

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE

Texas A&M  
AgriLife Extension Service,  
Walker County

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Or on the web at:  
<http://walker.agrilife.org>



## Agricultural Education Events & News

(September/October Edition 2013)

**Don't miss out on these educational programs!**

### Hot & Predominately Dry weather continues!

I'm sure the headline above isn't anything you were not aware of! The current challenge regarding agriculture for most of us; is do we continue with our normal operations during these times, or should we be making alternative plans for future agricultural endeavors? That's not a unusual situation for many old hands in the field; however, we are seeing a great number of new landowners who seem to struggle with basic questions (should I plant, when do I start working the land for site preparation, is it time to restock, etc.). As most of us know, the proper answer is dictated first by weather conditions. Even in times of extended drought, the planning process is relatively short term. This may include a 2 year plan, a 5 year plan, or maybe even a 10 year plan for the forward thinkers in the group. How many agricultural landowners regularly plan further out than that for general management issues?

For discussion purposes, let's throw a related long term planning topic out in the open:

Water issues are a growing concern in the state of Texas. Agriculture is one of the large utilizers of water. Our effort to grow food and fiber to feed, clothe, and house our growing population will have to respond to increased utilization and need of water resources by that very same population. The population of Texas is projected to grow 82% from 2010 to 2060. The overall demand for water is projected to increase by only 22% in the same time period. Numbers don't add up you say? Think changing land use and it starts to make some sense. Options on the table for future sources include: conservation, drought management, reservoirs, wells, water reuse, and desalination plants. It is expected that 34% of this would be realized from conservation and reuse, while 17% would be from new major reservoirs, and 34% from other surface water supplies. When you look at positive gains made in the past, you will see that irrigation efficiency has increased greatly since the 1970's since the adoption of more technically advanced sprinkler irrigation rather than the traditional flood and furrow irrigation. This technology adaption provided efficiencies that moved from 60% to 88-95%. (As reported in *Status and Trends of Irrigated Agriculture in Texas*)

How much thought have you given to the water currently available to you? Water for cattle, water for gardens, water for crops, and even water for landscapes... At some time in the not too distant future we may see limitations on these resources much different than today. Will you be prepared for these changes? Have you looked into methods of conservation of the resource? Is there any way to capture "your" water before it flows off of your property?

Maybe it is time for a larger number of us to get interested in the topic and start learning more about the issues. The 2012 Texas Water Plan which forecasts out to 2060 shows some real challenges for agriculture across the state. If you haven't read the plan, you may want to set aside some time to look it over. Walker County is in Region H. If you are interested, the 2012 State Water Plan is available online at <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/waterplanning/swp/2012/index.asp>

*In This Issue:*

#### Local educational programs

Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> Deadline for  
submitting hay samples

October 29<sup>th</sup> Walker Co Hay  
Evaluation

#### Area/Regional educational programs

Sept 10<sup>th</sup> Montgomery Co-  
Livestock Identification,  
Handling, & Safety

Sept 14<sup>th</sup> Jefferson Co-  
Beekeeping for Beginners

Sept 27<sup>th</sup> Brazos Co (TAMU) -  
Bull Selection for Commercial &  
Seedstock Beef Producers

Sept 30<sup>th</sup>-Oct 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Fruit  
Growers Conference

Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> Texas High Tunnel  
Conference

Oct 28<sup>th</sup>-Nov 1<sup>st</sup> Ranch  
Management University

#### More Local Events

Sept 12<sup>th</sup> Walker Co- Mounted  
Equine Search & Rescue  
Organizational Meeting

October 19<sup>th</sup> Walker County  
Master Gardeners Fall Plant Sale  
& Butterfly Festival

#### Educational Information

Texas Cottage Food Law

## Fall Hay Evaluation

Event Date: October 29, 2013

Location: Walker Co Storm Shelter (455 Hwy 75 N, Huntsville, TX)

Time: 6:30 PM

\$5.00 Registration Fee



It is time for another Hay Evaluation! Thanks to the spring and mid-summer rains which some of us enjoyed we should have hay to look at and evaluate based on tested quality here in Walker County. Knowing the quality of your hay helps you determine feeding strategies to make the stored forages fit your needs. Matching hay quality up with the class of livestock you are feeding it to makes all the difference in the world when you are trying to meet the nutritional needs of your cattle.

