

News From Your County Agent
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Greetings to all of you and thank you for reading this week. The first day of summer was very comfortable for the most part which is not typical at this time of year for our area but we will take it. Sad to see and learn about all of the flooding that took place last week in the lower Rio Grande valley and south east Texas. I am sure some of those folks would have loved to share this rain with us to alleviate the extreme amounts they received, but that is usually the case. Some get to much and others do not get a drop.

Zavala and Neighboring Counties Label And Use Reminder For Pesticide Users

As a service to producers, applicators and consumers, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service reminds users of herbicides on cotton that the specific product use requirements on the approved label must be followed. These requirements were covered during the annual Zavala County pesticide applicators training in December and again in January. With pesticide applications in full swing we want to remind producers about the requirements of using Enlist and Xtend. The use of these products is essential for the vitality of cotton production in Zavala County and in Texas. How these products are used will determine if the TDA and EPA will all continued use of these products in the future.

Please see the following requirements on the use of the products Enlist (2,4-D) and Xtend (Dicamba). Although significant training and education was done on Xtend and Enlist, applicators are encouraged to review label requirements before applying these products. It is important to remember the LABEL IS THE LAW and it is a violation of federal law to use the product in a manner inconsistent with the label. It is important to know the following and check application guides for further guidance.

- Be aware of surrounding crops
- Know the buffer zone requirements
- Watch weather conditions such as wind speed, temperature, and cloud cover.
- Do not apply if drift could occur to food or forage
- Be aware of nozzle requirements and operating pressures listed on the product
- Be aware of low-level temperature that could cause inversion and product drift
- Use clean equipment sprayers
- Do not aerially apply these products
- Do not apply through irrigation
- Review the label and rules with all individuals that might be applying product

If you have questions, contact your product representative or the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Division of the Texas Department of Agriculture. You can also review product information at <http://www.enlist.com/en> for Enlist and at <http://www.xtendimaxapplicationrequirements.com/Pages/default.aspx> for Xtend. The Texas Department of Agriculture is designated as the state's lead agency in the regulation of pesticide use and application. TDA is responsible for licensing and training pesticide applicators, overseeing

worker protection, registering pesticides for sale in the state and working to minimize unnecessary impacts to agriculture while enhancing protection of endangered and threatened species. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is the lead agency in the education of use and application of pesticides.

Zavala, Uvalde And Medina 2018 Seed Cotton Meeting Planning Underway

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 for Agriculture (2018 Farm Bill) has new language dealing with generic acres and cotton production. New choices will need to be made for each tract with an FSA Number by late summer. Each producer that does not have prior knowledge of these changes will need to be introduced to the new rules and how these rules will apply to their operation. Choices that will need to be made for each FSA field number will be: 1) allocate the generic base acres (if there are any on this tract), 2) the producer will have an opportunity to update their base yields, and 3) they will need to choose whether that tract will participate under the ARC provisions or the PLC program provisions (a one-time choice). A program sign-up workshop to cover these changes for Zavala, Uvalde and Medina Counties is currently being planned. All producers in these counties will receive information regarding this training and an informational newsletter will be mailed to each producer in each of these counties once this program is finalized. For more information contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

Tip Of The Week: Meeting The New Quality County Requirements For Animal Exhibitors

As you may be aware, Quality Counts has been undergoing major revisions to better meet our youth livestock exhibitors with the most relevant and timely information related to this project area. Focused on quality assurance and character education, Quality Counts is designed to teach young people the importance of displaying good character in carrying out livestock projects, and in every aspect of their lives. Quality Counts helps youth exhibitors learn the importance of using proper livestock management practices so that food quality and safety are preserved. Livestock show programs, like Quality Counts, are critical in the development of agricultural industry careers of young professionals.

Notable revisions and changes to Quality Counts:

- New eLearning platform to better appeal to audience with enhanced visuals and learning activities.
- Combination presentation of content and exam to allow for exhibitors to engage in the full learning experience to receive certification.
- Engaging videos presented by major livestock show personnel, Extension professionals, Texas FFA representatives, previous exhibitors, and industry experts.
- New modules, such as: performance enhancing drugs and major livestock shows, livestock program ethics policy overview, social media tips, and more!
- Comprehensive exam to better gauge learning outcomes.
- Three age-level specific courses and exams.

Perhaps the most beneficial component of the updated Quality Counts program is the structure of the content and exam combination. What is meant by this is that exhibitors will first be required to engage in the full learning content before being presented with the verification exam. Unlike in previous years

when a student could only take the exam without reviewing content, now students will be exposed to all of the in-depth learning opportunities presented in the modules. What this means for exhibitors: more educational experience. What this means for educators: better prepared exhibitors and less time spent on classroom instruction. While you are still more than welcome to supplement classroom teaching with the Quality Counts curriculum, it is not necessary with the fully-loaded content driven modules provided in the eLearning course.

I hope you can see that this program will be worthwhile and impactful for youth livestock exhibitors. Another change to the program is that the Quality Counts course will be housed on the online validation website (www.texaslivestockvalidation.com). This will allow for integration of exhibitor/family information to be stored and synced with validation information.

Currently the state office is working on integration to the new site, but we did want to let you know, the new Quality Counts is coming soon! We are expecting launch in **August 2018**, and will be sure to keep you in the loop to ensure you are prepared to facilitate this change at the local level. All livestock exhibitors will be required to be verified under the new system for entry into major livestock shows. At this time this is NOT a requirement for local county shows but it may be in the future. If you have any questions about the new and improved program please feel free to give us a call at the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883. Have a great week. M.V.

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