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Bexar County

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec 7 – Private Pesticide Applicator Training  
Jan 9 & 16 – Beef Cattle Short Course

### Private Pesticide Applicator Training

A Private Applicator Pesticide Training program is scheduled for Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Bexar County Extension Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge Street, Suite 212. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. with the training to follow at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will not be provided. This training is for people who do not have a license or those who had a license that expired at least a year ago. If you plan to attend, please contact Denise at the Bexar County Extension Office to sign up. Study materials are available at the Extension Office and can be picked up in advance. The program registration fee is \$60/person and includes study materials. Participants should plan on bringing a calculator and photo ID.



### Beef Cattle Short Course

The Bexar County Ag and Natural Resource Committee is pleased to announce that the 2018 Beef Cattle Short Course will be held January 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm at Palo Alto College (Performing Arts, Room 101). Registration will begin both days at 6:00 pm with the program to follow at 6:30 pm.



### January 9th Topics:

- Developing Replacement Heifers and Adding Value to Cull Cows and Bulls –  
Dr. Joe Paschal, Extension Livestock Specialist
- Cattle Fever Tick Situation –  
Dr. Brodie Miller, Regional Director TAHC
- Supplemental Feeding Strategies –  
Dr. Joe Paschal

### January 16th Topics:

- Brush/Grazing Management 101 – Back to the Basics –  
Drs. Bob Lyons and Megan Clayton, Extension Range Specialists
- Drones and Their Application in Rangeland –  
Dr. Megan Clayton

Three hours of CEUs (2 Integrated Pest Management, 1 General) will be offered between the two sessions.

Registration fee is \$15 per session. Be watching for more information concerning program details to include sponsors and vendors. To RSVP, contact Denise at 210-631-0400.



Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend class and need special accommodations or auxiliary aid, please contact the Bexar County Office at (210)631-0400 at least five (5) days prior to the date so appropriate arrangements can be made. *Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.*

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

## Prescribed Fire for Wildlife

**Dr. Maureen Frank, Extension Wildlife Specialist**

Texas' landscapes are adapted to fire. While many people are hesitant to use fire on their land, and this tool certainly does need to be used carefully, controlled burning benefits wildlife in several ways. Opening up brushy areas can also be great for hunting opportunities!

- Fire can reduce brush cover, allowing forbs to grow and diverse brush species to flourish. Even a very hot fire, however, is unlikely to kill mesquite, so know your plants before you burn and realize that fire is just a tool, not a silver bullet.
- After fire, a flush of early successional species of vegetation appear on the landscape. Forbs will be some of the first plants to return after a fire, benefitting deer, quail, songbirds, and other wildlife.
- Burning can be used to create a “crazy quilt” mix of vegetation types that increase habitat quality for countless species.
- Fire helps fertilize the soil by fixing nitrogen from burn debris, and increases water filtration.
- Some species, such as woodpeckers, are adapted to take advantage of the burned trees and readily available insects after a fire. Other species such as quail benefit from the exposed insects as well as exposed seeds.

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## Hay Meadow's Friend or Foe?

**Forage Fax – Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olsen, Extension Forage Specialist**

Annual Ryegrass...a cool season annual forage often utilized by livestock producers for winter grazing.

However, it's often deemed an enemy of many a hay producer. Volunteer annual ryegrass can be common in hay meadows. Winter rainfalls can promote seed germination and seeds can survive for multiple years in our soils.

Later maturity of annual ryegrass can delay or prevent our warm season perennial forages (i.e. bermudagrass or bahiagrass) from breaking dormancy in April/May therefore delaying our initial hay cutting.

So how do we manage this unwanted ryegrass? We have several options:

- Graze it. If your hay meadow happens to be fenced as well as have a source of water, grazing can be an excellent way to utilize the high-quality forage as well as remove it from the meadow.
- Bale it. Harvesting ryegrass for baleage or a dry hay is an option. Baleage or haylage is forage baled at 50 to 60% moisture. It is then preserved in an air-tight plastic wrap (single bales or one long tube). This requires specialized equipment and diligence in maintaining the integrity of the plastic wrap. Harvesting for a dry hale product can be tricky during years we have ample spring rainfall.
- Spray it. Use of herbicides to control annual ryegrass is probably the most common method practiced. Prowl H2O (pendimethalin) is a pre-emergent herbicide labeled for dormant bermudagrass and bahiagrass pastures and hay meadows. Treatments should be applied prior to rainfall, to enhance soil incorporation and herbicide activation. Glyphosate (active ingredient in Roundup, etc.) and Pastora (nicosulfuron + metsulfuron) are two post emergent herbicide options. As with any herbicide application timing is critical along with following label directions. Ideally for control, ryegrass needs to be sprayed when plants are less than 6 inches in height in the fall. Annual ryegrass is generally susceptible to postemergence herbicides in early winter prior to freezing temperatures and before seedhead emergence. Unfortunately for bahiagrass growers there are no selective herbicides available for post emergence control of annual ryegrass. Spot treatments of glyphosate are recommended in bahiagrass for control. For rates and any restrictions refer to product labels.
- Out compete it. Maintaining some substantial bermudagrass/bahiagrass stubble height (>4”) could provide some shade that could reduce ryegrass seed germination. This may not provide 100% control however competition can help to reduce undesired plant growth. Maintaining a higher stubble height can also be beneficial for the warm season perennial future growing season. Higher stubble height means more substantial root structure to capture deeper soil moisture and nutrients.

# Considerations when Loading and Transporting Cattle

**FIGURE 1: RECOMMENDED CATTLE TRAILER STOCKING DENSITIES**

Maximum number of cattle by size for various trailer dimensions.

