

News From Your County Agent
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According to ABC news total spending for Valentines day will top \$18.2 billion, yes folks billions like with a "B", which averages to about \$136.57 per person according to the National Retail Federation. The most popular expenditure is jewelry where 1 in 5 of folks will spend a whopping \$4.3 billion. Other Valentines spending is on chocolates, cards, romantic trips and on quiet dining experiences. Of course being a county Extension Agent and since I have written article on rose, care and other flowering tips I am curious on the spending on flowers on Valentines day. According to this same survey consumers are also expected to spend \$2 billion on flowers, mostly on roses. Of course guess what happens to these flowers after 8-10 days? They will wilt, die and out to the trash(hopefully your compost pile) they go. Yep \$2 billion dollar bills in the trash or mulch in your garden(Please see my tip of the week-Care and Growing Roses). Greetings to all of you, Happy Valentines day everyone and thank you for reading this week.

USDA To Host Labor, Wage Compliance For Agriculture Producers-Ranchers and Farm Labor Contractors Next Week

The U.S. Department of Labor, Wage & Hour Division, is hosting a free event for agricultural related employers. The event — February 21 and February 22, 2018 in Uvalde, Texas — will cover the different regulations pertaining to agricultural employment. This event is open to all including growers, packers, shippers, farm labor contractors, and agricultural buyers. We have plenty of space available if you are interested in participating. *This is free to the public.* We are especially interested in having you attend and spread the word to your clients and community. As extension agents you have direct contact with the people we are trying to reach. To pre-register or for more information, please call the Labor Department at 210-308-4515, or Marcel Valdez, County Extension Agent-ANR Zavala County at [830-374-2883](tel:830-374-2883). To register today for the Uvalde site please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/us-labor-dept-agriculture-seminar-tickets-42369951666>.

Reminder For Producers About Texas A&M AgriLife Extension And PSA Water Summit

The Zavala County office of the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension in collaboration with the Produce Safety Alliance will be hosting a Water Summit on February 27-28, 2018, to identify concerns, needs of growers, sources of information and support, and the rules for assessing produce safety hazard risks for covered produce related to water use under the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Final Rule - Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption (21 CFR §112). The two-day Water Summit is an engagement opportunity for growers, regulatory personnel, industry representatives, educators, and researchers to increase understanding and work collaboratively to develop ideas that support risk reduction related to water used during the production of fruits and vegetables. This Water Summit will include informational presentations and breakout discussions. Participants will explore challenges related to the FSMA Produce Safety Rule Subpart E - Agricultural Water requirements and discuss potential solutions that are workable, while still protecting public health.

Through collaboration with the four Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Regional Centers, and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, multiple remote breakout session sites will be held, including multiple locations in Texas to facilitate more growers participating. The Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Uvalde will be one of the remote sites. These remote site sessions will meet on the same dates (Feb. 27-28, 2018), stream the meeting live to their location, and conduct breakout groups at the same time as the Water Summit attendees in Covington, KY. Information from these groups will be fed into the meeting in real time so that their feedback can be integrated into the meeting outcomes.

In order to register for the Uvalde location remote site, please complete the registration form at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tjnW6Ru-desju_q45FyviJFGQpPp0m93zN0wLzUgfp0/edit

There is no cost to attend the remote site, but registration is limited to 30 participants for space and breakout/work groups facilitation. Breakfast items (coffee, juice, pastries) will be provided both days, as well as lunch on Feb. 27 at no cost to participants. For more information, please contact Matthew Taylor, Texas A&M University, at [979-862-7678](tel:979-862-7678) or matt.taylor@tamu.edu, or Marcel Valdez, County Extension Agent-ANR Zavala County at [830-374-2883](tel:830-374-2883).

Tip of the Week: Growing and Care of Roses

As I mentioned in my opening roses are very popular during Valentines and even mothers day. If you are one of the LUCKY ones that received a nice healthy rose plant for Valentines but now you are stuck on having to keep it alive or growing it so that it will grow, flourish and produce fresh roses for you, don't panic, here are a few tips for you to help you with this task.

Roses have a reputation for being difficult to care for, but actually learning how to take care of roses is somewhat simple. The main components involved with caring for roses that you need to understand are: planting, watering, fertilizing, pruning, and winterizing. Simply put, with the correct amount of water and sunlight and a little bit of grooming, your roses should thrive. And remember, roses are resilient plants. So, if you occasionally forget or muff something, the plants are surprisingly forgiving.

First thing you need to do for planting your rose plant that come in a container is to eyeball the pot the rose came in and dig a hole a bit wider and deeper. Once you dig the hole you can set the pot in, plant and all, to check the hole size for yourself. Next you loosen the soil on the sides and in the bottom of the hole, using your fingers or a trowel. This way, the roots can head outward and downward more easily when they're ready. Now you are ready to plant your rose. You can't just pop your rose into a hole, add the soil, and call it a day. Prepare the plant for planting, water the plant well - until liquid runs out the bottom of the pot - before planting. Next groom the top half of the plant. Clip off damaged stems, flowers, and buds. Leave on as much good foliage as you can. You can cut down to the highest five- or seven-leaflet leaf group. Cut to an outward-facing set of leaves to encourage new growth away from the center of the plant. Next run a butter knife, ruler, or other similar flat object all the way around the inside edge of the pot to loosen the plant. Squeezing the container sometimes helps to get it out. Gently pop it out.

Now that you have the plant out look at the root ball. If the rose is really root-bound, take a moment to help it further. Score the sides of the dense root ball with a sharp knife, up and down in two or three places. Don't make a deep cut, just 1/2 an inch deep is fine. This step stimulates root growth. Now holding the plant by the rootball (not the top growth), set it into the prepared hole, and backfill

good soil around it make a basin of soil or mulch around the plant when you're done; then water. The basin should be about 12 to 18 inches in diameter so the water that it collects soaks in directly over the root zone of the rose. This basin makes it easier watering . If the plant settles too low in the hole after you water it just simply wiggle it back up to the soil level. **NOW YOU ARE DONE.** To keep your newly planted rose growing and making a nice addition to your landscape there are a couple of rules you should follow. The rule of thumb for watering roses is to ma get about 2 inches of water a week. Deep soakings are much better than frequent, shallow watering. Set the hose at the foot of the rose and let water trickle in. Good luck with your newly planted roses. Have a happy Valentines day and keep your roses happy. M.V.

February 12-16, 2018.

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.