



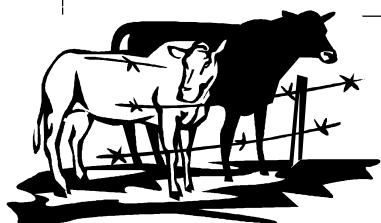
Agricultural Program Update

Inside this issue:

Livestock Premises Identification Program

The Texas Animal Health Commission would like to remind Texas ranchers and other livestock facility owners in the livestock and poultry industry that they can sign up for a unique "premises identification number," for their livestock facilities. The premises identification number will identify the location of livestock operations in the state. It is the first step in implementing a national system for quickly tracing livestock and poultry for disease investigations or during a disease outbreak or animal health emergency.

Ranchers and livestock facility owners in Texas may register online through the TAHC's web page at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us>. Web users can download the premises identification registration form off the web. If you do not have access to the internet, you can contact the Extension Office for a copy of the form or you can contact the Texas Animal Health Commission at (800) 550-8242.



Coreopsis (*Coreopsis grandiflora*)

by Dr. William C. Welch, Extension Horticulturist,
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Perennials are finding their way back into many gardens after many decades of absence. By definition, perennials are plants that return each year from a permanent crown or root system.

C. grandiflora is a native to Texas along with a number of other *Coreopsis* species. The species itself is a useful and colorful plant but is tall and falls over after spring rains or wind. New selections, such as 'Baby Sun' and 'Sunray' are valuable because they are compact and therefore, more useful in the landscape. Plants of these two varieties are usually 8 - 10" tall with bloom heads reaching to eighteen inches. 'Sunray' is a double flower more orange than yellow in color. 'Baby Sun' is single and a rich, golden yellow. 'Zagreb' and 'Zamphir' are also low-growing varieties - the latter has rolled petals which are unusual for flower arranging. Culture is

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST IN THIS ISSUE.

- Iola Clover Tour
- Bee Keeping Association Forming
- USDA Grant Opportunity



If you are interested in participating in the 2005 Walker County Farmers Market, contact the Walker County, Texas Cooperative Extension Office.

FARMER'S MARKET

Texas Cooperative Extension
Walker County

102 Tam Road Suite B
Huntsville, TX 77320

(936) 435-2426

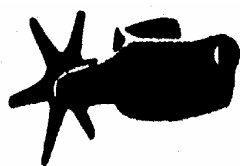


Forage Field Day

SHSU Gibbs Ranch

May 20, 2005

3:00 PM



Sponsored meal will be served
following forage plot tour.
RSVP requested by 5/17/05 to
Walker Co., Texas Cooperative
Extension at (936) 435 2426.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

DEVELOPED BY:

THE WALKER COUNTY
EXTENSION LIVESTOCK &
PASTURE COMMITTEE,
SAM HOUSTON STATE
UNIVERSITY—AGRICULTURAL
SCIENCES DEPARTMENT

WITH COOPERATING SPONSORS:

PENNINGTON SEED
AND
MONTY'S PLANT FOOD

Topics for this program:

Tour Forage Trial Plots

- ♦ **Selection of Adapted Forages**
Site requirements
- ♦ **Forage Establishment**
Control of competing species
- ♦ **Tall Fescue (3 varieties)**
Regional adaptation
Production capability
Endophyte situation
- ♦ **Ryegrass Results (5 varieties)**
Early maturity variety
Production capability
- ♦ **White Clover Evaluation**
- ♦ **Arrowleaf Clover Evaluation**
- ♦ **Forage Sorghum**
- ♦ **Seeded Bermudagrass Update**
- ♦ **New Holland Hay Baler
Demonstration**

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.

**1 HOUR TDA PESTICIDE APPLICATOR
C.E.U. CREDIT**

(GENERAL CATEGORY)

WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR LICENSED APPLICATORS

Pecan Field Day

April 22

James Boyce's Farm
Oakhurst, Texas

The San Jacinto County, Texas Cooperative Extension office would like to invite anyone interested in learning about commercial pecan production to their upcoming field day. This program will begin at 10:00 AM on Friday, April 22, 2005. Topics scheduled for the program include: pecan variety selection, grafting, processing & pest management. Speakers for the event will be James Boyce and Bill Ree, Extension Agent—Entomology (Pecans).

