



April 2015

# Walker County Agriculture News

Greetings from the Walker County, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office!

## Addressing Issues Important To You:

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 the Leadership Advisory Boards in a process to ask residents what is important to them – the **2015 Texas Community Futures Forum**.

### Walker County 2015 Texas Community Futures Forum

6:00 PM, April 20, 2015

Walker County Storm Shelter

AgriLife Extension, Walker County will be holding our Texas Community Futures Forum on Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. We will begin at 6:00 PM at the Walker County Storm Shelter. All residents interested in agriculture, youth development, family education, or community economic development is invited to attend. We want to know what you see as the critical issues which will be affecting our communities in the next 3-5 years.



If you can attend the meeting in person, please RSVP to 936-435-2426 so that we may have the room set for the appropriate number of people.

\*If you cannot attend in person but would like to provide input on critical issues, we have an online method linked here for collection of data. [LINK TO 2015 TCFE DATA COLLECTION](#)

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## **Educational Resources:**

### **Sustainable Aquaponics -Video:**

It seems that aquaponics have been a popular topic around the office during the past couple of months. Aquaponics is not a new management system, but it is becoming possibly more of a realistic method for production.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnU0MbdLiX8>

### **Aquaponics Farm How To –Video:**

Dr. Joe Masabni, Extension Vegetable Specialist discusses some of the basic “How To” involved in aquaponics. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C4e21HRUNA>

### **Aquaponic Publications – Online:**

Here is a great link to a number of aquaponic publications from reliable sources.

<http://fisheries.tamu.edu/aquaponics/>

### **Controlling Algae in Farm Ponds –Video:**

Another of the popular phone calls in Walker County starting in the spring through late summer is what to do about algae in farm ponds. This video is a great review of identification and control of the types of algae seen in our ponds and lakes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rj59ouOEgyE>

## **Upcoming Events:**

### **It is Walker County Fair Time!**

**April 3-11, 2015**

**Walker County Fair Grounds**

**(Hwy 30 West)**

Come out to the 2015 Walker County Fair for a great family fun time. 4-H & FFA youth have been preparing for all the events and are ready for you to see their projects. A detailed schedule of county fair events, activities and attractions can be found online at: <http://www.walkercountyfair.com/>

You are invited to attend the Fair and cheer the youth of Walker County on as they exhibit all their projects. Don't miss the excitement over the next two weeks (April 3-11, 2015). There are a wide variety of fun activities and events scheduled during the 2015 County Fair.

### **Household Hazardous Waste Event**

**City of Huntsville Solid Waste-Recycling Services**

**April 11<sup>th</sup> (Saturday), 2015**

9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

City of Huntsville Disposal & Recycling Facility 590 I-45 North

#### ***Acceptable Items:***

***Aerosols***

***Batteries-Alkaline***

***Corrosives***

***Flammables***

***Fluorescent bulbs***

***Oxidizers***

***Paint-Latex and Oil***

***Poisons-Solids and Liquids***

***Propane***

***Reactives***

For Information, please call Solid Waste & Recycling Services at (936) 294-5743. Funding for this event is provided by the H-GAC and the TCEQ through a Solid Waste Management Grant.

### **Electronic Recycling Day**

**City of Huntsville Solid Waste-Recycling Services**

**April 11<sup>th</sup> (Saturday), 2015**

9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

City of Huntsville Disposal & Recycling Facility 590 I-45 North

***Acceptable Items:***

***Laptops/Notebooks***

***Printers / Scanners***

***Copiers / Projectors***

***Plasma Screens / LCD/ LED Screens***

***Computer Accessories***

***Telecommunication /Networking Equipment***

***Stereos, radios***

***Cell Phones / Pagers / Cameras***

***PDA / Palm Pilots***

***Rechargeable Batteries***

***Vehicle Batteries***

For additional information, please call Solid Waste & Recycling Services at 936-294-5743

## **Environmental Quality Incentive Program**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is currently excepting Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications for 2015 funding in Walker County.

This program provides Technical and financial assistance with a number of different conservation practices to address any resource concerns you may have with your Ranching operation, such as, **Grass Planting, Cross-fencing, water systems (Livestock Pipeline or pond), Brush Management and your Forestry operations, such as Site prep., Tree Planting,** just to name a few.

