

**News From Your County Agent**  
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**Zavala County**

A nice way to start the week with nice scattered showers in the area on Monday giving us hope that July will not be as brutal as July's past. We hope this trend continues especially the chances of rain. Tropical storm Barry did not do much for our rain chances but remember hurricane season is only beginning and the peak of hurricane season has not been reached. Greetings to all of you and thank you so much for reading this week.

**Update on Anthrax Confirmed Cases In The Area**

A couple of weeks ago I informed you of a confirmed case of Anthrax in neighboring Uvalde county. Since then several other cases of this disease have been confirmed. The first anthrax case of the year was confirmed in one captive antelope on a premises in Uvalde County on June 19, 2019. Since that time, anthrax was confirmed in goats on a new Uvalde County premises on June 24, one Sutton County horse was confirmed to have anthrax on July 3, and cattle were confirmed to have anthrax on a separate Sutton County premises on July 4. All of the premises have been placed under quarantine and producers were advised on vaccinating exposed animals and the proper disposal of affected carcasses, as outlined by TAHC's rules. Typically, quarantines are lifted 10 days from vaccination or the last death loss.

It is common to see an increase in anthrax cases after periods of wet, cool weather, followed by hot, dry conditions. During these conditions, animals ingest the anthrax bacteria when they consume contaminated grass and hay, or inhale the spores. Outbreaks usually end when cooler weather arrives. There is an effective anthrax vaccine available for use in susceptible livestock (includes but is not limited to, swine, equine, sheep, goats, cattle, wildlife, etc.) in high risk areas. TAHC encourages livestock owners to consult with a local veterinary practitioner and vaccinate livestock if owners live within the triangular area bound by the towns of Uvalde, Ozona and Eagle Pass. Producers may order anthrax vaccines directly from the manufacturer.

After exposure to anthrax, it usually takes three to seven days for animals to show symptoms of anthrax. Once symptoms begin, death will usually occur within 48 hours. Acute fever followed by rapid death with bleeding from body openings are all common signs of anthrax in livestock. Owners of livestock and animals displaying symptoms consistent with anthrax or experiencing death of animals should contact a private veterinary practitioner or a TAHC official. Producers are encouraged to follow basic sanitation precautions when handling affected livestock or carcasses. It is recommended to wear protective gloves, long sleeve shirts and to wash thoroughly afterward to prevent accidental spread of the bacteria to people. For more information on how anthrax affects humans please visit <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/anthrax/information/faqs/>.

For more information about Anthrax, visit

[www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure Anthrax.pdf](http://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_Anthrax.pdf), or contact your local TAHC region office, or visit [www.tahc.texas.gov](http://www.tahc.texas.gov).

**Reminder of Required Grower Training Available Next Week July 24<sup>th</sup>**

If you have missed a Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower training held in our area a few months ago you have a chance to meet this requirement this month. A training for fruit and vegetable growers and others interested in learning about produce safety, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule, Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), and co-management of natural resources and food safety may attend. This PSA Grower Training Course is one way to satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in § 112.22© that requires at least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration. In addition to learning about produce safety best practices, key parts of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements are outlined within each module. There will be time for questions and discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and produce safety questions.

The training will be sponsored by the Zavala, Uvalde and Medina county Extension agents and will be held on Tuesday, July 24, 2019 at the Hondo Public Library located at 2003 Avenue K. in Hondo, TX 78861. The program is scheduled to be held from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The cost to attend this program is \$40.00 per person which will cover lunch, training materials and certificates. 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 online go to [https://secure.touchnet.com/C21490\\_ustores/web/classic/store\\_main.jsp?STOREID=401](https://secure.touchnet.com/C21490_ustores/web/classic/store_main.jsp?STOREID=401). You may also register by phone by calling 979-862-7678. For additional information about this training or assistance in registering for this event you may call the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

### **Tip of The Week: Be Cautious Of Ticks-Another Summer Pest**

People usually think of mosquitoes when they think of insect-transmitted viruses like Zika or West Nile which garner a lot of headlines. But ticks can transmit viruses, too. Unfortunately ticks sometimes take a lesser degree of importance since many Zavala county residents are busy battling mosquitoes but ticks can also cause serious health risk like mosquitoes if you do not take precautions to control them or avoid them altogether. Scientists have historically grouped tick-borne viral diseases into two categories. One is diseases similar to dengue fever. The main dengue-like viral disease transmitted by ticks in the U.S. is Colorado tick fever, which occurs in mountainous areas of the West. In Texas, you may encounter the lone star tick, American dog tick, brown dog tick, Gulf Coast tick, black-legged tick, winter tick, and the spinose ear tick. All these ticks could pose a threat with different species acting as vectors for various diseases. Ticks transmit many diseases when they feed on people or pets. Most people have heard of Lyme disease, and tick species in Texas have given this to humans before, with between 50 and 100 people diagnosed each year. But, this is not the only problem caused by these blood-suckers. Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia, and ehrlichiosis may all be transferred to people from tick bites. In fact, a lone star tick bite could make you allergic to meat. Though these ailments are treatable, prevention is a better option.

While rare, tick-borne diseases can be devastating. To avoid them, prevent getting bitten in the first place. Before going out, apply a repellent that prevents ticks from settling on your clothing and skin.

Look for the ingredient permethrin. Protect your backyard by making it inhospitable to ticks. Don't walk through areas of high grass or groundcover. When hiking, stick to the trails, where open paths are less likely to harbor ticks. Check yourself and your pets regularly when outside, and if you see a tick, remove it immediately with tweezers. Even with all the precautions possible, you may still get sick. After removing a tick, watch out for signs of illness that indicate you should go to a doctor. Many tick diseases may be fatal if left untreated, so don't delay in seeking medical help. Watch out for a rash near the bite – especially if it has a bullseye shape – a high fever, muscle aches, headaches, or generally not feeling well within a month of a bite. These could indicate tick-bite illnesses, which often take days to weeks to set in.

So what to make of all this? We know that Texas has the Lyme disease carrying tick, and that a few to dozens of people contract the disease from outdoor activity in Texas every year. And these numbers are likely underestimates, because Lyme disease is less frequently tested for here than in parts of the country where it is known better and more common. We also know that the ticks that carry Lyme disease are doing well enough to be showing up in more, rather than fewer, counties every year. Researchers have now found blacklegged ticks in 49% of all U.S. counties spread across 43 states. This represents an increase of almost 45% from 1998, when tick distribution was last mapped. The status of nine Texas counties changed from “previously unreported” or simply “reported”, to a higher status of “reported” or “established” (six or more ticks or two or more life stages collected in a year). The tick has now been reported from 71 (28%) out of the 254 Texas counties.

So remember to use permethrin-containing sprays applied to clothing are the most effective repellents for ticks, though skin applied repellents can also help. Learn how to remove a tick by grasping close to the head with tweezers or protected fingers to pull straight out. The sooner a tick is removed the less chance for disease transmission. The CDC advises to avoid folklore remedies such as “painting” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach. Also, heat and suffocants, like grease, may actually stimulate the tick to salivate, increasing your potential for infection. Although chances of infection with a tick-borne disease in Texas are relatively low, should you experience a rash, fever, headache, joint or muscle pains, or swollen lymph nodes within 30 days after being bitten by a tick, tell your doctor. Knowing that a tick might have been involved will provide your doctor with information that is needed to properly diagnose the problem. Be safe and have a great week. M.V.

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