

March 2004

AGRICULTURAL Program Update

2004 Agriculture Survivor Program Series Begins..

During 2004, we will be hosting a series of program events designed to help new and experienced agricultural producers “survive” the uncertainties of modern production agriculture while enjoying the rural way of life. Educational offerings in the Survivor Series will be provided through cooperative efforts of the Walker County Extension Program Council, Walker County Livestock & Pasture Committee and the Walker County Master Gardener Program. This cooperative effort will allow participants to learn about the production of traditional and alternative agricultural products for both commercial production and home use applications.

Educational opportunities currently planned will include information on many traditional agricultural subjects such as home vegetable gardens, pesticide safety, livestock management, fencing, forage establishment and plant varieties. Additionally, the **Spring AG MINI- TOUR** on April 23 will include information on goats, a popular alternative Agricultural enterprise. See the program flyer on page 3 in this newsletter for more details.



2004 Spring Educational Programs:

- ☆ **Plant Disease Concepts** -March 11, 2004 (3 hour CEU credit) Class meets from 1 PM until 5 PM at the Walker County Extension Office. \$5.00 registration
- ☆ **Master Gardener Community Education Program -Native Plants for Bird Friendly Yards** -March 31, 2004 (NO CEUs), Evening Program, 6:30 PM at the Huntsville, City Service Center on Hwy 75 North. Special Guest Speaker: Diane Cabiness of Diane Cabiness Native Nursery
- ☆ **Vegetable Gardening** -April 1, 2004 (1 hour CEU credit) Class meets from 1 PM until 5 PM at the Walker County Extension Office. \$5.00 registration
- ☆ **Basic Entomology: Insect Diagnosis & Management** -April 15, 2004 (3 hour CEU credit) Class meets from 1 PM until 5 PM at the Walker County Extension Office. \$5.00 registration
- ☆ **Pesticide Safety** -April 22, 2004 (3 hour CEU credit) Class meets from 1 PM until 5 PM at the Walker County Extension Office. \$5.00 registration

*We will be holding a **Pesticide Applicators Training & Testing Session** on April 26, 2004. This class is for Ag Producers needing to obtain a Texas Department of Agriculture, Private Pesticide Applicators License. Call to be placed on the waiting list. Cost for this class is \$30.00 per participant (includes study materials). Class size is limited to 30 participants.

Special points of interest:

- Pasture & Livestock Workshop
- Beef Cattle Risk Management Program
- Agriculture Mini-Tour
- East TX Forestry Field Day
- Poultry Testing
- Pond Weed ID & Management Calendar
- Timber Growers Association
- Farmers Market Association

Pasture and Livestock Management Workshop – 2004

Texas A&M University Agricultural Research & Extension Center, Overton
April 6-8, 2004

Registrations are being accepted for the next Texas A&M University Pasture and Livestock Management Workshop scheduled for 2004. The Workshop is for **new or inexperienced ranchers** and covers the basics of forage establishment, management, and utilization. Basic livestock management and production are also covered. The workshop lasts three days, with about half the time spent in the field demonstrating various “how to” methodologies of planting, calibrating sprayers, inoculating legume seed, castrating, vaccination, and de-horning calves, pasture and livestock management, and more. Due to limited enrollment, Workshop attendees have ample time to visit with Texas A&M University faculty one-on-one to discuss various aspects of forage production and livestock management. Registration forms and checks must be received ASAP to reserve your place for the program.

The Workshops begin with registration at 8:00 a.m. the first day and are followed by approximately 28 intensive hours of classroom and field exercises. A Workshop manual containing dozens of publications on pasture and livestock management is provided. Two noon and two evening meals along with break refreshments are also provided. Workshop participants also receive a special monogrammed shirt and cap available **only** by participating in this Workshop.

Lodging is available at several Kilgore motels (approximately 10 miles). Enrollment is limited to individuals who pre-register by sending their check for **\$300 per participant** to the following address.