Registration for this program is \$5.00 to cover publications and lunch. Please RSVP to 936-628-6407 by April 19, 2005 for planning purposes and further information.

Tractor Theft

What you can do to protect your equipment...

T.R.I.P. Texas Recovery and Identification Program

This DPS sponsored program allows individuals who own both commercial and farm equipment to voluntarily enter information into a database to be utilized by law enforcement personnel if needed to track stolen equipment.

Participation in this program is free with no charge to enter your equipment. You can access the T.R.I.P. program on the web at <http://records.txdps.state.tx.us/mvt/>

Participants will be required to create a user account and provide a variety of information including a property identification number from the equipment, year, make, style, and color of the equipment. Following inclusion in T.R.I.P, the equipment owner will receive program stickers for each piece of equipment. The stickers are to be attached to the equipment to further help identify equipment if stolen. Equipment can easily be taken off the owners account if sold or later transferred to another owner.

Beekeeping Group Forming..

Anyone interested in forming a Beekeepers Association in the Walker County area is invited to contact Chuck Johnson. Chuck can be reached at 936-291-0943 or cjohnson@consolidated.net for more information.

Clover Field Day

April 27

Gene Sollock's Farm
Iola, Texas

The Natural Resource Conservation Service's offices from Grimes, Madison, & Walker Counties would like to invite all interested Beef & Forage Producers to attend the 2005 Iola Clover Field Day.

For additional information, contact the Walker County NRCS office at 295-7511.



WARM SEASON ANNUAL FORAGES..

(A Quick Primer)

There have been numerous calls this spring about some of the Warm Season Annual Forages which can be grown in our area. These are often misunderstood forage plants that require a little extra knowledge to utilize correctly and safely. The following information has been excerpted from Texas Cooperative Extension publications for your review.

Introduced Forages for South and South Central Texas William R. Ocumpaugh, Ph.D., & Charles Stichler
<http://foragesoftexas.tamu.edu/establishment/introducedforages.pdf>

Forage sorghum, sudangrass and sorghum sudan hybrids (*Sorghum bicolor*) are summer annual grasses often planted for hay and sometimes for grazing. They can produce a modest amount of forage quickly with a limited amount of water. Forage sorghums are best used as a hay crop and are not a good substitute for perennial grass pastures for grazing. (See L-5219, Managing for High Quality Hay) Because of land preparation and fertility requirements, they are expensive to produce every year.

It is difficult to make even moderate quality hay unless it is cut at the proper time and adequately fertilized. In high rainfall areas, it does not store well outside in round bales. Sorghums are subject to both nitrate or prussic acid poisoning problems under certain

circumstances (See L-5231, Nitrate and Prussic Acid Poisoning). Much forage sorghum is cut when it is too mature and nutritive value is lost due to poor management or to weather complications. There are other varieties too numerous to list.

There is one relatively new innovation in forage sorghums, and that is the development of varieties that will not flower if planted after a certain date in the spring. This prevents flowering, but does not prevent maturation of the tissue. So even though the plant does not flower, it can still be of poor nutritive value if it is grown too long before it is utilized for hay or grazing. These plant types are well adapted to intensive grazing programs, because unlike most varieties they will regrow better after defoliation, providing that you do not let the plant reach maturity.

Sorghum Alnum (*S. alnum*) is a natural perennial hybrid between *S. bicolor* and *S. halepense* (Johnsongrass) that has rhizomes like Johnsongrass, but does not have sufficient winter hardiness to perennate in most of the region. The seed shatters readily, making it a good food source for game birds. Many pounds of sorghum alnum seed is sold each year for use by livestock and wild game managers. It is also used as a “filler” when planting grass seed for quick establishment to hold water and provide for erosion control. When grazed, it will slowly decline over a period of several years.

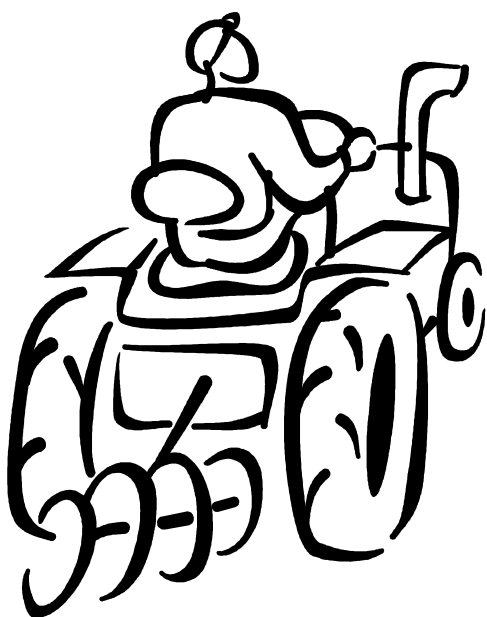
Pearl millet (*Pennisetum americanum*) is another summer annual grass that resembles forage sorghum in growth habit, but has not proven to have any real yield or quality advantage over dryland forage sorghums in this region. Pearl millet is more sensitive to cold stress during germination and early seedling growth than are the sorghums. Temperatures in the 40 to 50°F range can kill pearl millet seedlings. Pearl millet is smaller than sorghum seed and is preferred by birds. Since pearl millet is not a member of the sorghum family, it does not have problems with prussic acid poisoning. However, pearl millet can still accumulate nitrates to toxic levels under certain conditions. Like forage sorghums, the trait which prevents flowering has recently been added to at least one pearl millet variety.

Forage Sorghum Production Guide, Dr. Twain Butler, Extension Agronomist – Stephenville & Dr. Brent Bean, Extension Agronomist - Amarillo <http://foragesoftexas.tamu.edu/pasture/FORAGE%20Sorghum%20temp.pdf>

Grazing

Sorghum-sudangrass and sudangrass hybrids are most often used for grazing because of their regrowth potential. They also tend to have less risk associated with prussic acid than the forage sorghums. The goal of grazing should be to keep the forage in an early vegetative stage in order to maximize quality. If the forage is allowed to grow too much

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\$14.3 MILLION USDA GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The United States Department of Agriculture has announced the availability of \$14.3 million in funding for the USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. This program provides opportunities for producers and rural businesses to further refine agricultural commodities, increasing their value to consumers. The grants also provide capital to allow producers to better market their products in both domestic and international markets as well as develop alternative sources of renewable energy. Applications that have at least 51% of project costs dedicated to activities for a bio-energy project will have priority consideration.

For further information please contact the USDA Rural Development office in Huntsville at 936-291-1901 Ext. 4. or see the web site at <http://rurdev.usda.gov/tx>.

(Continued from page 1)

undemanding with a sunny location being the primary requirement.

Coreopsis are very drought and heat tolerant. They flower from April through most of the summer. Like most spring and summer flowering perennials, they should be divided and reset in the fall. This should be done every one to two years. New plants can also be started from seed, which is available from many mail order seed sources. Started plants are being grown and made available by nurseries specializing in perennials and native Texas plants.

Although most people use the genus name coreopsis, *Hortus Third* lists the common name as tickseed, which describes the mature seed of the plant. Annual forms of Coreopsis bloom earlier and are more common than the perennial types. *Coreopsis tinctoria* is especially conspicuous in mid-spring with its fine textured foliage and dark red, or bi-colored red, brown and yellow disc flowers.

With increasing emphasis on utilizing our native Texas plants, Coreopsis seems a logical choice for homeowners. Groups of 'Sunray' or 'Baby Sun' spaced 12" apart are highly effective as a mass display in the landscape. Once established, they are exceptionally heat and drought tolerant and are among the easiest perennials to grow.

Beef Cattle Browsing, March 2005, Dr. Steve Hammack, Professor and Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Emeritus

ANTHELMINTICS AND SUPPLEMENTING HEIFERS ON RANGE

Treatment of growing cattle with anthelmintics (de-wormers) for internal parasites is often beneficial on intensively-grazed improved pasture. But what about on native range? Oklahoma State University researchers used heifers weaned in May or June to study the effects of supplementing (S) and anthelmintics (A) on heifers grazing native pasture during late summer/early fall in north central Oklahoma. There were four treatment groups: no supplement or anthelmintic (NN); supplement but no de-wormer (SN); anthelmintic but no supplement (AN); and supplement and anthelmintic (SA). The anthelmintic was Ivermectin, with clorsulon (effective against liver flukes), applied at the start of the trial on July 25 and again on August 26. Supplement was 41% CP cottonseed meal fed Mon, Wed, and Fri at 2.33 lb/feeding (averaging 1 lb/day) until October 21 (84 days).

Heifers were weighed and fecal samples collected every 28 days. The A heifers had lower fecal egg counts. Weight gain for the 84 days was: 81 lb (NN); 123 lb (SN); 106 lb (AN); and 143 lb (SA), so S and A increased gains additively, with greatest effect from S. Heifers were then commingled and grazed with minimal hay and supplement for 151 days until April 24. There was little weight change during that period, averaging (in the same order) +20 lb, -21 lb, +12 lb, and -8 lb. So, total weight gain, from start in July to end in April, was 101 lb, 102 lb, 118 lb, and 135 lb. Response during late summer/early fall from anthelmintic tended to be retained, but that from supplementing tended to be lost, during the following winter/spring. (OSU Animal Science Res. Rpt. P-1008:18)

CATTLE NUMBERS FINALLY INCREASING

For the first time since 1995, January 1 cattle numbers increased. Beef cows are up about 240,000 head (0.6 percent) from a year ago, heifers saved for replacements are up about 220,000 head (4 percent), and total cattle numbers are up a little less than a million head (1 percent). However, last year's calf crop was the smallest in over 10 years, down about 1 percent from a year ago. All this means that feeders should be in short supply for awhile, but more cows should change that in two to three years. We'll see. (USDA - National Agricultural Statistics Service)



(Continued from page 4)

before grazing, quality will go down. In addition, cattle tend to waste tall forage by trompling over it. Ideally cattle should be allowed to graze sorghum-sudan hybrids when they reach a height of 20 to 30 inches and sudangrass at a height of 15 to 20 inches. Sudangrass can be grazed earlier because it has less prussic acid potential. Prussic acid develops in sorghum plants that are under stress and accumulates in new leaves.

It is often difficult to stock pastures heavy enough to take advantage of the rapidly growing forage. For this reason it is desirable to subdivide the field into three or more smaller pastures or paddocks. The date that each paddock is planted should be staggered in 10 to 14 day intervals. Cattle can then be placed on the first planted paddock, grazed for 7 to 10 days at a high number of head per acre, and then rotated to the next paddock. Number of cattle on the paddock should be sufficient to graze the forage down to a height of 6 inches in a 7 to 10 day period before moving to the next paddock. Do not place cattle back on the grazed paddock until the forage has reached a height of 18 inches. This rotational system allows for maximum production. Excellent cattle gains can be achieved using sorghums as a pasture if managed properly. The key is to not over graze the pastures.

Sorghums for grazing can be planted either with a drill or in wider rows. If a drill is used consider plugging drill rows to allow for an 18 to 20 inch spacing between rows. This will allow room for cattle to walk and will prevent forage from being lost by being trampled on by the cattle.

Hay Production

High seeding rates are desirable in order to decrease the size of the stalks. A smaller stalk will dry quicker after cutting. Seeding rate recommendations will vary depending on water availability and row spacing. Because of the increased digestibility of the BMRs (Brown Midrib variety) stalks a lower seeding

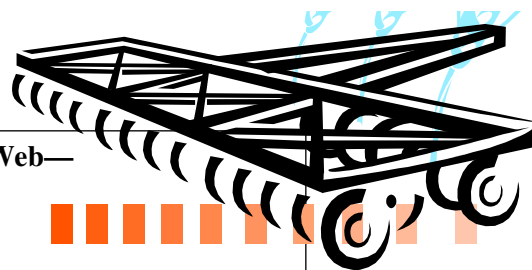
rate can be used. A lower seeding rate will also tend to decrease the potential for lodging of the BMR plants if harvesting is going to be delayed until heading in order to maximize yield in single cutting hay crops.

Multiple Cuttings. Because of its rapid regrowth potential, sorghum-sudan hybrids are often used for hay production if multiple cuttings are desired. Sudangrass is sometimes used, but overall yield is usually less than with the sorghum-sudan hybrids. In order to obtain multiple cuttings planting will need to be as early as possible. Optimum soil temperature for sorghum seed germination is considered to be between 70 and 75°F. However, if early planting is desired seed will germinate once soil temperatures are above 60°F.

Single Cutting: Either sorghum-sudan hybrids or forage sorghums can be used. Forage sorghums often have higher yield potential for single cutting hay crops. Keep in mind that stalks of forage sorghums are larger and may require more drying time. BMR forage sorghums varieties may be desirable in that their stalks are more palatable and digestible than conventional forage sorghums.