*We would like to invite you out to the Hay Evaluation for the educational program and also to enjoy a **ribeye steak dinner** with us. Registration for this educational program is \$5.00 per person.*

In addition to the traditional hay quality topic, we will be discussing other agriculturally relevant information to include:

- **Making Your Fertilizer Applications as Efficient as Possible**
- **Legal Aspects of Texas Water & Agricultural Water Concerns**
- **Rangeland Insurance**

**Hay samples are due to the Walker County Extension Office by September 23<sup>rd</sup>.** Please see the attached form in this newsletter and submit that completed document with your sample. Hay testing expense is sponsored by the Walker County Farm Bureau. There is no charge for the first two samples from each individual producer. If you would like to have additional samples tested, they are available for a \$10.00 fee for each sample. We are also pleased to announce that the program sponsors for this educational meeting also include: American Plant Food Corporation, and Silveus Insurance Group –Rangeland Division. All three of our sponsors have been continuous supporters of the Walker Co Hay Evaluation for a number of years.

This educational meeting will help bring you up to date on some of the items going on in the agricultural production fields important to Walker County. Landowners and resource managers will benefit from participation in this educational program. **RSVP is required by October 22<sup>nd</sup>**; contact the Walker County, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office to reserve your seat, (936) 435-2426.

## In Case You Missed Them!

### 2013 Texas Range Webinar Series are archived for viewing

*Presented by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
Ecosystem Science and Management Unit*

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Ecosystem Science and Management Extension Unit conducted lunch-based webinars monthly throughout 2013. All of these webinars have been recorded and are posted for viewing at your convenience. The Ecosystem Science and Management Extension Unit partnered with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University to develop this information on Forestry and Natural Resource webinars which is available on their website at <http://naturalresourcewebinars.tamu.edu/archive/>

## Livestock Identification, Handling, and Safety!

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

at the **Montgomery County Fair Park**

Registration begins at 8:30 am

Program begins at 9:00 am



### Program topics to include:

- Stock Law History
- The Role of a Livestock Officer
- Brand Laws, Microchips and Other Identification
- Liability and Insurance
- Theft of Livestock, Liability of Death of Livestock During Capture
- Body Condition Scoring, Animal Colors Animal Handling Techniques and Safety, Theft Prevention, Recovery
- Relationship with the TSCRA, TAHC, and Sale Barn Owners
- Role as a Mediator
- Livestock Management During a Disaster
- Understanding Coggins Tests and more!

Registration Fee of \$20.00 covers the noon meal, educational materials and TCLEOSE (8) credits, TDHS ()credits

**To register contact the Montgomery County Extension Office at 936-539-7822 or come by 9020**

**Airport Road, Conroe**

### Program Sponsors:

- Texas AgriLife Extension Service - Mike Heimer
- Montgomery County Pct 5 Constable Office -Gordon Welch
- Texas Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association -Brent Mast
- Texas Animal Health Commission - Billy McCallum

## **Walker County: MOUNTED EQUINE SEARCH & RESCUE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**



Event Date: September 12, 2013

Location: Walker Co Storm Shelter (455 Hwy 75 N, Huntsville, TX)

Time: 5:30 PM

Everyone with interest and a horse is invited to attend and discuss the formation of a Walker County Chapter of the East Texas Mounted Search & Rescue.

Andy Stewart, Chairman of the East Texas Mounted Search & Rescue will be the guest speaker.