Contact Floyd Nauls, District Conservationist for Walker County @ (936) 291-1901 EXT. 3 or @ 2 Financial Plaza Ste #735 Huntsville, TX 77340 for more program information.

## **Agriculture Field Day**

**Prairie View A&M University Campus**

**CEP Building, 250 E.M. Norris Street, Prairie View, TX 77446**

**April 24<sup>th</sup> (Friday) & April 25<sup>th</sup> (Saturday), 2015**

**Registration: \$10.00 per person – [Online Registration](#) (the registration link on the upper right of the page worked better for me than the one in the center of the page)**

Prairie View A&M will be hosting this Agriculture Field Day sessions which will feature workshops, seminars, farm tours, and a goat barbecue! The Friday session will look at how to make \$43,560.00 by farming one acre of land presented by Clif Slade, Farmer & Retired Extension Specialist, Virginia State University. The Saturday sessions will look at: Parasitology, Ultrasound Evaluation of Cattle & Goats, and Emergency Medical Care for Goats, Livestock Guardian Dogs, Cattle Management, Reproduction in Goats, Medicinal Plants.

## **Grassfed Beef Production Conference**

**Rosenthal Meats Center/TX A&M University Campus**

**488 Olsen Blvd, College Station, TX 77843**

**May 28<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) & May 29<sup>th</sup> (Friday), 2015**  
**Registration: \$250.00 through 5/22, \$300 onsite**

Final details on cost and registration for this increasingly popular conference are now available online through conference services at

<https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/index.cfm/productDetails/ProductID/1744/>

Additional information can be obtained from Dr. Rick Machen, Extension Livestock Specialist, (830) 278-9151, or by email at [r-machen@tamu.edu](mailto:r-machen@tamu.edu)

9:00 A View of the US Beef Industry from 30,000 feet -Dr. Jason Cleere, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service

10:00 Growing Forages for Grassfed Beef -Dr. Monte Rouquette, Texas A&M Agrilife Research  
Moderator – Dr. Rick Machen

1:00 Defining Natural, Grassfed and Organic Production Systems -Dr. Rick Machen, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service

2:00 Cattle Best Suited for Grassfed Beef -Dr. Joe Paschal, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service

3:00 Nutrient Needs of Growing & Fattening Cattle -Dr. Jason Banta, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service

4:00 Preventative Herd Health Management -Dr. Glenn Rogers DVM, Grassy Ridge Consulting

5:30 A Grassfed Prime Rib Dinner / Louis Pearce Pavilion

Dr. Davey Griffin , Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Low-Stress Handling Cattle for Wholesome Beef

Dr. Bruce Carpenter, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension

Friday, May 29 / Rosenthal Meats Center

Moderator – Dr. Ron Gill, Assoc. Dept. Head, Animal Science

8:00 Fabrication – from Carcass to Retail Cuts -Drs. Davey Griffin and Dan Hale, Tx A&M AgriLife Extension Service

11:00 Pre-Harvest Production System and Beef's Nutrient Content  
Moderator – Dr. Rick Machen

1:00 Production & Marketing Grassfed Beef (Producer Panel)

Dr. Glenn Rogers, Grassy Ridge Natural Beef, Aledo, TX

Pati Jacobs, Bastrop Cattle Company, Bastrop, TX

Charlie Bradbury, JBS Grassfed Beef, Huntsville, TX

4:30 Adjourn

**Additional items of interest for our Walker County area landowners:**

### **Timber Management Plans/Meeting Requirements for Tax Appraisal Valuations**

This topic has been an item of discussion and landowner need for some time now. I am pleased to announce that The Texas A&M Forest Service (Montgomery, Harris, Waller & Walker, Grimes Counties) has received authorization to provide training to landowners which will assist the landowner in writing your forest management goals (plan) for your property.

Landowners can contact the TFS office in the district which their property is located for detailed information. There are several 3 hour workshops scheduled to instruct landowners on this process of developing your own forest management plan. Landowners will need to schedule a site visit (on the property) with TFS prior to attending the 3 hour workshop.