Texas A&M University Agricultural Research & Extension Center
Attention: Dr. Larry Redmon, Workshop Coordinator
P.O. Box 38, Overton, TX 75684

Cancellations made within 60 days of the workshop receive **no refund** due to special commitments necessary regarding this Workshop. **Please make the check payable to TAES.**

Beef Cattle Risk Management Program Palestine, TX – Wednesday, May 19, 2004 Palestine Civic Center, 1819 Spring Road

Cattle producers have one of the lowest profit margins in the agricultural sector. This combined with a potential production or marketing disaster, can put producers' profitability or even survivability in doubt. Developing a good risk management plan can not only limit risk, but can also improve current and future profitability.

Fee to attend is \$20/person. You may register at the door. For more information, visit <http://mastermarketer.tamu.edu/>. or call Margaret Freeman at 806-677-5600.

Beef Cattle Browsing:

Editor: Dr. Steve Hammack, Professor and Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Emeritus

FEEDING VALUE OF GENETICALLY-ALTERED CORN

Univ. of Illinois and Univ. of Nebraska researchers compared Roundup-ready corn with three established hybrids in three separate studies. Each study used from 175 to 200 yearling British-Continental crossbred steers. No significant differences were found due to corn type in feed intake, average daily gain, feed efficiency, final weight, carcass weight, ribeye area, fat cover, Quality Grade, or Yield Grade. (J. Animal Sci. 81:2600)

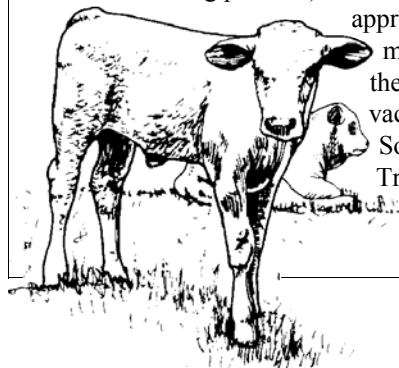
EFFECT OF BODY CONDITION AND NUTRITION ON COW PERFORMANCE

In a collaborative study, Oklahoma State Univ. and Univ. Of Missouri researchers classified Angus X Hereford cows at calving as thin (avg. BCS = 4.4) or moderate (avg. BCS = 5.1). For the first 71 days after calving, all cows had 4% CP prairie hay ad lib. Half of the cows were fed to gain 1 lb/day (M), by supplementing with 4-5 lb/day of 34% CP cubes. The other half had free access to 10% CP, 60-65% TDN feed, and gained 2 lb/day (H). H cows averaged intake of 35 lb/day of supplement. All cows were then fed to gain 1 lb/day until 21 days after first estrus. During the 71-day period after calving, thin M cows lost 0.1 BCS compared to a loss of 0.5 BCS for moderate M. Thin H gained 0.6 BCS versus 0.3 BCS gain for moderate H. Averaged across both initial BCS groups, pregnancy rate of M was 57.6 % vs. 76.3% for H. Production of weaning weight averaged 22 pounds heavier for H. Increasing BCS after calving resulted in better reproductive performance, especially for thinner cows, and heavier weaning weights. However, this report did not compare these benefits with the extra nutritional cost to obtain them. (J. Animal Sci. 81:3107)

A NEW BRD VACCINE?

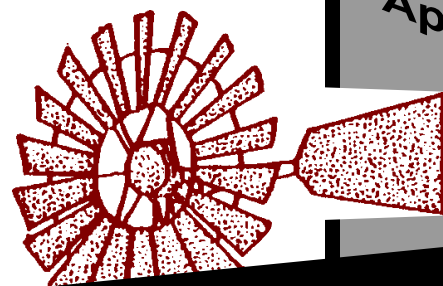
The National Animal Disease Center in Ames, IA has created a new live vaccine that does not contain foreign DNA. The vaccine can be injected (giving protection in 7-10 days) or fed (protecting in 3-4 days). Vaccinated high-risk calves had a mortality rate of 4% vs. 16% for unvaccinated. Also, there was some advantage for vaccinated in weight gain during the first 35 days of feeding. (However, such early advantage often is lost over entire feeding periods.) The vaccine has not yet been

approved by the USDA. But it may have promise, and offers the additional method of vaccinating by feeding. (Am. Soc. of Animal Sci. FASS Track, 12/17/03)





