

News From Your County Agent
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We wanted rain and we got it and more to come for most of the week. Early Monday morning a good line of showers swept through the area dumping over an inch of rain in most parts of the county. There are good chances of more thunder showers to make their way through our area for most of the week including the upcoming weekend. Greetings to all of you and thank you for reading this week.

Work Continues on New Modernizing Agriculture Transportation Act

Following the introduction of the Transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act in the Senate on last Tuesday, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) and Representative Greg Pence (R-IN) announced late last week the introduction of H.R. 2460, the Modernizing Agriculture Transportation Act. The legislation is a companion bill to S. 600, introduced into the Senate in February, where it is already showing bipartisan support and would require the Secretary of Transportation to establish a working group to study regulatory and legislative improvements for the livestock, insect, and agricultural commodities transport industries.

The working group would be responsible for presenting the Secretary of Agriculture with a report identifying the “initiatives and regulatory changes that maintain and protect the safety of highways and allow for the safe, efficient, and productive marketplace transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities”. Members of the working group would include Governors; representatives of State and local agricultural and highway safety agencies; other representatives of relevant State and local agencies; and members of the public with experience in the livestock, insect, and agricultural commodities industries. The main focus of this legislation is to focus on the safe and efficient movement of cattle throughout the country so that transporters will deliver their live cargo as humanely as possible. New regulations, imposed in 2017 are currently not working and a solution to these regulations are being explored. I will keep you informed of any new updates regarding this legislation that will affect producers in Zavala county, the state and nation.

June 22 is Deadline For Steer Exhibitors To Validate Animals For 2020 Shows

Whether you plan on showing a steer project in the Zavala county junior livestock show or you want to experience the exhibition of livestock at a major show in Texas such as the State Fair in Dallas, the San Antonio Livestock show or Houston and many others you will need to have these animals validated next month. Both the county and state validation of these projects will take place at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday June 22nd at the Chaparrosa Ranch facilities located approximately 4.8 miles south of La Pryor on highway 83.

Exhibitors must have PREVIOUSLY ordered a state steer validation tag in April in order to validate those projects for a major show in Texas. Exhibitors that will only show steers in the county did not have to order tags and will not have to order tags, just bring your animals to validation. Exhibitors

and at least one parent must be present at validation to obtain all the required documentation and officially enter these animals in the county and major shows. For more information regarding this process please contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service at 830-374-2883.

Tip of the Week: Tomato Diseases-Causes, Prevention and Control

Cool conditions so far have been very favorable for those of us growing tomatoes for our home use. Of course it did not take long to get the first call of the season regarding tomato diseases showing up in vegetable gardens across the county. Tomatoes are the most popular garden vegetable crop in Texas. They are a good source of vitamin A and fair source of vitamin C. Fresh tomatoes are popular in salads, on sandwiches and sliced. They can be cooked and used in many ways. Diseases of tomatoes are classified according to the stages of the fruit in which diseases occur or parts of the plant that show disease problems as well as their potential cause. These diseases or tomato disorders are classified as diseases of the green fruit, diseases of the ripe fruit, tomato stem diseases, tomato leaf diseases, tomato root diseases and diseases caused by insects. For the most part the majority of tomatoes being grown in Zavala county gardens are currently setting fruit and for the large part fruit that is on the plant at this time of year are green. Therefore I will focus on tomato disorders of green fruit this week and as the season moves along and I receive more calls about tomato disorders I will address these in future tips of the week.

So lets discuss a few tomato disorders of the green fruit:

Bacterial Speck:

Symptoms: Symptoms may appear on any plant part. Leaves of infected plants are covered by small, dark brown, irregular patches of necrotic tissue that are surrounded by yellow halos. Disease severity is increased by leaf wetness from sprinkler irrigation, rain, or heavy dews.

Control: Minimize wetting of the leaves by using drip or furrow irrigation. Copper sprays provide effective control.

Bacterial Canker:

Symptoms: Bacterial canker is characterized by wilting and eventual death of the lower leaves, with the leaves drying up while still attached to the stem. Vascular tissue is discolored, brown, or brownish-yellow, and a characteristic yellow slime can be squeezed from affected stems. The bacterium that causes this disorder may be seed or soil born.

Control: Crop rotations and careful seed source selection are primary considerations. Seed beds in infected areas should be sterilized. Mechanical damage to the transplants (such as topping) spreads the disease.

Late Blight:

Symptoms: Lesions on leaves appear as large watersoaked areas, that eventually turn brown and papery. Fruit lesions are large irregular greenish-brown patches having a greasy rough appearance. Green to black irregular lesions are also present on the stems.

Control: The fungus develops during periods of cool wet weather. Fungicide sprays as a preventative measure during these periods may be needed if the crop is being grown near large areas of tomato relatives (Solanaceous weeds, potatoes).

Alternaria Canker:

Symptoms of Alternaria canker appear on stems, leaves and fruit. Brown or black necrotic lesions are usually visible on plants from which infected fruit are picked. Fruit are infected when green, but symptoms persist into the ripening period. Sunken grayish lesions are present on fruit.

Control: Fungus overwinters in crop residue and is easily spread by wind. Wounding of young plants (by mechanical damage or pruning) provides an entry site for infection. Furrow or drip irrigation is preferred over sprinkler irrigation. Preventative fungicide sprays may be required if a “zero tolerance” for defects production system is needed.

Buckeye Rot:

Symptoms: Buckeye rot is one of a number of fruit rotting diseases that attacks both green and ripe fruit, especially where the fruit touches the soil. The lesion is rounded with alternating bands of light and dark brown in concentric circles. The lesion appears water-soaked at first, but later may become leathery on the surface.

Control: Staking or plastic mulch to prevent fruit from contacting the soil is an effective control. The disease is worse in hot, wet weather. Fungicides offer little control to soil-contact type diseases.

Sun Scald:

Symptoms: Fruit have yellowish or whitish patches on side exposed to sunlight. These patches turn leathery and dry out. They may become infected with various types of mold as secondary infections in the wounded tissue. Fruit protected by shade from leaf cover or shading material are unaffected..

Control: Select varieties noted to retain leaf cover throughout season. Use good fungicide/insecticide program to prevent leaf loss due to insects and disease. On small scale, can cover fruit with straw or shade plants with row cover.

Blossom End Rot:

Symptoms: Blossom end rot is often misdiagnosed as a fruit disease. The blossom end of the fruit fails to develop normally, turning black-dark brown and eventually shriveling and becoming hard. Blossom end rot is usually due to a nutritional imbalance that is exaggerated by alternating periods of water stress.

Control: Provide even soil moisture and follow recommended fertilization practices noting particularly the balance between nitrogen and calcium.

Tomato Mosaic Virus:

Symptoms: Tomato mosaic virus (TMV) infected plants have a green/yellow mottled appearance and are usually stunted. Infected fruit may have necrotic brown patches on them.

Control: The virus is most commonly transmitted by handling or mechanical damage. Gardeners who smoke may infect plants with virus particles left on their hands after handling cigarettes. A variety of insects can also transmit the disease from infected weeds in the Solanaceae family. Avoid planting in a field where infected tomato plants were grown, and in greenhouse situations, all pruning equipment should be steam sterilized regularly. Use resistant varieties.

If you would like to see pictures of the tomato diseases I have mentioned in this column this week please go to our Extension horticulture site at <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/problem-solvers/tomato-problem-solver/green-fruit/> Have a wonderful week-M.V.

May 6-10, 2019.

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