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Ag Blog, Newsletter & Online Resources:

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| Aug. 30 | Forage Management Workshop |
| Sept. 6 | Pesticide Applicator Training |
| Sept. 17-18 | Water Screening |
| Oct. 1-2 | Bennett Trust Land Stewardship
Women's Conference |
| Oct. 5 | Seed Cotton Meeting |

PESTICIDE APPLICATOR TRAINING

A Private Applicator Pesticide Training program is scheduled for Thursday, September 6, at the Bexar County Extension Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge Street, Suite 208. The training will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 12:00 noon. Lunch will not be provided. This training is for people who do not have a license to apply restricted use pesticides on their property or those who had a license that expired at least a year ago. If you plan to attend, please contact Carrie at the Bexar County Extension Office to sign up. The registration fee is \$50/person which includes the training and study materials. Study materials are available at the Extension Office and can be picked up in advance. Participants should plan on bringing a calculator and photo ID.



FORAGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Bexar Ag/NR Committee will be hosting a Forage Management Workshop on Thursday, August 30, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 noon, at the Bexar County Extension Office. Cost of the workshop is \$15. Three (3) hours of CEU credit will be offered (2 IPM, 1 General). The speaker will be Dr. Larry Redmon, Extension Program Leader and State Forage Specialist. Dr. Redmon will discuss forage varieties, how to get them established and various management techniques. Whether you're an experienced or a new landowner, this program is sure to be of interest and educational value. To sign up, please RSVP to Carrie at 210-631-0400.

LIVESTOCK PREDATORS

Livestock predators are on the rise, presenting big problems for producers. In an effort to combat predators, Dr. Reid Redden, AgriLife Extension State Sheep and Goat Specialist, and William (Bill) Thompson, AgriLife Extension Service Assistant Professor and Extension Economist, have released an online predator survey directed toward livestock producers. This survey is an attempt to gather information on the scale of the losses, which species are suffering those losses, and the predator control costs producers are incurring. The link for this survey is: <https://tinyurl.com/predatorsurvey>. If you are a livestock producer and have any kind of predator problem, please take a minute to fill out this online survey.

WATER WELL SCREENING EVENT



The Bexar County Ag/NR Committee, in cooperation with the Texas Well Owner Network and Texas Water Resources Institute, will be hosting a water well screening event on Tuesday, September 18, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. **ONLY** at the Bexar County Extension Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge Drive, Suite 208. A meeting explaining the results will be held on Wednesday, September 19, 6:30 p.m. at the same location.

Well water samples will be screened for common contaminants including fecal coliform bacteria, nitrates and high salinity. The cost is \$10/sample. Sampling materials are available at the Bexar County Extension Office and can be picked up through Monday, September 17. Samples will be accepted **ONLY** between 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 18.

2018 NASS U.S. & STATE CASH RENT SURVEY RESULTS PUBLISHED

Tiffany Dowell Lashmet - Ag Law Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

August is here, which means that the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service has published its survey results showing average cash rental rates by state. Next month, they will issue their report, breaking this information down within each state by region and county.

The 2018 NASS report offers average rental rates for irrigated cropland, non-irrigated cropland and pastureland across the country. Lands used for haying or CRP are considered to be cropland, rather than pastureland. The 2018 results are as follows and are all reported as price per acre, per year.

United States average cash rental rates:

- Irrigated Cropland: \$215 (Up \$3.00 from 2017)
- Non-Irrigated Cropland: \$125 (Up \$2.00 from 2017)
- Pastureland: \$12.50 (No change from 2017)

The highest average cash lease rate in the country for irrigated cropland was found in California (\$528), while Iowa posted the highest averages for both non-irrigated cropland (\$231), and pastureland (\$54). The lowest reported averages were found in Oklahoma for irrigated cropland (\$72), and in Montana for both non-irrigated cropland (\$26.50) and pastureland (\$6.30).

Texas average lease rates for 2018 are:

- Irrigated Cropland: \$91 (Up \$3.00 from 2017)
- Non-Irrigated Cropland: \$30 (Up \$2.00 from 2017)
- Pastureland: \$6.70 (Up \$0.10 from 2017)

As always, I like to remind folks that these numbers are just useful as a ballpark. The cash value for cash leases in your area depend on a number of factors such as weather conditions, precipitation, quality of fences, access to water, and quality and quantity of forage.



DEALING WITH THE CURRENT DROUGHT

Vanessa Olson - Associate Professor and Forage Extension Specialist, Overton

During a drought, little can be done to increase forage pasture growth. Proper management can minimize impacts of drought on your operation when it does, and it will, occur. Careful



management early in a drought can minimize long-term stand damage and help maintain forage yields when rains do come. If pastures are managed properly during times of low moisture, the effects of drought

will be less severe and pastures will rebound faster when precipitation is sufficient. Remember, management practices that minimize damage to pastures during drought are also the same for maintaining healthy pastures in a normal year.