**For more information contact Butch Davis at 936-577-2846**

Sponsored by: Walker County Office of Emergency Management

## **Bull Selection for Commercial & Seedstock Beef Producers**

Event Date: September 27, 2013

Location: TAMU Beef Center (7707 Raymond Stotzer Pkwy, College Station, TX 77845)

Time: 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Fee: \$60.00 Registration (LIMITED TO FIRST 50 PEOPLE TO REGISTER)

A bull is responsible for 50% of the herd's calf crop and a good bull is an investment that can certainly pay big dividends. This one-day, intensive workshop will discuss applied as well as advanced bull selection techniques.

The following will be discussed:

- Cattle Breeds and Breeding Programs
- Visual Selection
- Individual Performance Data, EPDs, and Genetic Markers
- Bull Fertility and Bull to Cow Ratios
- Bull Care and Management

The registration fee includes lunch and course materials. For more information on this program please contact Michelle Sensing (903) 834-6191. Online registration available at Register online at:

<https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> (keyword: bull) or call Extension Conference Services @ 979-845-2604

## **Texas Fruit Conference**

Event Date: September 30-October 1, 2013

Location: Best Western at Old Town Center (1920 Austin's Colony, Bryan, TX 77803)

Time: 12 Noon on first day

Fee: \$80.00 (7/25-9/22), \$90.00 onsite

The 2nd Annual Texas Fruit Conference is an educational program designed to meet the needs of novice and experienced orchardists in Texas. Last Year's 2012 conference went "back to the basics", with significant devotion to new orchard projects. This year a balanced blend of topics will be offered for growers who are just starting a fruit orchard or who have been growing and selling fruits for many years. While this conference is intended to assist commercial fruit producers, the materials presented will also be helpful to homeowners and gardeners who simply want to grow fruits and nuts for home consumption and pleasure.

Important and new topics for this year's event include: New Texas A&M University peach and nectarine varieties; commercial grape opportunities, assessing and coping with insufficient winter chilling, stone fruit disease control, food safety for fruit growers, brown marmorated stinkbugs in Texas, blackberry production history, and managing Phytophthora root rot. Monday's opening session begins at 1:00 pm with a new grower session covering basic topics of tree planting, orchard establishment, and disease problem solving. "Assessing orchard and vineyard nutrition" will also be presented. A full day program is planned for Tuesday, October 1st with nine different speakers covering 12 different topics. A state-wide overview of new fruit crops, like pomegranates, will also be presented. Pesticide continuing education units (CEU's) will be offered for this one and one-half daylong event.

Registration for both events (TX Fruit Grower Conference & TX High Tunnel Conference) is On-Line at <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> For more information; please contact Monte Nesbitt, (979) 862-1218.



## Texas High Tunnel Conference

Event Date October 2, 2013

Location: Best Western at Old Town Center (1920 Austin's Colony, Bryan, TX 77803)

Fee: \$55.00 (7/25-9/22), \$55.00 onsite

Morning Session: Why Grow in High Tunnels?

- High Tunnels in the US and Around the World
- Constructing High Tunnels for Texas Weather
- Crop Selection for High Tunnel Production
- Growing Peaches in High Tunnels
- Pest Management in High Tunnels
- The NRCS EQIP Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative

Afternoon Session: Raising High Tunnel Strawberries

- Challenges of Growing High Tunnel Strawberries
- Marketing High Tunnel Strawberries
- Heat and Moisture Stress in High Tunnel Grown Strawberries
- Diseases of Strawberries
- High Tunnel Organic Strawberries: Yes or No?

Program Includes Pesticide CEU's. Registration for both events (TX Fruit Grower Conference & TX High Tunnel Conference) is On-Line at <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> For more information; please contact Monte Nesbitt, (979) 862-1218.

## Walker County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale & Butterfly Festival!!

Event Date: October 19, 2013

Location: Walker County TX AgriLife Extension Office

Time: 8:00 AM -2:00 PM

Fall is the time to refresh your landscape. Master Gardeners will have a wide variety of plants available including: hard to find and desirable seeds, pass-along plants, daylilies, natives, trees, shrubs, and herbs. There will be demonstrations to view with great "how to" information. The LEAF-PRO demonstration gardens will be open for viewing-Bring the family! We will have the Children's Area in our Learning Center with special activities just for them.

