



October 2021

Walker County Agriculture Update

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

Winter & Cool Season Forages:

If you are planning on establishing annual forages for the cool season and have not gotten started now is the time to begin making progress on those projects. Those who have not yet tested their soil can still get that done; however, you better get on it quickly. The soil testing labs get busy this time of year. Tests really need to be analyzed to know what your fertilizer needs are.

Soil preparation will be the key to allowing annual forages to establish early once our fall moisture begins arriving. It is really too late for fall pH adjustment; however, agricultural limestone applied now will initiate reaction over the next few months and be working for you in the spring to support your warm season plants.



Key item: Sunlight needs to reach the ground. The closer a field is to "clean tilled" the quicker your seeds will germinate and establish -when moisture is available. This past weekend I worked on wildlife food plot establishment and the big issue we fought was heavy grass cover throughout most of the plot locations. Add the fact of exceptionally dry soil not typically turning/breaking well under the tillage equipment most of us utilize in this part of the state. East Texas agriculture producers usually do not have exceptionally heavy farming equipment making soil preparation a challenge with current soil conditions. Add a heavy grass cover and the difficulty increases plus multiple passes across the field equal more diesel fuel with a higher cost per acre.

Select the cool season forage that fits your needs. Early grazing will require small grains with oats typically being the species of choice. Others such as wheat, Elbon rye, or triticale also work well in various soils found in Walker County. Be sure to note that small grains do need a prepared seedbed or grain drill for best results as direct soil/seed contact is required. Grazing later in the cool months (Feb-April or later depending on the year) is best achieved by utilization of annual ryegrass and this species also fits well with a sod seeded/broadcast establishment process. A variety of forage legumes should be planted in the fall for late spring production; however, be aware that increased management is required for grazing or potential seed production if desired.

A great reference document describing many common forage species and their management is titled Forage Species for Texas can be found at: [http://forages.tamu.edu/PDF/Forage%20Species%20for%20Texas_Final\[2\].pdf](http://forages.tamu.edu/PDF/Forage%20Species%20for%20Texas_Final[2].pdf) (Cool season forages start on page 15).

Featured Upcoming Events:

Fall Plant Sale: Walker Co Master Gardeners

Saturday, October 9, 2021

8:00 AM until 12 Noon

Walker County Texas A&M AgriLife Office (102 Tam Road, Huntsville, TX 77340)

The plant sale will be on-site and in person this year, join us in the fresh air of the Demonstration Gardens for this event. Fall is the best time of year to plant shrubs, perennials, natives, & fruit trees! Come out and get your hard-to-find seeds, plus bulbs, day lilies, roses, and herbs. We will have Fall vegetables as well. Don't wait too late in the day, what you need may be in somebody else's garden!

Walker County Fall Hay Evaluation

– MEAL Included!

Date: October 12, 2021.

Time: 6:30 PM (meal then program)

Location: Walker County Fair Grounds Committeeman's Room

Cost of meeting participation: \$10.00 per person

For additional information: (936) 435-2426

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/walker-county-fall-hay-evaluation-tickets-167889178051>

2 Hours TDA CEU credit to be available

Hay production during challenging years make hay testing even more important. This is YOUR chance to have hay tested at no cost! In addition to producing and evaluating quality hay, we will look at management of problem weeds. Dr. Bobby Lane will lead the hay quality discussion and talk about weed control in your hay fields following the wet 2021 late spring through summer season. Additionally, many of you may have heard (or even seen) some of the new and emerging options for feral hog control. To help explain what you need to know about these options, we will have Dr. Aaron Sumrall with us to showcase these very interesting new tools. We are pleased to have Walker County Farm Bureau sponsor the hay testing costs again this year.

Brats & Brews

Walker County Program Series

3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Dates:

- **October 13 Home Brewing & Meat Processing**
- **October 20 Sausage & Boudin Making**
- **October 27 Dehydration & Smoking Meats (BBQ)**

Registration: [Brats & Brews Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

Program Cost based on attendance options:

In person \$45.00 for all three sessions or \$25.00 per individual session

Virtual \$20 for all three sessions or @12 per individual session

The Covid situation increased interest in many home-based processing options. Among these was meat processing and bulk purchase options. We plan to assist with information on how to take larger primal cuts and develop valuable consumer end products. Add to that – its is almost deer season and just about everybody likes a great venison sausage. Note we will not be making deer sausage, but the process is the same!

This educational program series on home processing of meat (possibly either livestock or wildlife), sausage making (homemade link sausage & boudin), smoking of meat (BBQ-how's pork belly burnt ends grab you?)

and preservation by drying (Jerky) and some home brewing (Yes, I'm serious) ... Sounds interesting? I thought so: Sign ME up! We are pleased to have REO Spice as a contributing program sponsor for this educational series.



