

News From Your County Agent
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Good bye June and hello July. What a fascinating start to July with temperatures way below normal giving us a comfortable July 4th week. Of course this weather pattern will change soon but as I have shared with you in past articles my friends at the National Hurricane Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA have predicted below normal temperatures for the summer including decent chances of rain (a rare occurrence) for our neck of the woods. I just hope they are 100 percent right. Greetings to all of you and may all of you have a wonderful and safe 4th of July week (please see tip of the week). Enjoy the decent summer weather.

Spinach Producers To Hold Elections In August

The Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board election will be held by mail balloting to fill two positions on the board. Spinach producers in Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, Medina, Uvalde, and Zavala counties will receive their ballots by mail approximately two weeks prior to the established August 31, 2019 election date. All ballots must be postmarked no later than August 31, 2019. Any person who produces spinach, and would be required to pay the assessment within the counties listed above for commercial purposes, is eligible to vote. This biennial election is being certified by the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Texas, Wintergarden Spinach

Any person qualified to vote in the election may place his/her name in nomination for election to the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board by application to the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board, signed by him/herself and at least ten other persons eligible to vote in the election. Such applications must be received by August 1, 2019, in order to have his/her name placed on the ballot. A board nomination form can be obtained upon request by contacting the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service located at 221 north first avenue in Crystal City, Texas or the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board at P.O. Box 886, Uvalde, Texas 78802. Any person qualified to vote that does not receive a ballot 15 days prior to the election, may obtain a ballot from the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service located at 221 north first avenue in Crystal City, Texas or the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service offices in Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, Medina or Uvalde Counties as well.

Neighboring Kinney County Has Confirmed Case of VSV

First it was Anthrax in neighboring Uvalde county now vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV) was confirmed in horses on a Kinney County premise on June 21, 2019. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirmed the virus as the Indiana serotype. The horses were tested after the owner observed lesions on the horses' muzzles and contacted a veterinary practitioner. TAHC has quarantined the premises, and there is no known exposure to other horses. The quarantine period for premises with suspect or confirmed VSV cases is 14 days from the onset of lesions in the last affected animal on the premises.

No other cases of VSV have been identified in the immediate area or elsewhere in the state. VSV can cause blisters and sores in the mouth and on the tongue, muzzle, teats or hooves of horses, cattle,

swine, sheep, goats, llamas and a number of other animals. Lesions usually will heal in two or three weeks. Because of the contagious nature of VSV and its resemblance to other diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), animal health officials urge livestock owners and caretakers to report these symptoms to their veterinarian immediately. Most animals recover with supportive care by a veterinarian.

Known competent vectors for transmission of VSV include black flies, sand flies, and biting midges. Livestock owners should implement best practices to limit livestock exposure to insects. Some states and other countries may restrict movement of, or impose additional requirements for susceptible animals from states having known cases of VSV. Before moving livestock, contact the state of destination for their requirements. For export information contact the USDA Veterinary Services (VS) Austin office at (301) 851-3300 option 2. If you suspect your animal has VSV, notify your private veterinarian immediately. VSV is not highly contagious to people but it can cause flu-like illness if infected saliva gets into an open wound, eyes or mouth. People handling potentially infected animals should wear gloves for protection, and talk with a physician if they have questions. For more information about VSV visit

https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_VS.pdf.

Tip of the Week: Enjoying a Safe July 4th Week-Safe Food and Safe Play

The fourth of July is one of the biggest grilling and BBQ days on the calendar. According to a survey by the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), 73% of people will be firing up the grill for July 4th – making it the #1 grilling event. But, foodborne illnesses increase during the hot summer months – because not only does bacteria multiply faster in warmer temperatures – but preparing food outdoors makes safe food handling more challenging. Then as it is a tradition in Zavala County add a little fireworks action and you have the ingredients for a fun filled day, but of course if safety rules are not followed the day can be a very uncomfortable event. Here are a few safe grilling and safe fireworks popping tips to make your holiday a real joy from start to finish.

Grilling:

Chill in Preparation

Keep meat, poultry, and seafood refrigerated until ready to grill. When transporting, keep below 40°F in an insulated cooler.

Clean

Wash your hands with soap before and after handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood. Wash work surfaces, utensils, and the grill before and after cooking.

Clean your grill and tools. Use a moist cloth or paper towel to clean the grill surface before cooking. If you use a wire bristle brush, thoroughly inspect the grill's surface before cooking. Wire bristles from grill cleaning brushes may dislodge and stick into food on the grill.

Separate

When shopping, pick up meat, poultry, and seafood last, right before checkout. Separate them from other food in your shopping cart and grocery bags. To guard against cross-contamination, put packages of raw meat and poultry into individual plastic bags. Throw out marinades and sauces that

have touched raw meat juices, which can spread germs to cooked foods. To prevent foodborne illness, do not use the same platter, cutting board or utensils for raw and cooked foods. Harmful bacteria present in raw meat and poultry and their juices can contaminate cooked food. Use clean utensils and a clean plate to remove cooked meat from the grill.

Cook

Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is cooked hot enough to kill harmful germs. When smoking, keep temperatures inside the smoker at 225°F to 300°F to keep meat a safe temperature while it cooks.

- 145°F – whole cuts of beef, pork, lamb, and veal (stand-time of 3 minutes at this temperature)
- 145°F – fish
- 160°F – hamburgers and other ground beef
- 165°F – all poultry and pre-cooked meats, like hot dogs
- Smoking: 250°F – 300°F – inside smoke
- After Grilling: 140°F or warmer – until it's served

Chill – Refrigerate Leftovers

Divide leftovers into small portions and place in covered, shallow containers. Put in freezer or [fridge](#) within two hours of cooking (one hour if above 90°F outside).

Fireworks: According to the Consumer Protection Safety Commission (CPSC), almost 12,000 people were taken to the emergency room for fireworks-related injuries in 2015. The majority of these injuries are sustained around the 4th of July holiday weekend. The hands and fingers are the most often injured body parts resulting from fireworks, but injury can occur to any part of the body. Here are a few safety tips to follow this week.

- Do not allow young children to handle fireworks
- Set off fireworks outdoors in clear areas free of houses, dry leaves, or other flammable materials. REMEMBER IT IS ILLEGAL TO USE FIREWORKS IN THE CITY LIMITS.

- Do not try to reignite or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Be sure other people are out of range (or the line of fire) when lighting fireworks
- Never light fireworks in a container, especially glass or metal containers
- Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas
- Store fireworks properly and check instructions for special storage instructions And don't forget about your pooch. More pets are lost during times when fireworks are used than any other time of the year. Many pets get scared and nervous from all the fireworks going off. There are lots of simple things you can do to help your pet deal with fireworks. By preparing in advance before fireworks start your pet will be better able to cope with the noises. Close windows, use blankets or comfort jackets and turn up t.v. to block out some of the fireworks noises. Better yet have someone cuddle your pet and make them feel safe during the time fireworks are being set off.

If you choose to celebrate with fireworks and outdoor grilling please do so safely. Protect not only yourself, but your loved ones as well, especially children. Injuries sustained resulting from making a poor decision can last a lifetime. Have a happy and safe 4th of July. M.V.

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