While you are here, plan to stay later in the fun filled day for the Butterfly Festival activities. One of the most popular events of the year is the Monarch Butterfly Tag & Release! Learn how this is done and take part in the release at noon. Educational information to be included will discuss how to have an environmentally friendly landscape to attract and support wild butterfly populations. Be sure to visit the Butterfly House on site at the LEAF-PRO Demonstration Gardens while you are with us.



## **Ranch Management University**

Event Date: October 28-November 1, 2013

Location: TAMU Beef Center (7707 Raymond Stotzer Pkwy, College Station, TX 77845)

Fee: \$500.00 (5/02-10/23), \$500.00 onsite

The Ranch Management University is an intensive 5-day event that targets new or inexperienced ranchers and landowners and covers the fundamentals of soils and soil fertility, forage establishment, pasture management, utilization by livestock, and wildlife management. Basic livestock management practices such as castrating, and vaccinating calves are demonstrated. Grazing management, stocking rate, and body condition scoring are also highlighted. Horse and small ruminant management presentations are also conducted. Additionally, several wildlife management topics are covered for those interested in managing white-tailed deer, turkey, feral hogs, and farm ponds.

Approximately one-half the workshop involves lectures and discussion, with the remainder consisting of the field demonstrations of various how to methods of soil sampling, calibrating sprayers, and sampling hay. Various forage species, including bermudagrass and other introduced forages, native forages, small grains, annual ryegrass, and clovers are studied by workshop attendees. Additional demonstrations include hog trap management, and pond fisheries management. Plenty of time is allowed for interaction with Texas A&M University faculty with expertise and experience in all management facets of the soil-plant-animal interface and wildlife management.

Registration is On-Line at <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> For more information; please contact Larry Redmon, (979) 845-4826.

## ***Texas Cottage Food Law***

Texas Cottage Food Law allows the sale of foods that are prepared in residential homes as long as gross sales do not exceed \$50,000 annually. This type of business is not regulated by a local or state health department, which means that your kitchen will not be inspected by a health inspector (unless there is concern about the public's health). If you want to start a Cottage Food Business, the information below may be helpful.

Foods that are not considered "potentially hazardous" are allowed

- Baked goods that don't require refrigeration (cookies, cakes, breads, pies, pastries)
- Candy
- Coated & uncoated nuts Cereal (including granola)
- Vinegar
- Unroasted nut butters
- Popcorn snacks
- Fruit butters
- Pickles
- Canned jams & jellies
- Fruit pies
- Dried herbs & herb mixes
- Mustard
- Roasted coffee or dry tea
- Dehydrated fruits & vegetables

These foods are not potentially hazardous because they do not have to be held at specific temperatures to prevent foodborne illness. Potentially hazardous foods such as eggs, meat, poultry, shellfish, milk, and other dairy products can be used to prepare a food but if the final product requires time or temperature control to prevent the growth of bacteria, it cannot be sold under the Cottage Food Law.

#### Selling your foods

Foods can be sold at the individual's home, a farmers' market, a farm stand, or at municipal, county, and non-profit events. Foods can also be delivered to the customer, where the sale can then take place.

Foods cannot be sold over the internet, by mail order, or at wholesale.

#### Labeling and packaging your foods

Foods must be packaged to prevent contamination. Bulky items (e.g. wedding cakes) are exempt from being packaged; however, common sense should be used to keep them safe.

Foods sold under the Cottage Food Law must be labeled with the following information:

- Name and physical address of the operation
- Common or usual name of the product
- Any major food allergens that are present in the food (E.g. eggs, nuts, soy, peanuts, milk, or wheat)
- The following statement: This food is made in a home kitchen and is not inspected by the Department of State Health Services or a local health department.

