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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 3rd - Private Pesticide Applicator Training
April 30th - South Texas Agriculture Symposium
May 10th - Multi-County Beef/Forage Workshop
May 21st - Farm Pond Management

Texas Panhandle Wildfire Update

The Texas A&M Forest Service has shared that the Smokehouse Creek Fire, which burned over a million acres, is at 100% containment. There is obviously going to continue to be a great need for resources in the coming months as producers assess damage and begin the road to recovery.

I know several local entities are making donations to help those affected. I'm proud of our Extension Ag/NR Committee for their desire to help their fellow man.

To see how you can help, please visit <http://tx.ag/wildfirerelief>. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated!



Private Pesticide Applicator Training

When: Wednesday, April 3rd, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Where: 3355 Cherry Ridge, Ste. 208, San Antonio, TX

Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. 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. The program registration fee is \$60/person which includes the training and study materials. Please contact Kennedy Green at (210) 631-0400 or email kennedy.green@ag.tamu.edu to register.

Texas Solar Eclipse

April 8th is right around the corner and all the buzz is surrounding the total eclipse. This event is unique in that:

- 31 million people live inside the pathway of totality
- the path is within 200 miles of many metropolitan areas
- the duration of totality is 4 minutes and 28 seconds

Remember to use only ISO certified safe solar glasses. Once the sky turns dark and the solar corona appears, it's safe to take off your eclipse glasses.

A couple of things to remember – prepare for more traffic than normal especially at restaurants, gas stations and retail stores. Try to schedule your errands a couple days in advance of the eclipse. Be aware that some businesses may be closed or have limited hours during the event and cell phone service may be impacted.

South Texas Agriculture Symposium

Join us Tuesday, April 30th from 8:00-2:30 p.m. in Suite 208 for live streaming of the annual South Texas Ag Symposium. Cost is \$25/person and includes lunch. One hour of pesticide CEU credit will be offered.

The program is offered by our district and regional extension specialists and offers an array of subject matter. Topics will include:

- Plant Diseases & Their Management
- Weather-Related Challenges for Tree Management
- Common Wildlife Diseases & Parasites
- Basics of Wildlife Tax Valuation (1-D-1)
- Essentials to Every Rangeland Management Plan
- The State of Warm-Season Grasses
- Sedge Management in Pastures & Hay Fields
- Options to Expand Your Cowherd
- Digital Agriculture: Economic Implications

To RSVP, please contact Kennedy at (210) 631-0400 or email kennedy.green@ag.tamu.edu to register.

Multi-County Beef/Forage Workshop

Plan on attending our annual Multi-County Beef and Forage Workshop hosted by Atascosa, Bexar, Guadalupe, and Wilson counties on Friday, May 10th in Stockdale at the Kosciusko Community Hall. Topics will range from beef cattle nutrition to capturing rainfall to pasture management. We'll also have a brush equipment demonstration and a tour of Lyssy Beefmasters. Two hours of pesticide CEUs will be offered to attendees. Lunch will be provided courtesy of Livestock Nutrition Center in Gonzales. The cost will be \$25/person (pay at the door). Contact Kennedy today to reserve your spot.

Farm Pond Management

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, May 21st 10-12 noon at the Bexar County Extension Office, Ste. 208 to learn about managing invasive weeds and basic stocking considerations. One hour of pesticide CEU credit will be offered. Cost will be \$15/person. Please RSVP to Kennedy at (210) 631-0400.

Need Pesticide CEU's

For various online opportunities, follow the link:
<https://ceusearch.texasagriculture.gov/>

Kaput Feral Hog Bait

The warfarin-based toxicant created by Kaput was recently approved for feral hog management in Texas. You may recall that warfarin was registered by EPA in 2017, but the Texas registration was pulled shortly after to wait for further testing. In 2021, the 87th legislature directed Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to conduct a field evaluation. The study lasted two years and the results were submitted to the 88th legislature in August 2023. The report showed that the toxicant did work and if used correctly, could help landowners reduce feral hog numbers.