When to harvest sorghums for hay will depend on if maximum yield is desired or if maximum quality is the most important consideration. Due to differences in maturities, it is difficult to (*predetermine the*) number of days after planting that harvesting should occur, it is best to use the growth stage/development of the plant. Traditionally it is recommended to harvest in the 'at-boot' stage or prior to boot to optimize both quantity and quality.

Typically, hay should be harvested and allowed to dry to 15-20% moisture before baling. If moisture is too high, hay can either form mold or the temperature can exceed 120°F and the protein can become "heat bound", which is unavailable to microbes in the rumen. It is also important that hay not be in contact with soil surface as microbes will break down the hay.



Where to Find Additional Warm Season Annual Information on the Web—

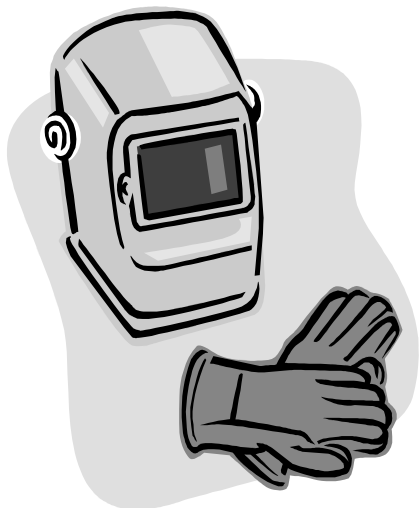
L-5219, Managing for High Quality Hay

<http://animalscience.tamu.edu/ansc/publications/beefpubs/l5219-hay.pdf>

L-5231, Nitrate and Prussic Acid Poisoning

http://publications.tamu.edu/cgi-bin/mime.cgi?name=-36730&mime_type=application%2Fpdf

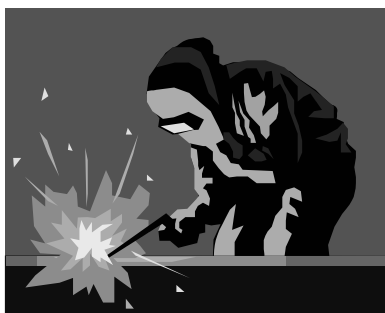
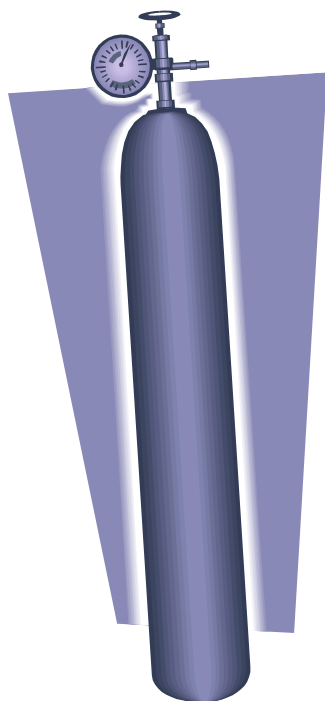
Farm & Ranch Sustainability WORKSHOP



This workshop has been designed for you if you are interested in learning about or brushing up on basic arc welding & oxygen acetylene fuel cutting!

\$20.00 Program Fee will be charged to cover project expenses. Contact the Walker County Extension Office for pre-registration (required), additional information and directions. (936) 435-2426

Sign up early! Workshop is limited to first 20 paid participants.



**Program Sponsored by:
The Walker County
Extension Program
Council Committee**

Basic Arc Welding & Oxy Fuel Cutting

Agricultural Producers this workshop series is for you...

Series will be held at the
Sam Houston State University
Ag Mechanization Lab
Avenue M, Huntsville, TX

4 Night Series Schedule:

May 3, 2005

May 10, 2005

May 17, 2005

May 24, 2005

(6:30 PM to 9:30 PM each night)





Help Support

- ◆ Educational Programs for Landowners
- ◆ Youth Scholarships
- ◆ Legislative Awareness

Join the Walker Co. Timber Growers & Landowners Association

\$10.00 Annual

Association Membership.

Call the Texas Forest
Service at (936) 295 – 5688
for additional information.

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.

We hope you enjoy this issue of Walker County Agricultural Program Update. 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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