Managing livestock: Reduce stocking rate if you believe forage supply will be limited. First, cull cows that are open, in poor condition, or have poor disposition. A veterinarian can palpate cows for pregnancy and check for health problems that warrant elimination from the herd. Cows that are not pregnant are difficult to justify feeding expensive hay. Moving cattle to leased grazing lands where forage is available is an option to move cattle from stressed pastures without selling off a portion of the herd. Another option is early weaning and sale of calves. This reduces the stocking pressure

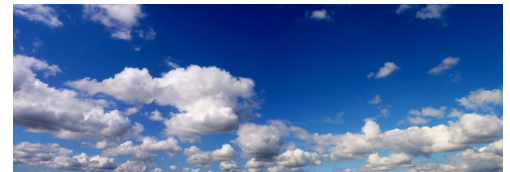
and reduces the nutrient requirement of the cows (reducing forage intake by 20%) because the heavy nutrient demand at lactation is stopped. The longer decisions to decrease livestock numbers are delayed, the sooner the forage supply will be exhausted. Delaying the decision to reduce stocking during a drought accelerates financial losses.

Grazing management: Lack of moisture suppresses plant growth and retards root development. Allow 6-8 inches of new growth before allowing livestock to graze. A healthy pasture will have 3 to 6 inches of stubble. In severe drought, pastures may not reach this stubble height, so these pastures should be deferred until the time of dormancy (when nights are 55°F for warm-season grass pastures) and then grazed to 3-4 inch stubble height. Those pastures with little or no green growth are living off the roots, and root mass has declined substantially. Roots must be replaced or bare areas will increase and invader grasses/weeds will prevail. In addition, overgrazing of plants removes the buds needed for re-growth. If insufficient stubble remains, water capture and infiltration is reduced. So when it does rain again, less water will enter the soil stores for plant growth. Stocking rates must be reduced on all types of forage. Fertilizer inputs should be reduced or stopped during periods of reduced precipitation, and rotational stocking should be considered to increase harvest efficiency and forage utilization.

Weed management: Do not apply herbicides during a drought. Plant mechanisms, in response to a drought, will prevent adequate entry of herbicides into plants and result in a high-cost application with little control of the specific weed.

A WORD ABOUT THE WEATHER

What can we expect weather wise this fall? According to an [article by Brian Bledsoe](#), (Southern Livestock.com) and the JAMSTEC Model Precipitation Forecast (September-November), we're potentially looking at a wet fall and average winter. Temperature wise (September-November), we're looking at an average to cooler than average fall, with a colder than average winter. This model seems to line up with the historic, when a Modoki El Niño is in play. So, if the JAMSTEC holds true, drought shouldn't be a huge issue for most of the region. Let's hope he is right!!!



The coming months should provide a clearer picture of what type of El Niño we will see, which will give the model more confidence. Keep in mind this is an early prediction but something worth keeping an eye on.

EMPOWERING WOMEN - NEW STEWARDSHIP TRADITIONS

A conference devoted to helping women manage natural resources in the Edwards Plateau will take place in Fredericksburg October 1-2 at the Inn on Barons Creek. "The Women's Natural Resource Management Conference is funded by the Ruth and Eskel Bennett Endowment," said Dr. Larry Redmon, co-chair and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Bennett Trust specialist.



Cost of the 2-day conference is \$75 and includes all meals, break refreshments, and tour transportation costs. Among the speakers will be wildlife biologists, animal scientists, range scientists, and financial planners.

The preliminary agenda for the first day includes presentations and discussions of land stewardship on your property and how to apply it. Day two includes a Hill Country Tour where participants will learn about plant identification, wildlife sign identification, trap and

archery shooting, lunch at Bridget's Basket in Hunt, Texas, and stops by more agricultural operations.

Registration for the Bennett Trust Women's Conference is now available at the following: <http://agrilife.org/bennetttrust/>.

SEED COTTON MEETING

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 for Agriculture (2018 Farm Bill) has new language dealing with generic acres and cotton production. New choices will need to be made for each tract with an FSA number by late summer. Each producer that does not have prior knowledge of these changes will need to be introduced to the new rules and how these rules will apply to their operation. Choices that will need to be made for each FSA field number will be:



- 1) allocate the generic base acres
- 2) consider updates to base yields
- 3) choose whether that tract will participate under the ARC provisions or the PLC program provisions

The Ag and Food Policy Center has developed a decision aid tool to assist producers in making these decisions. A meeting is planned in San Antonio for Friday, October 5, from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, in the Federal Building, located at 727 E. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd., Suite 406B (Building Conference Room).

Happy Labor

Day!!



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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