

Atascosa Ag Newsletter

Courtesy of: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office Atascosa County

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Questions? Call US! 830-569-0034

Check out our website at Atascosa.agrilife.org

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The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunities throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

AFTER CHRISTMAS CARE FOR POINSETTIA'S

It's Christmas time and you have bought or received a beautiful Poinsettia plant. You kept looking pretty through the holiday season, but the question we all ask ourselves is what we do with it when Christmas is over. Below are some tips to care for them after Christmas and hopefully have a successful plant that you won't have to buy next year.

Having a poinsettia year-round does require some attention but can be possible for many, the first step in ensuring that your plant continues to grow is for the plant to receive at least 6 hours of indirect sunlight each day. Not only that but it needs to have day temps of anywhere from 65°F - 70°F and have night temperatures to remain cooler but above 60°F. With your normal watering until the first of April and gradually allowing it to dry.



Photo by Stars for Europe

Now if your plant becomes to look leggy cut the stems about 4 inches above the soil and move to larger pot if necessary. You should use a all-purpose house plant fertilizer every couple of weeks. Now you have made it through spring and summer rolls around when those night temps began to stay above 50°F the plant can put in a semi shaded location outside. Once fall rolls around and the temp drop your plant will need to be brought back inside.

You may be thinking how I get it to bloom for Christmas well here is how. The plant requires short days to bloom. Therefore, you will need to keep in in complete darkness for about 12-14 hours a day from October – Thanksgiving. After this time the plant should return to 6 hours of sun and reduce the water and fertilizer. If you follow along you should have a beautiful blooming Poinsettia just in time for the Christmas holidays.

COW-CALF CORNER: THE IMPORTANCE OF COLOSTRUM

BY: MARK Z. JOHNSON, OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION BEEF CATTLE BREEDING SPECIALIST

As we move into the Spring calving season, we think about what we need to prepare and one of those things that we need to have prepared is Colostrum whether it be colostrum or colostrum replacer. Being prepared can potentially save a calf. Normal cow-calf operations need several doses on inventory at the start of the calving season. Let's talk a little about why that is important.

Having adequate colostrum is extremely crucial for a newborn it not only is their first milk, but it also helps them gain passive immunity. Calves born after a prolonged delivery through the pelvic canal can suffer from severe respiratory acidosis. Causing them to be less efficient at absorbing colostrum immunoglobulins or antibodies even if artificially fed colostrum.

If you decide that you want to store colostrum it must be kept frozen to protect the integrity of the large protein molecules that make up the various immunoglobulins. Fresh colostrum can be stored in one-quart doses by putting that much in a gallon-size Ziploc bag. Lay the bags flat to freeze in the freezer.



Photo by Jamie Purfeerst

When it is time to thaw the colostrum the "best practice" is to thaw in a warm water bath at 122° Fahrenheit for one hour. Avoid thawing at room temperature or in the microwave oven.

When giving newborns colostrum a practical rule-of-thumb is to feed 5% to 6% of the calves body weight within the first six hours and repeat the feeding when the calf is 12 hours old. Such that an 80lb calf will equate to about 2 quarts of colostrum per feeding. This is done to ensure that the final blood immunoglobulin concentration is high in order to aid in disease protection.

If you are using a replacer keep in mind that they contain more than 100 grams of immunoglobulin per dose. Always read the label before purchasing. It is important not to confuse supplements and replacers. Supplements are used to boost antibody protection a calf gets from nursing and contain 40-60 grams of immunoglobulins, which is not enough to provide protection in a calf that has not nursed.

Glenn Selk discusses the long-term effects of inadequate colostrum on calf health in a classic Cow-Calf Corner on SunUp TV from January 9, 2021 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sfni3cB6G0M>

NITRATE AND PRUSSIC ACID IN FORAGES

With the recent weather changes some maybe worried that their plants are being affected by the weather. Well, the truth is they are plants take up nitrogen and convert them into amino acids. This occurs in the roots of some grasses such as bermudagrass, and in the leaves, stems, and stalks of plants such as corn and sorghum. When you plants are stressed (caused by recent temperature drops) it slows or stops the process allowing the nitrates to accumulate. Some of the conditions that cause nitrate accumulation are as follows.