Food labels must be attached to the package unless the item is too large or bulky to be packaged. Then, the label should be added to the sales receipt.

#### Use Safe Food Handling Practices when Preparing Your Cottage Foods

Each year, nearly 1 in 6 people become sick from the foodborne illness. Everyone is at risk for a foodborne illness; however, pregnant women, young children, older adults, and individuals with chronic disease or a compromised immune system have a higher risk than others.

Reduce the risk of foodborne illness by:

- Practicing good personal hygiene
- Preventing germs from spreading from one surface or food to another (cross contamination)
- Cooking food to a proper temperature
- Storing food properly

If you are making shelf stable food products (e.g. jams, jellies, and pickles), be sure to use tested recipes and process them correctly in boiling water bath canner.

#### Food Handler's Card is Required

Beginning January 1, 2014 an owner of a Cottage Food business is required to have a food handler's card. Earn your food handler's card through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Our accredited food handler's course will help you learn basic food safety practices that can help assure the food you prepare and sell is safe.

For more information about the Cottage Food Law or earning your food handler's card contact your local County Extension Agent or complete the course online at <http://foodsafetyonline.tamu.edu/>

While Beaumont is a bit of a drive for us, Walker County has been experiencing a large amount of growth and interest in beekeeping. We have a great Beekeeping Club that meets monthly at the Walker County, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office. If you are interested in joining or attending a meeting feel free to contact us and we will get you the contact information.

For Registration Information on this Beekeeping for Beginners program: Please call the Jefferson Co Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at (409) 835-8461.



TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

## BEEKEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14**

**REGISTRATION 8:30—9**

**PROGRAM 9:00 — 4**

**\$25 includes both  
sessions and lunch**

Pre-Registration Required by September 10  
Seating is limited

**Texas AgriLife Extension Service Auditorium**

**1225 Pearl Street, #200**

**Downtown Beaumont**

**(corner of Franklin & Pearl)**



**Bryan and Tammy  
Muldrow,  
Local Beekeepers,  
“Benefits of Backyard  
Beekeeping”**

**Dean Cook,  
Local Beekeeper,  
“Honey Bees and Top  
Bar Hives”**

**Sponsored by Jefferson County Horticulture Committee**

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services are requested to contact Cary Erickson, Jefferson County Human Resources Director at (409) 839-2391 five working days prior to the meeting so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Programs conducted by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service 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.





– **COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION & SECURELY ATTACH TO YOUR HAY SAMPLE:**

(Sample entry DEADLINE : September 23, 2013)

Please attach the following information securely to your hay sample. Limit of TWO samples per person. Samples may be turned in at the Walker County Extension Office on TAM Road. Hay sample may be producer grown or purchased. All samples must be processed through a mechanical hay baler. Hay testing is sponsored by Walker County Farm Bureau. Recognition awards for this program are sponsored by American Plant Food and Silveus Rangeland Ins. Questions about your entry? Call: (936) 435-2426

**CLASS OF HAY ENTERED:**

WC PRODUCER GROWN \_\_\_\_\_  
PURCHASED \_\_\_\_\_

IMPROVED BERMUDA \_\_\_\_\_  
COMMON BERMUDA \_\_\_\_\_  
BAHIA \_\_\_\_\_  
SORGHUM \_\_\_\_\_  
LEGUME \_\_\_\_\_  
LEGUME GRASS MIX \_\_\_\_\_  
RYEGRASS \_\_\_\_\_  
MIXED GRASSES \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**ONLY ONE SAMPLE PER FORM**

**Samples Must Consist Of:**  
**TWO BLOCKS From Square Bales OR**  
**ONE FULL CLEAN FEED SACK from**  
**Round Bales. NO PLASTIC BAGS!**

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If you have questions or would like more information regarding Extension Educational Programs, call us at (936) 435-2426.

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 three to five days 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 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied.

*Reggie Lepley*

Reggie Lepley,  
County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Walker County  
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