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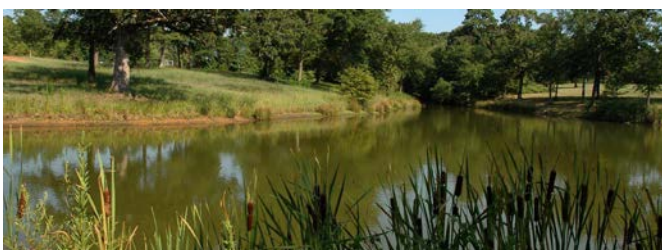
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 Bexar County

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr 28 – Pond Management Program
- May 12 – Beef Cattle Herd Rebuilding Workshop
- May 16-17 – Reproduction Management Workshop
- Jun 1 – Private Applicator Pesticide Training
- Jun 8 – Urban Wildlife Series

Multi-County Pond Management Program

Join us in Seguin at the Guadalupe County Extension Office (210 East Live Oak) for an informative program on Pond Management Friday, April 28th. The program is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service offices of Bexar, Guadalupe and Wilson counties. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. Topics include Predator Control around Ponds and Lakes, Pond Ecology and Stocking Rates and Aquatic Weed ID and Management. Cost is \$15 and lunch will be served. Three hours of CEU credits will be offered to Commercial, Non-commercial and Private Pesticide license holders (1 hour in General, 1 hour in IPM and 1 hour in L&R). Please RSVP to the Bexar County Extension Office at (210) 631-0400 by Tuesday, April 25th.



Multi-County Beef Cattle Herd Rebuilding Workshop

Make plans to join us Friday, May 12th at Mark Luensmann’s Ranch 115679 FM 775, La Vernia for a great program aimed at Rebuilding the Cattle Herd. Program topics will include: Cattle Selection, Economic Value of Management Practices, Cow Bid Decision Tool, Projected Replacement Cattle Values, Chute Side Demonstration and Brush Control Options. Cost is \$20 and will include lunch. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the program to follow at 9:00 a.m. Two hours of CEU credits (1 General, 1IPM) will be offered. Please RSVP to Denise by Tuesday, May 9th.



Multi-County Reproduction Management Workshop

The Atascosa, Bexar, Frio, Medina and Wilson County offices of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service have planned a very good hands on workshop for producers covering several aspects of beef cattle reproduction. Topics include: Ins and Outs of Pregnancy Testing, “Hands on Anatomy of a Cow’s Reproductive Tract, Rectal Palpation and Estrus Synchronization Made Easy. What makes this program unique is the **attendees will be required to bring 3-5 cows** for demonstration purposes. Space is limited and participation will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. To sign up, please contact the Bexar County Extension Office by Friday, May 5th at (210) 631-0400. Producers can select one of two days to attend. The program will be offered on Tuesday, May 16th from 9:00-2:00 p.m. and again on Wednesday, May 17th from 9:00-2:00 p.m. at Tom Brothers Ranch, 770 Co. Rd. 412 Campbellton, TX. Lunch will be served both days courtesy of Capital Farm Credit. Take advantage of a great opportunity to network and further develop your competencies.

Urban Wildlife Series

The Bexar County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee is hosting an Urban Wildlife Series June 8th & 29th, July 11th & 25th and August 8th from 10-12 noon at the Bexar County Extension Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge, Ste. 208. Topics include: Local Resources & Tools for Wildlife Identification & Management, Appreciating Backyard Wildlife, Urban Nuisance Wildlife, Snakes & Other Reptiles, and Managing for Songbirds. The cost is \$25 for the series or \$10 per class (payable in advance or at the door). Registration deadline is Friday, June 2. Classes will be recorded and broadcasted on Web Ex for those unable to attend in person. If you're interested in joining us and to reserve a spot, please contact Denise at (210) 631-0400.



Landowner Survey Participation Request

Please take a few minutes to complete a survey to help us better understand private landowner needs, preferences and concerns in operating and managing land and natural resources. The survey was developed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Private Lands Advisory Committee in partnership with Texas A&M University Institute of Renewable Natural Resources.

Note: If you have already taken the survey, no need to complete it again. The system works best if you can take the survey on a computer terminal as some smartphones and tablets have formatting issues. To access the survey, please click on the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BNPNBXR>



Private Applicator Pesticide Training

A Private Applicator Pesticide Training program is scheduled for Thursday, June 1st at the Bexar County Extension Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge Street, Suite 208. 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 call 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 \$50/person and includes study materials. Participants should plan on bringing a calculator and photo ID.



Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart & soul of a strong county extension program. They are responsible for identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating educational programs. Special Thanks to the following volunteers for their leadership in 2017 Agriculture/Natural Resource Committee:

Dorothy Ahr
Pat Ahr
Roger Bippert
Ty Chumbley
Jimmy Echtle
Dennis Hale
Elma I. Garza

David Janszen
Marilyn Magaro
Dr. Jim McMullan
Angel Torres
Ken Weidenfeller
Bill Wengler

Congratulations to David Janszen for being recognized as the Ag/NR Program "Volunteer of the Year" at our 2017 Extension Volunteer Recognition Event!



Spring Management Tips for Cow Calf Producers

Joe C. Paschal, Extension Livestock Specialist

Spring is here and it is time to consider some management tips for the cowherd. With most of the calves on the ground, now is the time to begin planning to work this year's calves. Vaccination for Blackleg and other Clostridial diseases should be a priority. The Sudden Death diseases (including Blackleg) are the number one killer of calves and cows. In addition, castration of bull calves, implanting the steer calves, internal and external parasite control treatment, dehorning, and identifying all calves with an ear tag and a ranch or holding brand should be included.

Any heifers considered for replacements should be vaccinated for Brucellosis or Bang's disease between the ages of 4 and 12 months of age. Brucellosis causes abortion and was once a significant reproductive disease in the state. After many years of vaccination and testing, Texas is Brucellosis free, but I highly recommend continued vaccination of replacement heifers, both purebred and commercial. Your veterinarian will have to administer the brucellosis vaccine so you will have to schedule your calf working around an appointment with them.

Although I prefer knife cutting for castration, some prefer to use an elastic band to castrate calves. If you prefer to band your bull calves, I recommend a tetanus toxoid vaccination. Since the process of castration by banding takes a little longer and the wound caused by the band takes longer to heal, there is a greater risk for infection. Some of the Blackleg vaccines, especially some of the 8-way vaccines, contain tetanus. Check the label or vaccinate with a separate injection.

While planning for the calf working consider any cow work that might be done. If the calves are 3-4 months old, some early pregnancy checking could be conducted. In addition, there might be some vaccinations your veterinarian recommends and certainly horn fly control would be appreciated by your cows. It has been an early season for horn flies and a combination of both a "knock down" product like a pour-on and long term control like a fly tag should be used.

Techniques Conserve Water Resources

Jim Johnson, Soils and Crops Consultant, Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

On any landscape, there are opportunities to reduce the amount of water evaporated from the soil. One option for grazers is to leave the grazed stubble a little taller so it shades the soil a little more. For instance, if you normally graze to a 4-inch stubble height, try grazing to a 5-inch stubble height. You may give up a small amount of production, but you will gain a little more shade on the soil surface. Increasing shade on the soil surface reduces the temperature of the soil on a hot, sunny day, and in turn, reduces the amount of water lost to evaporation from the soil. The same holds true when mowing the lawn or cutting hay. Raising the cutting height by a small amount will allow your yard or hay meadow to evaporate less water and redirect that water to growing grass.

The design of a pond to supply livestock water can also conserve water. A deeper pond with a smaller surface area is better than a shallow pond with a larger surface area. The bigger the surface area, regardless of the depth, the more evaporation can occur from the pond. For example, if the surface of a pond loses 1 inch of water over the course of three summer days, you would lose 1 acre-inch of water from a pond with 1 surface acre; you would lose 2 acre-inches of water from a pond with 2 surface acres. If the 1-acre pond is 20 feet deep and the 2-acre pond is 10 feet deep, they have the same storage capacity.



However, the deeper pond with the smaller surface area will lose less water to evaporation. Plants growing in soils with adequate fertility are more water efficient and make more forage or crop per inch of water used. Grazers and crop farmers should both maintain soil nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and pH at adequate levels.

Another way crop farmers can reduce evaporative losses from soil is by reducing tillage and leaving more crop residue to cover the soil. Again, the shading of the soil surface by crop residue reduces the temperature of the soil surface, which again reduces the amount of water lost due to evaporation. Farmers with irrigation can more efficiently use the water they apply by irrigating less frequently but with larger irrigation amounts that allow water to soak more deeply into the soil. In the Southern Great Plains, it is possible to lose one-quarter of an inch of water from each irrigation application to evaporation of the water droplets before they reach the ground. This means that if only one-half of an inch of water is applied at a time, one-half of the total application is lost. If two one-half inch applications are made in an attempt to apply one inch of water, only one-half inch of the total gets used and the other half inch is lost. However, if 1 inch is applied in a single application and one-quarter of an inch is lost, then three-quarters of the inch applied are used.

These are just a few ways that we in agriculture can make more efficient use of the water we have. Hopefully, these techniques and others will allow us to make the most efficient use of our water resulting in better stewardship of our resources.