- When the temperature is high and moisture is adequate, plants may undergo a process called photorespiration. Photorespiration produces carbon dioxide rather than assimilating carbon to energy building blocks. This may cause nitrate to accumulate.
- When the soil contains nitrate nitrogen but little soil moisture, nitrates are highly concentrated in the water plants take up. Plants don't have enough water to continue growing and nitrates accumulate.
- Herbicide injury can limit the conversion and assimilation of nitrates in plants. After herbicide applications, check the field, especially field edges, for forage plants affected by off-target herbicide drift. Three to five days of active growth are needed to significantly reduce nitrate levels in plants.

Nitrates can often accumulate to toxic levels in the following plants.

Forages	Weeds
alfalfa	Canada thistle
barley	dock species
corn	jimsonweed
flax	johnsongrass
millet	kochia
oats	lambsquarters
rape	nightshade species
rye	pigweed
soybean	Russian thistle
sorghum and sorghum hybrids	smartweed
sudangrass	sunflower species
sugarbeets	

The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic laboratory at Texas A&M University has found that it is safe to feed forage with nitrate to healthy ruminants as long as the levels remain at 1% nitrate. If it is said to have a higher percentage of nitrate it could still be fed but needs to be ground and mixed with forage that is free from nitrate in order to allow the levels to be below 1% nitrate. They have also found that if the levels are anywhere from 0.5-1% they should not be fed to weakened cattle unless approved by a veterinarian.

Symptoms of Nitrate Poisoning

If forage contains too much nitrate the animals cannot complete the conversion and nitrite levels build up. Nitrite is adsorbed directly into the blood stream through the rumen wall where it combines with hemoglobin to form meth-hemoglobin. Hemoglobin carries oxygen in the blood, but methhemoglobin can cause an animal to die from asphyxiation, or lack of oxygen. The animal's blood turns brown instead of normal bright red. Monogastric (horses, mules, swine, etc.) are less sensitive to nitrate toxicity than ruminants. An animal's conditioning affects its ability to assimilate or tolerate nitrates.

Sampling

The highest nitrate accumulation is in the lower stem, and the least in the leaves. There are different ways to sample your fields one way is to sample standing forage. For this process you should create a composite sample from plant parts taken from at least 10-15 areas with the same fertility and moisture conditions. To ensure that you get accurate testing make sure you achieve sample of the whole plant leaves and stems. After collecting your sample it will need to be shipped off to the laboratory in a paper bag to ensure no mold forms and interferes with your nitrate analysis.

Continued on page 4

NITRATE AND PRUSSIC ACID IN FORAGES CONTINUED

Prussic Acid Poisoning

One other area that we should be concerned about is Prussic Acid Poisoning. Unlike nitrate, prussic acid may be present for a while and then dissipate from plants properly cured for hay. This can happen when:

- There are poor growing conditions that prevent stems from developing properly.
- Recent hay harvest or grazing causes slow and stunted growth of new plant tissue.
- Nitrogen fertilizers are over-used or there are other soil fertility or nutrient imbalances.
 - Plants develop new growth after prolonged drought.
 - Plants are injured by herbicides, frost, hail, or other events.

Prussic acid in forages can pose a significant risk to certain grazing and barnyard livestock. Plants that accumulate

Forage or Plant	Prussic Acid Potential
Peral and Foxtail Millet	Very low
Sudangrass & Sudangrass hybrids	Low to Moderate
Forage Sorghum	Moderate to High
Shattercane	High
Johnsongrass	High to Very High
Grain Sorghum	High to Very High
Sorghum Almun	High to Very High

Symptoms are similar of those of nitrate poisoning except that the blood when tested will be cherry red compared to that of the chocolate brown from nitrate

Since prussic acid accumulates mainly in leaves with the highest concentrations in new growth. Concentration in leaves many times higher than in stems. Because live-stock usually eat leaves before stems, samples taken for prussic acid analysis should be largely comprised of leaves . This is especially true when sampling fields where cattle will be allowed to graze. If grazing is limited, cattle probably will not consume stems.

Testing

There are two testing labs in our area that can be used to test for both prussic acid and nitrate. If you are needing the sample immediately such that you are planning on moving cattle within 2 days. We recommend the Quanta Lab in Selma, TX. It may be a little far but they have the ability to get you results within 24 hours. It is recommended that you call before retrieving your sample to ensure you are collecting what is needed. Another option is to collect and ship to the Texas A&M University College Station. This process may take a few days and the results could take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. If you are not in a hurry this is a great option.

If you need further information on testing or even just about prussic acid or nitrate feel free to call our office at (830)569-0034 and we can get you the information you are looking for. *Source: <https://agrillifeextension.tamu.edu/library/ranching/nitrates-and-prussic-acid-in-forages/>*

2021 TEXAS STATE-WIDE PEANUT VARIETY TRIAL

To all of our Peanut Producers in Atascosa Co. in the below link you will find the results from the Texas State-Wide Peanut Variety Trail. This is information that will be covered at the annual meeting if you have any question feel free to contact office.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11s1lTtpgymZGCw1ZOvSj5WENaupHubeiNmQ52vIEP9Q/edit?usp=sharing>

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

RANCHERS LEASING WORKSHOP

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services and Texas A&M's Department of Agriculture Economics specialists are hosting the award-winning Ranchers Leasing Workshop on February 8, 2022 in Brenham and September 13, 2022 in Kerrville. If you cannot attend in person there is a Virtual option. The course is designed for agricultural landowners and tenants, focuses on grazing, hunting and livestock leases.

The Ranchers Leasing Workshop is \$50, and preregistration is required at <https://tx.ag/AgLawsEvents22> Each participant will receive a copy of the "Ranchers Agricultural Leasing Handbook," containing checklists and sample lease language. Lunch is included.



Photo by: Texas A&M AgriLife Communications

For those unable to attend the in-person workshop, there is an online version of the Ranchers Leasing Workshop program at tx.ag/OnlineRanchersWorkshop The online program is \$75. For more information, contact Greg Kaase at 979-458-3348 or Tiffany Dowell Lashmet at 806-677-5600

Atascosa County Wildlife Co-op Annual Meeting

The Atascosa Wildlife Co-op will be hosting their annual meeting on March 29, 2022 at the Atascosa County Extension office. The topic of the meeting will be Wildlife Photography presented by Joseph Richards a Professional Wildlife Photographer.

The cost of the Annual Membership is \$25 dollars and you must RSVP by March 25th. If you have any question feel free to contact our Atascosa County Extension office at 830-569-0034 Dinner will be provided.

See Annual Meeting Flyer on Page 7

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES CONT.

South Texas Peanut Growers Annual Meeting

The 2022 South Texas Peanut Growers Annual Meeting will be held on March 1st 2022 at the Atascosa County Extension Office. There will be a Early bird session for the Dicamba Training that will offer 1.0 Laws and Regs continuing education unit with registration beginning at 2pm followed by the annual meeting with registration beginning at 3:00 and the program starting at 3:30pm. Topics to be covered include Varieties, Pathology, Research Trials, and more. An additional 2.0 CEUs will be offered. Supper will be served at 5:30pm cost is \$10 per person payable at the door. RSVP by February 25th, 2022 to the Atascosa County Extension Office. Also if you have any questions feel free to reach out to our office. **See Flyer on Page 8**

Save the Date

The following dates are for upcoming educational programs we will be releasing more information soon, so mark your calendars.