This series will be a seriously fun educational opportunity developed by the Walker County Texas AgriLife Extension office. We are trying something new... These events will provide a hybrid attendance option: In person (or) virtual. In person attendance participants will receive supplies for hands-on participation whereas, virtual participants will not. Participation costs will vary based on your attendance choices. For detailed information please see the registration link provided above. Paid participants will have access to recorded programs.

Area and/or Online Upcoming Events:

10th Annual Texas Fruit Conference

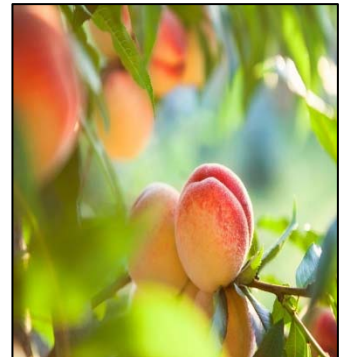
Saturday, October 11th & 12th,

Civic/Convention Center, 375 S. Castell Ave, New Braunfels, TX

- Intro to Fruit Growing Workshop (½ day, 1 lunch, & fruit receptions): \$55.00
- Main Conference (1.5 days, 2 lunches, & fruit receptions): \$90.00 /person
- Workshop & Conference Package (2 days, 2 lunches, & fruit reception): \$125.00

Registration and website: [Texas Fruit Growers Blog - Fruit & Nut Resources Fruit & Nut Resources \(tamu.edu\)](https://www.tamu.edu/fruit)

I have said it before: “Could you ask for a better “get away” location with the excuse of learning something?” This educational program includes numerous presenters. Topics encompass fruit production, marketing, disease and insect management, new crops, new varieties, grower experiences and an ‘ask the experts’ panel discussion. *Complete Conference Program Now Available*; just follow the link above for all the good information and details.



Conference topics this year include:

- Orchard site selection
- Crop & Variety selection
- Water, Fertilizer & Weeds: Surviving your first year
- Developing a Pesticide Philosophy and IPM Program
- Economic Considerations
- Time Considerations
- Worker Protection Safety Standards
- Selling Texas Fruit in Farmers Markets
- Climate Constraints on Fruit in Texas
- The New Fruit Frontier: Alternatives and Possibilities for Texas
- Peach Breeding Program Updates
- Figs: Past, Present, Future
- Sustainable Fruit Growing
- Growing Fruit Organically
- IPM in Fruit Growing

2021 Cow Country Congress

October 29, 2021.

8:00 AM registration

Baker Ranch: 3750 West FM 1988, Livingston, TX 77351

Early Registration by October 22 (\$20.00 per person), Late Registration after Oct 22: (\$30.00 per person)

Registration Link: [Cow Country Congress \(wufoo.com\)](http://wufoo.com)

Items to be included in this year's event include supplementation for reproductive efficiency, marketing cattle, forage planning for spring, profit driven breeding plans. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to visit with industry representatives and vendors throughout the day.

Cow Country Congress is an annual eight county area educational program designed to support the needs of beef cattle producers. We will feed you a GREAT LUNCH while you are there! Save the date to join the AgriLife agents from Polk, Trinity, Walker, Houston, Madison, Leon, Freestone, and Anderson for this longstanding educational event.

2022 Walker County Master Gardener Class Orientation

Thursday, November 18, 2021.

12:30 PM check-in

Walker County AgriLife Extension Office (102 Tam Road, Huntsville TX 77320)

The orientation session for our 2022 Walker County Master Gardener Class is scheduled. **I am putting in writing and saying it out loud: At this time – I will not be holding the 2022 class sessions online. NOT GOING TO DO IT. We will meet in person, or we will not have the class...* Class size is very limited due to the facilities at our office. If you are interested in the 2022 class, contact the AgriLife office (936) 435-2426 to have your name and contact information placed on the list. The possibility is strong that we will be required to have a selection process, attending the orientation and/or being on the contact list does not mean acceptance to the Walker County program. Master Gardener's are required to obtain a minimum of 50 training hours (we hold 15 classes/Thursday afternoons/starting in January) and return a minimum of 50 volunteer hours during the first year. The Master Gardener program is a VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT program of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Additional Items and Information of Note:

Fall Gardening Time!!!

Growing fall vegetables is a fun project! Cooler weather makes it better... (personal opinion there). September through mid-October is prime planting time for our later season gardens. To assist you in determining when various species need to be "in the ground", I have our county vegetable planting guide posted <http://counties.agrilife.org/walker/files/2011/05/WC-Vegetable-Planting-Chart1.pdf>

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



Reggie Lepley

Reggie Lepley,
County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources
Walker County
(936) 435-2426
r-lepley@tamu.edu