

News From Your County Agent
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Zavala County

I sincerely hope that all of you were able to take a few moments this Monday to remember all those veterans and active service men and women that have given their ultimate sacrifice in the freedom of our country. Unfortunately this day of remembrance has been commercialized so much that many people do not really understand the real meaning of Veterans day. Television, radio and even online market places promote Veterans day as a day for special deals at a car dealership or other Veterans day specials in the market place. Thank you VETERANS. Bundle up, check your home's heating system and make arrangements to keep 4-H animal project comfortable this week as temperatures will dip into the 30's in most parts of Zavala County. This time weather forecasters seem to be right about how cold it is going to be this week. Greetings to all of you, stay warm and thank you so much for reading this week.

State Swine Validation To Take Place Saturday

All 4-H families that ordered tags for a major show entry for a swine project are reminded that state validation for these animals will take place this Saturday, November 17, 2018 beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the exhibitors swine pens. Be sure to be there with your animal and with your parents or parent to complete this process. Several validation forms require original signatures of exhibitors and their parents or guardians. By validating a swine project does not enter your project in a major show, however, animals need to be validated prior to entry in a major show. Entries for major shows need to be completed by November 26, 2018 and turned in to the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Major Show Entries Due

If you validated a pig, lamb, goat or steer through the TEXAS STATE VALIDATION Program it is NOW time to COMPLETE your entries for the major shows you plan on showing in. Please complete ALL forms with signatures, social security numbers, new Quality Counts numbers and include the payment for your fees. Make checks payable to the Zavala Extension Education Fund, NOT TO THE STOCKSHOW you are entering, they will NOT take a personal check from individuals it must be paid from a 4-H or Extension Account. TURN IN ALL FORMS AND PAYMENTS NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2018 (EARLIER IS EVEN BETTER). If you need HELP completing these forms contact the Zavala county office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 BEFORE November 26, 2018

Tip of the Week: Considering Giving a Pet For Christmas-Tips To Consider

Christmas holiday commercials have already taken over Television air time and it is not even thanksgiving day yet. Of course these commercials do make us think of what we may get our loved ones, friends and significant others. Many times folks decide on a cute puppy or kitten as a Christmas present. While there are few gifts as special as a new pet, it's important to remember that adding a new member to your family is a big commitment. I know some folks that didn't make the decision to give a pet as a gift serious and it became a burden on the recipient and that is not even taking into account what the animal goes through in a case like this. To help you decide if giving

a pet is the best thing you can do here are some things you really need to think about before heading out to the animal shelter and fall in love with a pup that hypnotizes you with that puppy/kitten eyes.

Here are six steps you should take before giving a pet as a gift:

1. Consider the Long-Term Care Required

Pets need a lot of love and care to live happy, healthy lives. As such, it's important that you don't gift a pet to someone who isn't able to take care of it for the long term. Most dogs in the low end live 12-17 years and in some cases more so remember 15 year average commitment.

2. Get Your Home Ready

If you're getting your kids or significant other a pet, it's important that you kitty- or puppy-proof your home prior to the day of the reveal. This is an important step to ensure your new pet's safety. Make sure things like electrical cords and outlets are covered and that your houseplants are not poisonous to cats or dogs.

3. Choose the Pet Wisely

That adorable puppy may someday morph into a 160-pound dog, which won't be suited to a small apartment or a small home. Match the pet to the person receiving it, the type of environment in which they live and the time they have to care for the animal is important. Find out

For example, if you know that it will be a struggle to get your son to walk a dog, it might be a better idea to get him a cat, instead. If there are children around, you also need to take the animal's temperament into account. And don't forget to get the pet neutered, immunized and checked out by a veterinarian before you bring him home.

4. Have Supplies on Hand

Just like babies, dogs and cats need lots of stuff. Food, cleaning supplies and other items, like kitty litter, collars and toys, should be part of the gift. Your new friend can't wear that bow forever! If your new pet is a dog, provide a new puppy checklist available from the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Look at this list and make sure you haven't forgotten anything.

5. Set the Stage

Change, even good change, can be stressful for animals. Since holidays tend to be particularly chaotic, it's important that you go the extra mile to make sure that the pet is kept calm. You may also need some extra hands on deck to make the surprise happen seamlessly considering the safety and well being of the puppy or kitten.

6. Prepare for the Big Moment

If you decide to "box" the pet, it's crucial that you provide him with plenty of air holes. Of course, you shouldn't keep him in there for too long! You might also want to consider having the animal wait with a chaperon in an enclosed outdoor space, like your backyard. Either way, make sure that you film the big moment so that you can remember it for years to come!

So remember. Before you adopt that fluffy puppy you see in the window at the shelter as a Christmas gift for your child or loved one, think carefully about whether it is really the right choice. Tragically, countless pets given as holiday gifts end up in the shelter system and many of them never end up finding a new home. If you do decide to give a pet as a gift, put the time and forethought into the decision. Have a great week M.V.

November 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.