**Friday
Afternoon
April 23, 2004**



**Walker Co.
Agriculture:
MINI-TOUR 2004**



Date: April 23, 2004
Time: 1:00 PM
Program Site:
SHSU Gibbs Ranch

**AGRICULTURE:
MINI-TOUR
2004**

Small Acreage Production
& Supplemental
Agricultural Income
Potential

Cool Season Forages:

**RYEGRASS, WHITE
CLOVERS, BRASSICAS -
ESTABLISHMENT,
MANAGEMENT & RESULTS**

SOIL FERTILITY

**WINTER WEED CONTROL,
OPTIONS & ECONOMICS**

**Alternative Livestock
Enterprises:**

**GOAT PRODUCTION,
ECONOMICS &
MARKETING OPTIONS**

PROGRAM COOPERATORS:

Livestock & Pasture Committee
SHSU Agricultural Sciences
Department
Pennington Seed



**R.S.V.P.
REQUESTED
FOR PROGRAM PLANNING**

Phone: 936-435-2426
Fax: 936-435-2429
Email: r-lepley@tamu.edu
<http://walker-tx.tamu.edu>

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE LICENSED
PESTICIDE APPLICATORS CAN
RECEIVE 1 HOUR OF C.E.U.
GENERAL CREDIT**

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



2004 East Texas Forestry Field Day



This Year's Theme:

New Forest Management Strategies

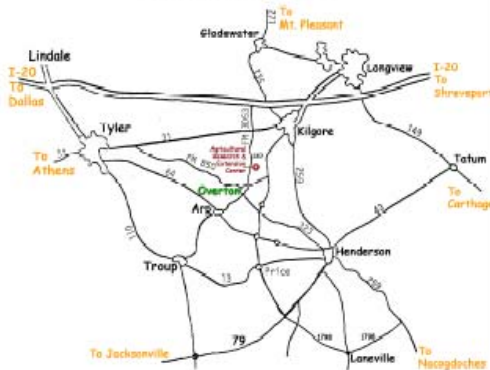
**May 27, 2004
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Only
\$25**

*Lunch, Refreshments & Notebook included
(additional family member - \$10)*

at the

**Texas A&M
Ag Research & Extension Center
Overton, Texas**



for more information contact:
Crystal Littlefield
903-834-6191
cdlittlefield@aq.tamu.edu

Our forests provide a unique ecosystem for many environmental benefits. As Texas grows, so grows the pressure of people and their demands on our natural resources, creating new challenges on forest resource use. Urban sprawl, land-use conversion and market changes are major challengers to the future of forestry in Texas. Landowners, foresters, loggers, and businesses will need to re-evaluate current management objectives and identify new forest management strategies to meet the technical, social and political challenges on the horizon!

Are you prepared?

**1.5 CEUs Cat 1
3 CFEs Cat 1**

Tentative Agenda

- 8:30 **Welcoming Remarks**
Darwin Foster- Extension Program Leader - Forestry, Texas Cooperative Extension
- 8:40 **New Strategies for a Changing Forest Market**
James Guldin - Southern Research Station, USDA Forest Service
- 9:50 **Coffee Break & Visit with Exhibitors**
- 10:00 **Forest Demonstration & Tours**
Eric Taylor, Forestry Specialist, Texas Cooperative Extension
- 12:30 **Lunch Break and Visit with Exhibitors**
- 1:15 **Texas Forest Associate Legislative Update**
Ron Hufford, Executive Vice President, Texas Forest Association
- 2:00 **New Strategies for Pine Seedling Success**
Eric Taylor
- 3:00 **Coffee Break & Visit with Exhibitors**
- 3:10 **Who's Who – We Can Help**
Bill Hubbard – Southern Region Extension Foresters
- 3:45 **Forest Health Initiative & Strategic Planning**
Bill Hubbard
- 4:30 **Questions & Answers**
- 5:00 **Adjourn Field Day**