**Montgomery, Harris or Waller Counties**, contact  
Conroe District Office (936) 273-2261

**Walker or Grimes Counties**, contact  
Huntsville District Office (936) 295-5688

## **Generation Next**

If you have considered how you may assist bringing your next generation of landowners into the family agri-business or land holdings, you may be very interested in sending your children or grandchildren (target audience ages 18-35) to the Generation Next educational programs. All ages are welcome to attend. (*program flyer attached*)

Join Texas A&M AgriLife Extension for a 2-Day Agricultural Business Start-Up School

- Gain ideas about operations you can add to an existing ranch
- Learn options for setting up grazing & wildlife leases
- Discuss business types, tax info, & insurance needs
- Exposure to all the latest land management tools & techniques

Locations & Dates:

- San Angelo: March 5th-6<sup>th</sup> (**rescheduled** for June 4-6 due to weather)
- Stephenville: March 12th-13th
- Corpus Christi: April 9th-10th

Each course Includes: 2 Days of Expert Instruction, a Resource Notebook & File Drive, 5 included meals, and participants earn a Generation Next School Completion Certificate. Registration Fee: \$100 (\$25 discount for students) *Limited to the first 50 people per location* To Register: <https://agrifiregister.tamu.edu/ESSM> Or call 979-845-2604.

The following information is being provided because we do receive a volume of calls throughout the year on the topic of galls in pecans and other trees. Excerpt from ***TX Pecan Pest Management Newsletter***, by Bill Ree, Extension Program Specialist-IPM, March 25, 2015.

## **Phylloxera Galls**

(*There is*) Not a lot of insect activity at this time of year unless you had some Phylloxera problems last spring. Treatment time for this insect will be just after budbreak at the growth stage shown in Figure 3.

Phylloxera: There are five species of Phylloxera that attack pecan but it is the stem phylloxera, *Phylloxera devastatrix* that causes the most damage.



**Figure 1. Pecan stem phylloxera galls.**

This species feeds on the new season's woody growth which can include stems, leaf petioles, catkins and nutlets. Ultimately the infestation will manifest into small galls in the new growth as shown in Figure 1. Infestations will not kill a tree but result in defoliation, nut loss and tree stress.

Pecan phylloxera overwinter as eggs in protected areas of the tree bark then around bud break the crawlers or stem mothers emerge and migrate to the new grow where they settle and feed. Only while the crawlers are still visible are they susceptible to insecticides for once they become imbedded in the tissue they are protected from treatments.

With the aid of a 10x lens the crawlers are visible and will resemble orange- yellowish mites or small aphids, Figure 2. Only trees that were infested last year need to be treated, so spot treatment is an option here. Aphid specific insecticides with the active ingredients imidacloprid and thiamethoxam are labeled for phylloxera as well as several broad spectrum insecticides. Pay attention to labels for grazing restrictions.



**Figure 2. Phylloxera crawlers or "stem mothers". Photo credit: Dr. Mike Hall (retired), LSU Pecan Research Station, Shreveport, LA**



Figure 3. Treatment stage for phylloxera

The next bit of information is taken from ***Beef Cattle Browsing*** –TAMU March 2015. The interesting part of this to me is that this topic was discussed during the Cattle & Climate Conference held in Stillwater Oklahoma this past fall. At the time, the discussion focused on how moderate sized breeds of cattle can help ranchers manage their property during drought conditions. When the topic of mature weight was brought up the group reviewed some of the historic pendulum type swings that have been seen in the beef industry over time. This was discussed with the realization that we have been encouraging frame size moderation for years but it hasn't really been happening out on the ranch.

### **Cattle Are Getting Bigger and Bigger**

We used to talk about the average beef cow as weighing 1000 lb. But that was years ago and cattle have gotten bigger over time. This is reflected in carcass weights. In 1960 the average carcass, steers and heifers combined, weighed around 650 lb. or live weight of 1000-1050 lb., about that of average cows at the time. In 1995 the average carcass weighed around 750 lb. That is now around 850 lb. and is projected to be around 875 lb. in four years. Recently, the average steer carcass weighed around 900 lb., or roughly 1400 lb. live.

This trend has resulted in some changes in beef marketing, including for premium branded products. An example is Certified Angus Beef®. When that program began in 1978 there was no limit on carcass weight to qualify. In 2006 an upper limit of 1000 lb. was implemented. Recently, that was raised to 1050 lb. CAB also has a required range for ribeye size of 10 to 16 sq. in. If carcass weights continue to increase, staying under that ribeye maximum will be more difficult. Time will tell how big cattle will be and how this will affect beef merchandising.

(<http://www.cabpartners.com/news/releases.php>, USDA-NASS, USDA-ERS)

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.



The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating