn or NOT. So if you like to mow, irrigate, and fertilize during the winter? Is it appropriate to overseed your lawn for the winter? These are just a few questions that you need to ask yourself before you overseed your turf. Warm season grasses such as Bermuda and zoysias go dormant during the winter months and can be over seeded with a cool season grass variety to maintain green color and adequate quality. This DOES NOT include St. Augustine grass which stays green-and-growing all South Texas "winter" long-unless we have a hard freeze below 20 degrees F. To gather some insight on this topic, I used some of the information from Drs. Jim McAfee and Roger Havlak, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Turfgrass Specialists. The following is what they have to say about overseeding.

Overseeding is defined as seeding onto an existing turf, usually with a temporary cool-season turfgrass (i.e. annual or perennial ryegrass), to provide green active grass growth during dormancy of the warm season turfgrass (i.e. bermudagrass). It is used extensively on sports fields and golf courses, and to some extent, on commercial sites and home lawns. Sports field managers and golf course superintendents overseed their turfgrasses primarily to offset the excessive traffic during winter play as well as to have a green, quality turf. But there are negative effects to overseeding. Competition between the cool and warm season grasses can be great, especially in the early spring when the warm season turf is trying to re-grow after winter dormancy-often referred to as 'spring transition'. If the spring is cool and wet it will favor the persistence of the overseeded grass at the expense of the re-growth of the warm season grass. Improved turf-type annual ryegrasses typically have a better spring transition than do the over seeded perennial ryegrasses. In years that favor continued persistence of the overseeding, there can be significant damage to the bermudagrass turf. Another big negative with overseeding is if the existing turfgrass should be "scalped down" to provide a seedbed to favor a quick fall transition to the overseeding turfgrass. This scalping, along with the fall competition from the cool season grass prevents the warm season turfgrass from being able to store the necessary carbohydrates in the fall months. This means the turfgrass is going into winter dormancy in a weaker condition, with less stored reserves to recover well the following spring. If you have a great deal of traffic during the winter period at your site, then overseeding may be appropriate.

The best time to overseed the home lawn is NOW(mid to late October and early November), but more accurately after the first frost. Annual ryegrass is the fastest germinating variety and probably the cheapest. It looks very similar to perennial ryegrass with a dark green color and shiny leaves. Annual ryegrass grows quickly and requires frequent mowing (around 2 to 2.5 inch height) especially during late fall and early spring. Their water use rates are moderate and fertility requirements are low - maybe one to two pounds of nitrogen over the winter months. For a dense stand of rye grass, overseed at a rate of about 10-12 pounds of seed per thousand (33 feet by 33 feet) square feet. And keep the lawn irrigated for several weeks to ensure germination. There are a couple of new annual ryegrasses from Lloyd Nelson at the Overton station. One is Excella and the other is Pantera. While these are annual types, they look and grow more like the perennial types. Texas A&M recommends the Pantera (better color) for homeowners anytime. The annual types will die

out faster in the spring and therefore don't create as much a problem for the turfgrass growing in the lawn.

If you decide to overseed it is recommended that you aerate the lawn 30 days prior to overseeding if possible. For some homeowners, this is not possible or too hard to do. Right before you overseed, scalp the lawn (NEVER scalp St. Augustine!) down as low as your mower will go. This will help get the seed down in contact with the soil, which is very important. Fertilize overseeded sites with a complete fertilizer such as 15-5-10 at 6 pounds 1,000 square feet. Apply fertilizer immediately after seeding so as not to "burn" the young seedlings. After seedlings emerge, light applications of nitrogen will help produce a dense, healthy stand of grass. As soon as the seed is planted, start watering. Water lightly a couple of times per day until the seed start to germinate and grow - this is not like when planting bermuda grass seed that you should water two or three times daily until the seed sprouts. If you water rye seed too much, it will rot and your overseeding project will fail. Remember overseeding might not be the best thing to do in every case. Evaluate your current lawn conditions and if you have a dormant dry looking lawn and you want to add a little green color to your landscape then overseeding might be the project you want to try over the course of the next few days. For more information about overseeding and to see our Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Plant Answers website please go to <http://www.plantanswers.com> or contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or send me an e-mail to mj-valdez@tamu.edu. Have a great week. M.V.

October 16-20, 2017.

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