

Howdy Grayson County,

This is your new Ag agent with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, Marshall Tolleson. I'm excited to be here in Grayson County, and unless most of you are lying through your teeth, you're excited I'm here too. One thing I'm looking forward to getting up and running is a newsletter to update the citizenry on local agricultural and natural resource related news. I promise I won't waste your time with information you can't use, and if you're the busy type, I'm planning on producing a podcast that you can listen to in the car or on the tractor. I'll put out the newsletter as soon as I have enough new information to justify it.

Let's get into it.

Row Crops

Wheat is beginning to head and from what I've seen when I've had the chance to get out of the office, we haven't been hit by rust to the same degree as growers to the south. Keep your eye on it though and protect that flag leaf. The best way to control rust in your fields is to plant resistant varieties, and you can read about those in Dr Clark Neely's newsletter [here](#) to help you pick a variety next year if you're having problems with rust in your fields.

We finally got enough dry weather to get in the field to plant corn, which is good because the deadline to insure your crop at full value has passed. My 55mph population surveys looked like most fields had good stands established. A couple looked like they might have missed out on a little phosphorous though, so if you feel like that's you it would be a good idea to test your soil before you plant next year and adjust your pop-up application accordingly.

If you're late to the party but still need to get something in the ground, sorghum is a good option. The deadline to plant for FSA insurance is May 15th. You can look at last years yield trial results from A&M's trial in Greenville [here](#).

If you're growing cotton, I haven't met you yet. When you finish in your fields feel free to come to my office, grab a cup of coffee, and tell me what your plans are. I'm interested to know.

Same goes for soybeans. I know at least one of you grew them last year because I found the stubble left in a field.

Pasture

The weather can't decide if it wants to warm up or not, which seems to be delaying green up in bermudagrass. I'd like to say after this last cold snap it should all be behind us and green pastures lie ahead, but as they say, "Only fools and newcomers predict the weather in Texas."

The folks in the Soil and Crop Science department at A&M want to be sure you know that if you have blackberries or dewberries in your pastures, mowing them will only tick 'em off. That, and it hinders any control you might have with an herbicide. The best time to apply an herbicide is while the plants are blooming and aren't under any stress, like that induced when you hit them with the shredder.

Coming directly from the forage fax newsletter:

Select Herbicide Options:

Chaparral (will kill bahiagrass)

Cimarron Plus (will kill bahiagrass)

RemedyUltra

Pasturegard HL

Surmount

Note that Pasturegard HL, RemedyUltra and Surmount may be less effective if mowing has occurred within a year prior to treatment for either species.

Lawns

Or as I like to call them, pasturitas.

If you're having problems with big weeds now, you're too late to do anything about it. The cool season weeds have flowered and made seeds, so anything you spray or spread will be a waste of money. You're also too late to apply a pre-emergent herbicide as bermudagrass and other turf grasses are starting to break dormancy and you don't want to inhibit their ability to put out new roots. And since their root systems are still developing, they won't be able to take in enough fertilizer to be efficient and you're likely to lose much of it to leaching through the soil. The best thing to do is mow if you haven't already and let some sunlight hit the soil to warm it up a bit.

However, if you've got money burning a hole in your pocket, you could make a charitable donation to 4-H and help grow some clover (kids).

Gardens

Even though it's warming up, there is still time to plant a productive kitchen or market garden. Many types of beans will still produce before the summer heat burns them up. You could also plant sweet corn, cucumber, eggplant, muskmelon, southern peas, transplanted peppers, pumpkins, radish, summer squash, and watermelons. You also just might be able to squeeze in transplanted tomatoes but no promises. Check out graysoncountymastergardeners.net for information on varieties that do well in our area, call the master gardener desk at (903) 813-4204, or better yet, become a master gardener.

In future newsletters I plan to consult with my more experienced Master Gardeners about specific plants and their care.

That's all I've got for now. As soon as I can I'm going to record the episode for the podcast and get that out there. I also intend to bring in experts to cover different topics in depth and turn those into more podcast episodes and relevant fact sheets.

Until next time,

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