As with any new product, there will be a big learning curve in it's safe and effective use. Once the product is available on the market, we'll be sharing additional information and offering educational programs. In the meantime, feel free to access the product label at [feral-hog-25lb-label-Jan2017-FRONT \(labelsds.com\)](http://feral-hog-25lb-label-Jan2017-FRONT(labelsds.com)).

Spring is Near

As the first day of spring nears and the temperatures begin to warm up, we start thinking more about our pastures and hay meadows. Fortunately, we've had some rain and things are looking much better than a year ago.

As our warm season grasses come out of dormancy, now is a good time to collect a soil test. We can't do much about the cost of fertilizer but we can be efficient in how we use it! It's recommended to sample hay meadows annually and grazed pastures every couple of years. For more information, contact us at the Extension office or visit <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu>.

Lastly, don't forget about weeds. Remember, an early application will be more cost effective and generally lead to better results as opposed to waiting later in the growing season. As a rule of thumb, when pastures contain 50% or more weeds, inputs go up and net returns go down.

Manures, Compost, and Effluent - How much nutrient content and what is it worth?

Calvin Trostle, Ph.D.
Professor & Extension Agronomist – Lubbock

Across Texas there are many kinds of animal waste, composts, and other materials used for agricultural purposes.

What is the nutrient content? What is it worth? How available are the nutrients? Are there materials in the manure, compost, or effluent that could damage a crop or pasture (there is—often high salt content)? And how do I know what I am really getting due to the moisture content?

These are good questions. The hardest one in my opinion is the moisture content. Manure scraped up from a feedlot or dairy hauled to a field and stockpiled could have more than 50% water. That means a ton of material could only be 1,000 lbs. or less on a dry matter basis. But then the material dries out by the time it is applied. Moisture content changes with time (and might go up if it gets rained on).

Nutrient Testing

Texas A&M AgriLife's Soil/Water/Forage Testing Lab (<http://soiltesting.tamu.edu>) has a specific form for use in testing materials like manure, composts, and liquid effluents. Instructions from the lab suggest at least 8-10 ounces of liquid or 1 lb. of solid material for testing. The current year form is located at:

<https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2023/05/biosolidweb2.pdf>

The Complication of Moisture Content in Solids

Ideally, the one who purchases manure, compost, or effluent wants to know the above nutrient content to establish what the material is worth. But the moisture content complicates truly knowing the amount of nutrients you are purchasing. An effort must be made to understand and estimate/document moisture content. Ideally, a consumer would request a nutrient and non-nutrient (salts) chemical analysis before purchasing. Will the seller allow you to take your own sample for testing?

Once moisture content is known then a value can be assigned per ton for solid materials.

The True Value-and Cost-of Manures, Composts and Effluent

Mr. Bob Whitney, state Extension specialist for organic production wrote recently about additional guidance for purchasing and valuing these materials. See

<https://agrilifeorganic.org/2024/01/09/what-is-the-true-cost-of-compost-or-manure/>

He also highlights the need-to-know moisture content in purchased materials.

When is the 'Value' of composts and manures realized?

For solid materials, especially for nitrogen and phosphorus, there may be several different forms of organic and inorganic nutrients. They will vary widely in composition from one material to the next. For example, two compost materials can have the same total nitrogen, but one is mostly organic N (which must be mineralized to inorganic forms a plant can use), while the other material could be ammonium or readily available nitrate-N.

Dr. Sam Feagley, former Soil & Crop Sciences Extension nutrient management professor, TAMU, generally recommended a consumer figure 50% of N be estimated as available for plant growth in the first year, 30% in the second year, and 20% in the third year. This is a guideline. Materials that are left on the soil surface and not incorporated could potentially have much lower nutrient efficiency for nitrogen. Dr. Tony Provin, Texas A&M AgriLife soil test lab director, notes that phosphorus use per year is about the same as nitrogen. But P is not 'lost' from the system like the N as the P does not volatilize but remains always in solid form.