Check out
<http://TREEevents.tamu.edu>
for more great forestry
educational opportunities

Registration Form

Please Mail Registration to
Conferences & Short Courses
East Texas Forestry Field Day
Texas A&M University
P.O. Drawer H-1
College Station, TX 77844

Register online at
<http://www.pware.com>

East Texas Forestry Field Day

Make checks payable to Account 250291-100

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Your are a (please circle the following)

Landowner Forester Both Other (specify) _____

Intensive Poultry Testing Plan To Ensure Disease Eradication, Help Regain Trade Status

Excerpted from a Texas Animal Health Commission News Release

Animal health officials are initiating a targeted disease surveillance plan for poultry flocks in and around Gonzales County to ensure that avian influenza (AI) is eradicated from Texas. A flock of nearly 7,000 broiler chickens were destroyed February 21 after the H5N2 strain of AI was confirmed February 19 in several birds from the flock. The H5N2 AI strain has not been shown to cause human disease or to compromise food safety. It is not the same AI strain that has caused disease and death loss in poultry and disease in some persons in more than 10 Asian countries.

AI is a respiratory disease of birds that usually is transmitted by bird-to-bird contact. However, the virus may be in the feces of infected birds, and the disease can be spread to other sites if equipment, boots, clothing or tires are contaminated with infective manure.

“Since mid-February, more than 250 noncommercial and commercial flocks have been tested within a 10-mile radius of the affected farm, and to date, no additional AI infection has been detected,” said Dr. Max Coats, deputy director for Animal Health Programs for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), the state’s livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. The disease surveillance strategy will include testing of commercial and non-commercial poultry and birds within a 30-mile radius around the affected farm, so we can assure trading partners that AI has been eradicated. This action should help us to re-establish our ability to ship poultry meat and poultry products to more than 30 countries as rapidly as possible.”

Dr. Coats said the 30-mile disease surveillance area has been divided into three zones around the affected farm. The **affected zone** extends to a five-mile radius around the affected farm, while the **surveillance zone** is a circular band that extends from five to 10 miles from the farm. The third area, referred to as the **buffer zone**, is the largest circular band, incorporating the area 10 to 30 miles beyond the affected farm.

As always, poultry owners are urged to contact the TAHC or USDA at 1-800-550-8242, to report unusual death losses or signs of illness in flocks.

Strict biosecurity measures will be utilized to prevent the potential transmission of disease from one farm to another. “We don’t want anyone to worry when they see testing teams wearing white disposable overalls, hair coverings, rubber gloves and rubber boots. The teams will disinfect equipment, boots and vehicle tires, and sanitize and bag all disposable gear. We urge poultry owners to take similar precautions, and prohibit unnecessary traffic onto farms.”

Pond Management Tip: Protect the Environment & Save Money – Identify Your Weeds First!