Trailer size (ft.)	400 (lbs.)	600	800	1,000	1,200	1,400	1,600	Total Cattle Weight (lbs.)*
14 x 6	16	11	8	6	5	5	4	< 6,500
16 x 6	18	12	9	7	6	5	5	< 7,400
18 x 6	21	14	10	8	7	6	5	< 8,400
22 x 6	25	17	13	10	8	7	6	< 10,200
24 x 6	28	18	14	11	9	8	7	< 11,100
26 x 6	30	20	15	12	10	9	8	< 12,000
30 x 6	35	23	17	14	12	10	9	< 13,900
34 x 6	39	26	20	16	13	11	10	< 15,700
20 x 7	27	18	13	11	9	8	7	< 10,800
24 x 7	32	22	16	13	11	9	8	< 13,000
28 x 7	38	25	19	15	13	11	9	< 15,100
32 x 7	43	29	22	17	14	12	11	< 17,300

*Source: Michael J. Baker, Ph.D., beef cattle extension specialist at Cornell University*

This chart represents recommendations for polled and dehorned cattle. Reduce the number of cattle by 5 percent when hauling horned cattle. During hot and cold conditions, decrease the number of head loaded to prevent additional stress.

\*The maximum weight of cattle for each trailer size with these calculations. Do not exceed the gross vehicle rating for your truck and trailer. Adapted from Jim Turner and Clyde Lane, North Carolina State University.

With most ranchers and professional transporters alike, the goal when shipping cattle is "get them on the truck and down the road." Working in a timely fashion is absolutely important, but some precautions and planning should be taken before, during and after the cattle arrive at their destination.

1. Get to your destination quickly and safely - Know your route and plan for any impediments. Try to avoid unnecessary stops and drive responsibly, respecting your cargo as well as other motorists on the road. Be mindful of the trip duration, time of day and weather conditions the cattle will experience while in transit. The less time livestock have to spend on the road, the better.
2. Treat them like your own - Care for the animals like they are your own, regardless if a bill of lading has been signed. In some instances, the majority source of a producer's annual income is riding in your trailer. They are entrusting you and your abilities to safely deliver their livestock to market in a safe and efficient manner. Do not assume that responsibility carelessly or lightly.
3. Trailer space and load density - Just because they can fit doesn't mean they should. Overloading a trailer is not only dangerous to the safety and well-being of the cattle, but it can be hazardous for the driver if he or she is not able to safely stop or control their vehicle due to improper load distribution or exceeding the capability of their trailer and/or truck. Utilize cut-gates so animals have the space they require but also remain secure so they cannot harm one another due to over- or under-loading.
4. Check your gates, then check again - If you're not sure, go look for yourself. The last thing anyone wants to do is chase after cattle that escape the pens or loading facility because a gate was not securely closed.
5. Remember, you do not have a static load - Cattle move and shift in a trailer, and their movement affects your vehicle and how it operates going down the road. Make gradual stops and turns, as well as smooth and steady starts to help the cattle maintain their balance and footing. Animals that slip and fall can become injured or lame, a situation that no livestock producer wants to encounter.

## Special Ranger Tips

### The Cattleman Magazine

Odds are, if you haven't had a trailer or saddle stolen, you know someone who has. Trailers and what they haul are popular targets for thieves, both at home and off your property. If your trailer, saddle or other equipment are stolen, could you provide descriptions and identifying information to law enforcement or prove ownership? Before you load up for the next day of working calves or trail riding, make sure you and your property are protected.

Saddles, Tack and Equipment - Take pictures of your saddles, bridles, bits, spurs and other equipment. Record any serial, model or make numbers and keep this information in a safe place. A brown saddle is just another brown saddle until it's your custom hand-tooled show saddle, and it's missing. Mark your saddles, bridles and other equipment with your driver's license and state or similar ID in an inconspicuous place such as on a saddle's tree, on the inside flap of a fender or under the skirt. This goes for any equipment or trailer accessories as well, like jacks, stands or tools. Don't leave your barn and tack room unlocked, even when you're at home. Thieves often take advantage of rural settings with few witnesses, often during the day. This goes for trailer doors, as well, especially if that is where you store saddles, ropes or other riding equipment. Don't leave trailer doors unlocked when traveling. All it takes is an unguarded moment for a thief to strike, whether you are stopped to eat or parked at a trailhead.

Trailer - Consider making your trailer unique with a custom paint job, decals, stripes or other distinguishing marks to make it less appealing to thieves. It will also make identification straightforward, especially if it's something that cannot be easily removed or changed. If your trailer looks like every other trailer in the parking lot, it will be easier for a thief to evade detection when they hook up and haul it off. Take photos or videos of your trailer from all angles and record the model information, a full description, VIN, license number and other identification. Keep this information in a place you can access quickly, such as in a secure place online, in your phone or elsewhere, in case you need to get it quickly to law enforcement. Locks and alarms are not only smart, they're a good deterrent to a thief looking to make a quick buck. Make it more trouble and they'll likely keep moving to another victim that's less of a hassle. Wheel locks are especially effective for keeping your trailer immobile, no matter where it's parked.

Horse - Brand your horse and make sure your brand is recorded with the county clerk's office. Even if you only have horses, that brand must be registered. Take good quality pictures of your horse from all angles. While many horses can be described as sorrel with a strip or star, a clear picture of how your horse's markings are uniquely shaped can turn it into a positive identification. Make sure copies of the pictures and any papers are easily accessible, such as stored in a secure location online, and not only on your phone or in a drawer at home.

Take a few steps to prepare and defend yourself and you'll be less likely to fall victim to thieves.