Top 10 Ways to Make Cow Herds More Profitable

Robert Wells, Ph.D., Livestock Consultant, Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

It has been well-documented in popular press and repeatedly confirmed at sale barns and coffee shops that the current calf market is about one-half of where it was just 2 ½ years ago. The short-term projection for both the cattle market and weather are not favorable for ranchers. For ranchers to economically survive the market downturn, they need to get back to the basics, fine-tune their operations and plan for the long-term.

The following is a top 10 list of best management practices and concepts to consider that can help keep you from paying to be in the ranching business and losing money for the next few years.

1 Don't buy average or inferior bulls. Spending as little as \$750 more on a known, better bull could net you an additional \$1,475 more per bull, annually. This is accomplished by purchasing a bull that will excel in growth traits that allow the rancher to sell the maximum pounds of weaned calves off the ranch.

2 Alliance. The Integrity Beef Alliance adds a verification program for cattle producers and helps them implement Join a cattle marketing best management practices, improve health status of their cattle by following established health protocols, reduce shrink by requiring the calves to be preconditioned, and sell cattle in larger lots through commingling. Historically, producers in this Alliance have achieved premiums for their cattle above the average of other programs.

3 Moderate cow size. Larger cows require more forage to sustain themselves on a daily basis. This can affect pasture stocking rates. A cow that is 200 pounds, or 17 percent, larger than another increases forage intake by 11 percent. Thus, stocking rate must be accounted for when moving from a 1,200-pound to a 1,400-pound cow. If you cannot increase the forage production accordingly, you will have to decrease stocking rate by 11 percent fewer cows to still have enough forage for the number of cows in the pasture. The heavier cow should wean a heavier calf, but this increase will not be enough to offset the reduced cow numbers.

4 Treat your cows as an employee. Your cows should be expected to work daily for you. A productive cow will efficiently deliver a calf to the weaning pen each year, with little cost or problems along the way. In order to do this, you must select the right female then develop her so she will be successful in the environment you expect her to work.

5 Cull cows. First, cull what I call the three O's: old, open and ornery cows. Then, consider additional culls as the situation warrants. Older cows have a difficult time maintaining weight while weaning an even smaller calf. Carrying an open cow through the winter is analogous to hiring an employee, paying them monthly but not expecting them to show up to work for the next year. Ornery cows damage equipment, injure people and reduce efficiency when they are difficult to work in the pen or take part of the herd to the trees when you come into the pasture.

6 Develop a short and defined breeding season. Increasing the number of earlier calving cows will increase the average weaning weight in the fall. Consider if a calf is born 30 days earlier in the calving season and gains 2 pounds per day while on the cow, the calf will weigh 60 pounds more at the same weaning date in the fall. That is roughly a 10 to 12 percent increase in weaning weight by simply making sure more calves are born in the first third of the calving season.

7 Control feed expenses. Manure scoring is a great way to monitor if a cow is getting enough proper nutrition in almost real-time. It gives the producer an estimation of the digestibility of the diet the cow has been eating for the past 36 to 72 hours. This method allows you to identify nutritional deficiencies before they manifest into lower body condition scores. If you have to feed hay, provide high-enough quality hay that additional feed supplementation is not necessary. At the cow's highest nutritional requirement, it takes a free-choice diet (28.4 pounds dry matter) of either pasture or hay that is at least 9.9 percent crude protein and 57.6 percent total digestible nutrients (TDN) to meet a 1,200-pound cow's nutritional requirements during peak lactation (three months post calving). If hay or forage quality is limiting but quantity is not, feed the right supplemental feed at the right time to meet the cow's requirements most economically.

8 Utilize heterosis. Heterosis is an often overlooked tool to increase the commercial cattleman's overall efficiency. Heterosis is an easy tool to implement for most cattlemen and can increase weaning weights and longevity of the cow, improve feedlot performance and produce a more desirable feeder calf.

9 If feeding hay, don't waste it. Hay feeding is probably the most expensive form of delivering forage to the cow. If you are locked into this system by the forage type available on your operation, make sure you don't waste hay by using antiquated-style hay rings. A modified cone hay feeder can save from 8 to 15 percent more hay than the older, typical style feeders.

10 Keep records. The old saying is true: you can't manage what you don't measure. The more records you keep, from how much feed/mineral and hay is fed to weaning weights and percent weaned calves, the more powerful your management decisions can become. Develop key performance indicators (KPI) to benchmark how your operation compares to itself over time and to others of similar size and in the same area annually.

Keep in mind the above referenced best management practices will help most producers survive market- and weather-related disruptions and will allow for more profit year-end and year-out.

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.

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