

News From Your County Agent
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The 4th of July week provided us with a few fireworks display in the form of isolated lightening which brought us some much welcomed isolated rain showers. As usual for summer showers some folks were lucky and got a good soaking rain and some folks did not get as much but overall most of the county received some measurable rain. It is always nice to see good chances of rain in July for our part of the world. Greetings to all of you and thank you so much for reading this week.

Reminder of Producer Food Safety Training Next Week Under the new requirements of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule producers must receive a food safety training as one of the requirements to meet the regulation requirement of the new law. The Produce Safety Rule outlines in section § 112.22(c), that “at least one supervisor or responsible party from the farm to successfully complete food safety training under the standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration”.

This training will be available to ALL produce growers in the Wintergarden area next week on Thursday, July 19, 2018. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the training to begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Uvalde County Fairplex - Frio Room located at 215 Veterans Lane, Uvalde, Texas 78801. Cost to attend this program is \$40.00 per participant to cover the noon meal, printed training materials and other resources. After attending the entire course, participants will be eligible to receive a certificate from the association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) that verifies they have completed the training course. To receive an AFDO certificate, a participant must be present for the entire training and submit the appropriate paperwork to their trainer at the end of the course. To register for this training you may register online at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/2608> or you may contact the Uvalde County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-278-6661 or the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

Reminder of 2018 Farm Bill Seed Cotton Decision Workshop July 18 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 a Farm Service Agency (FSA) number by later this 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 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) provisions or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program provisions (a one-time choice).

A seed cotton decision sign-up workshop has been set for Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. to cover Medina, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties. This workshop will take place at the Uvalde County Fairplex - Dry Frio Room located at 215 Veterans Lane, Uvalde, Texas 78801. There is no cost to attend this event. For more information and to sign up for this workshop contact Marcel

Valdez, County Extension Agent at the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or Samantha Korzekwa, County Extension Agent at the Uvalde County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-278-6661 or Sandra Kunkel, County Extension Agent at the Medina County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-741-6180.

Tip of the week: Controlling Fleas In and Around The Home Dry conditions like the one we are currently in seems to favor fleas and their population numbers. I had a couple of folks call last week about controlling this pest in and around the home. Do you need to get rid of fleas in the house? Dealing with fleas can be a time-consuming problem, but it's not impossible to resolve by yourself. Don't make the mistake of thinking you need a professional when you do not. Many times, folks put away attacking fleas when they first see one and then by the time you realize you have a flea problem, most likely a full-blown flea infestation has occurred.

Don't panic, because a full-blown flea infestation sounds worse than it is. Well, we all know where fleas come from, or do we? Pets are wonderful company and they bring us endless hours of joy. However, the downside to having pets in the house is the fact they can bring in fleas. But don't blame pets entirely for a flea infestation; humans can track fleas into the house, too. Fleas can jump on you when you're in the yard and hitchhike a free ride into your home where they multiply like crazy. In less than a week, you could discover a full-blown flea infestation has taken over, right under your unsuspecting nose.

The first step in effective flea treatment is to address any infested pets when you first notice fleas on them. Not only does this provide relief for your furry friend, but it starts to get control of the flea problem at the source. Use a fine-toothed metal flea comb to remove adult fleas from your pet; flick the fleas into a basin of soapy water where they will drown. Wash your pet in specially formulated flea shampoos to remove both eggs and live fleas. Spot treatments such as Frontline®, Advantage and others are applied between your pet's shoulders and protect it from getting new fleas for a month or more, depending on the strength of the product and the size of your pet. Flea collars help deter new fleas as well, though you'll want to use other treatments concurrently for maximum effectiveness.

Treating your pet will go a long way toward solving your flea problem, but you must treat your home to prevent your pet from attracting more pests. Thoroughly vacuum your pet's favorite spots, particularly where it sleeps. Immediately after vacuuming, seal the vacuum bag in plastic and dispose of it outside before fleas have a chance to escape. Be sure to treat baseboards, windows, doorframes and other areas fleas may try to hide. Continue to vacuum consistently to reduce the chances of another buildup. Wash your pet's bedding, throw rugs and pillows to destroy fleas and eggs. Use foggers, powders, and sprays to kill fleas and inhibit their growth.

And now the outdoors. There are a number of yard products available to get rid of fleas outdoors. Some are toxic. Read the instructions carefully. Most containers are adaptable to your garden hose. Attach product to your garden hose and spray thoroughly all affected areas. Do not spray near flowers or vegetables. Repeat as required.

It may seem like a lot of extra work, but if you apply flea control products on your pets at least once a month for two or three months, and aggressively treat the house and yard, your flea problem should disappear -- provided you do not continually bring more fleas into the house. You can get rid of fleas in the house. If you have tried all of these tips which I have provided, and you still have an out of control flea problem you might need to get professional help from a reputable pest control company. Have a great week. M.V.

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