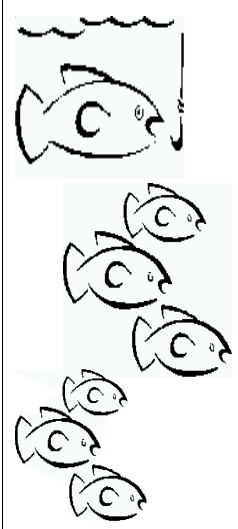
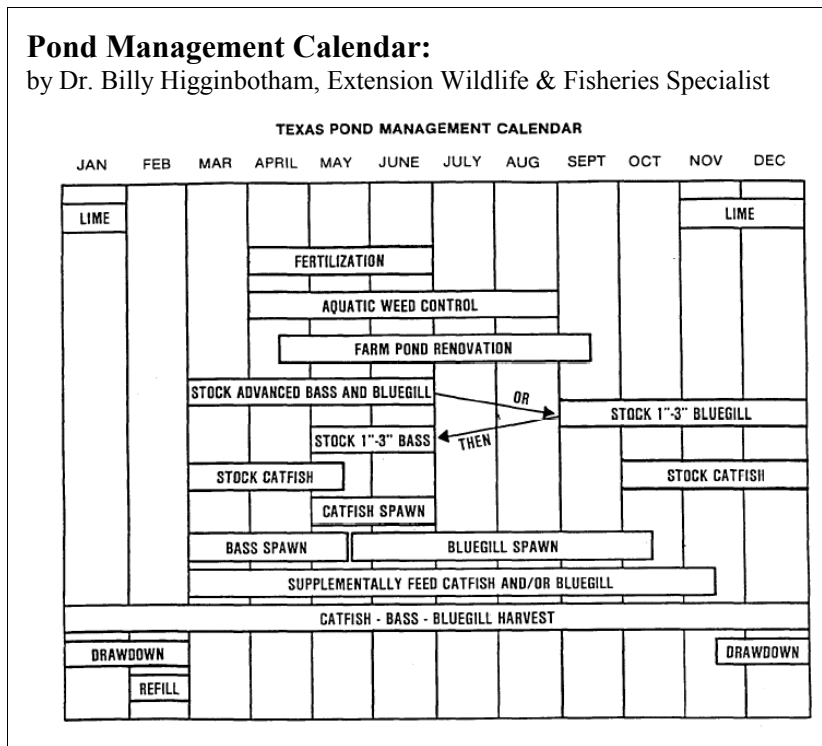
Before attempting to control any weed, the first item of business should be proper identification of the unwanted plant. This is especially important when selecting an aquatic herbicide due to potential environmental and ecological reactions which may occur. Many aquatic herbicides are very specific for the plants they will effectively control and; furthermore, many aquatic weeds look very similar to each other. Failure to properly identify your weeds may potentially mean no control of your weeds following application of the herbicide. Aquatic herbicides can be moderately to extremely expensive so make sure you know what product you need and apply it only at the proper rate.

If you would like to bring aquatic weed samples into the Walker County Extension Office for identification, we will be happy to help identify them. Be sure to collect a representative sample of what you see in the pond. Samples should be placed in a container with water to prevent them from drying out.

An additional tool for aquatic weed identification is the Extension Aquaplant Web Site. This site is an excellent tool with photos, line drawings, descriptions, control options and links to recommended chemical labels. The web site can be accessed at <http://aquaplant.tamu.edu/>

Pond Management Calendar:

by Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Extension Wildlife & Fisheries Specialist



Timber Growers Association Update

The Walker County Timber Growers Association has several interesting educational programs planned for the 2004 year. Included on the calendar of events for later this year is a Tree Stand Management Workshop and a Forest Chemical Application program. In addition to these programs, members of the association will be manning an educational booth at the Sam Houston Folk Festival and providing a scholarship for a college bound student from Walker County.

If you are interested in joining the Association or learning more about this group of timber producers contact the Huntsville Office of the Texas Forest Service at (936) 295-5688.



Farmers Market Association

If you are interested in selling farm raised produce at the Walker County Farmers Market, now is the time to contact the Extension Office. We will be holding the Farmer's Market organizational meeting later this spring. Membership is only \$10.00 annually.

Provisions from the American Disability Act will be considered when planning educational programs and activities. Please notify the Walker County Extension Office if you plan on attending an Extension Educational program and need specialized services. Notification of at least two weeks in advance is needed, so that we may have ample time to acquire resources needed to meet your needs. Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Cooperative Extension Service is implied.

If you have questions or would like more information call us at (936) 435-2426.

**Walker County Extension Office:
102 Tam Road Suite B, Huntsville Texas 77320
<http://walker-tx.tamu.edu>**

Sincerely,

**Reggie Lepley
County Extension Agent – Agriculture**



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