

News From Your County Agent
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Zavala County

This week will mark the end of February 2019 and take us into a very cold start for the month of March over the weekend according to the professional weather forecasters. Of course many native wildflowers are already in full bloom even bluebonnets giving us a hint that spring in South Texas is here even though temperatures may not reflect this time of year. Greetings to all of you and thank you so much for reading this week.

Second Request For Texas 4-H Summer Camp Staff

Do you want a summer job where you can play with kids, swim, dance, and have fun while gaining valuable leadership experience? Consider applying for a Texas 4-H Center Summer Staff position. The 4-H Center provides an opportunity for you to work in an atmosphere where you will not only impact the lives of young people, but also learn a lot about yourself and make life-long friends. Each position provides valuable leadership training, work experience, fun and profit for individuals who truly desire to be part of a positive summer experience for over 2,500 youth.

Requirements of applicants:

- * Successful completion of one year of college or other work by June 1, 2019
- * Be enthusiastic, creative, hardworking and dependable
- * Be able to get along with others and work as a team

So if you are a former 4-H members who is 18 years old, completed one year of college, and may be interested in working at the 4-H camp this summer this opportunity might be for you. The Texas 4-H camp is now accepting applications for Texas 4-H Camp Summer Staff. The application is on 4-H camp website at texas4hcenter.tamu.edu under the employment tab. Applications are due March 22. For more information contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or Cari Snider, Extension Program Specialist-4-H Development Program Coordinator-Texas 4-H Center at 325-784-5482 or go to <http://texas4hcenter.tamu.edu>

Zavala County Community Futures Forum To Be Held March 19

Our ability to meet educational needs depends on knowing what local residents see as their issues that impact their lives. There is no way to know the answers to these questions unless they are asked. Therefore, Extension will involve local people in a process to ask residents what is important to them. The 2019 Community Futures Forum will be held in Zavala county on March 19, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the La Pryor School Cafeteria. This process will be held in every county in Texas from January 1 to May 31, 2019. The 2019 Texas Community Futures Forum marks the 20 anniversary of this process. The original TCFE was held in 1999 with great success. This activity is just one part of the process to identify issues.

The issues that surface should be discussed with county committees, task forces, and subject matter specialists to determine the appropriate action for educational programming. Moreover, they will be shared with other agencies and educational groups to see if a program partnership can be formed to address the issue, as A&M AgriLife Extension is unique because it has Extension agents in every county of the state. This uniqueness provides an opportunity to bring together the people of Texas, other service agencies, and educational groups to help provide solutions to the problems and issues

facing Texans. Remember the mission of Extension: “Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education”. If you receive an invitation to be part of this process please participate, your input is valuable to all of us. If you want to be active in this process and you want to insure your participation please contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 and ask to be placed on the TCFE participation list for Zavala County.

Tip of the Week: Growing Your Own Herbs

A reader contacted me last week about growing herbs in a herb garden for home use. Well this reader and all of you who enjoy gardening are in luck. Herbs are plants that are used as flavoring agents. The common herbs used in cooking are referred to as culinary herbs. Mild or savory herbs impart a delicate flavor to foods while the stronger or pungent herbs add zest to foods. A number of additional herbs are used for medicinal or ornamental purposes. My article this week deals mainly with culinary herbs used in cooking. These herbs are attractive and varied so their ornamental value is also important. The leaves of most herbs are the part of the plant that is used although the seeds or roots of some herbs can also be used. Herbs are used in small quantities, so usually only a few plants are necessary to provide sufficient fresh and dried herbs for the entire season. Herb gardening is becoming popular throughout Texas. New enthusiasm for "natural" foods has heightened this interest. In addition, herbs add flavor and zest to creative cookery. Most food recipes can be accentuated with proper use of culinary herbs.

Many gardeners establish a small herb garden near the home. Generally, a 6 to 10 foot square or rectangular area is sufficient. Circular or free-form designs can also be used. Use the information contained in this article for proper spacing, and locate the tallest herbs to the back of the plot. Some of the herbs that do well in our part of the state are rosemary, anise, basil, coriander, dill, fennel, oregano, sage, tarragon and several others. Care for the herb garden is similar to a vegetable or flower garden. Select a sunny, well-drained location. Apply a balanced fertilizer but avoid excessive use of nitrogen fertilizers. Water as necessary during dry periods. Generally, about 1 inch of water is needed per week, if not supplied by natural rainfall. A mulch helps conserve soil moisture and reduces weed growth as well. Mints prefer moist soil so they require more frequent watering.

Establish annual and biennial herbs by planting seed directly in the garden or starting seeds indoors for later transplanting to the garden. Save seed produced by the herb plants for next year's crop, or obtain seed from your local garden center or seed catalog. Leaves of many herbs such as parsley and chives can be harvested for fresh seasonings. On these plants, gradually remove some of the leaves as needed, but don't remove all the foliage at one time. These plants produce over a long period if they are well cared for. On rosemary and thyme, clip the tops when the plants are in full bloom. For a complete list of herbs and how to grow them contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 and ask for the Extension growing herbs in Texas publication. Have a great week. M.V.

February 25 - March 1, 2019