March 3, 2022 Strawberry, Fruit and Vegetable Workshop

April 19, 2022 Atascosa Cattleman Association Annual Meeting



Wildlife Co-op Annual Meeting

Atascosa County

MARCH 29, 2022

**ATASCOSA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
25 E 5TH STREET, LEMING, TX 78050**

**REGISTRATION— 6:00PM
PROGRAM— 6:30PM**

**RSVP BY FRIDAY,
MARCH 25TH**

**For more info, please call
the Atascosa County
Extension Office at
830-569-0034.**

Topic:

Wildlife Photography
Joseph Richards– Presenter &
Professional Wildlife Photographer


Annual Membership:
\$25.00

Dinner sponsored by the Atascosa Wildlife Coop



Lets Enjoy the Outdoors and Wildlife Photography Contest

The Atascosa Wildlife and Fisheries & Atascosa Wildlife Co-op are hosting a Photography contest open to any one at least 8 years and who resides in Atascosa County. The contest is open now through April 15th if you have any questions feel free to contact our office. Below is the attached flyer for the contest.

<p>Let's Enjoy the Outdoors and Wildlife! Photography Contest</p> <p>Hosted by Atascosa Wildlife & Fisheries and Atascosa Wildlife Coop</p>	
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Get Started Right Away...

Entry period is open now through April 15, 2022.

Adult & Youth Categories are

- Wildlife Portraits
- Landscapes/Scenic
- Motion
- Game Camera
- Mobile Phone

Photos must be captured in Texas. For a complete set of rules and official [entry form](#) visit atascosa.agrilife.org and look at upcoming events on the home page.

Who is Eligible?

This contest is open to all photographers who are at least 8 years of age and reside in Atascosa County. Entrants 8 to 17 years of age MUST obtain verified parental or guardian consent regardless of division entered. Entrants 18 years or older are prohibited from entering the youth division.

How to Enter?

Entries must be submitted as digital files and emailed along with [entry form](#) to atascosawildlifephoto@gmail.com.

Entry Fees: Youth \$10/photo or Adults \$20 per photo. Youth may compete in the adult division but cannot compete in both divisions.

Payment Methods: Payment and [entry form](#) may be submitted via check payable to Atascosa Wildlife & Fisheries, PO Box 379, Leming, Texas 78050. Cash is accepted in person at 25 E. 5th Street in Leming, Texas 78050. Payment may be submitted online through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lets-enjoy-the-outdoors-and-wildlife-photography-contest-tickets-131638455163>. Please note Eventbrite charges an additional fee for their services. Please remember to email us your [entry form](#).

The Atascosa Wildlife & Fisheries and Atascosa Wildlife Coop are non-profit organizations created to connect adults and youth with nature, promote responsible stewards of wildlife, and encourage conservation efforts.

2022 South Texas Peanut Growers Association Annual Meeting



The 2022 South Texas Peanut Growers Annual Meeting will be held on **Tuesday March 1, 2022** at the Atascosa County Extension Office located at 25 E. 5th Street, Leming, Texas 78050. Early bird Dicamba Training will offer 1.0 Laws and Regs continuing education unit (CEU) towards your Texas Department of Agriculture Private Pesticide Applicator License. Registration begins at 2:00pm. Regular program topics include: Varieties, Research Trials, and more. An additional 2.0 CEUs will be offered. Regular registration starts at 3:00pm. Program starts at 3:30pm. Supper will be served at 5:30pm. Cost is \$10.00 per person. **Please RSVP by Friday, February 25, 2022 at 830-569-0034.**

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

We will seek to provide reasonable accommodation for all persons with disabilities for this meeting. We request that you contact the Atascosa County Extension Service twelve days (12) prior to the event at (830) 569-0034 or as soon as possible to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you require.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION COVID-19 UPDATE AND RESOURCES

While more and more face to face events open up we are still upholding our commitment to helping Texans better their lives. Here at the Extension office we deal with three of some of the most important things in your life: Your Food, Your Health, and Your Children. For a complete list of available resources check out <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/coronavirus/>

Food: Our local farmers and food producers are working hard to ensure a safe wholesome food product from their fields to your table. For our beef producers here in the county <https://beeffax.tamu.edu> is a great resource for cattle market updates.

Health: As we adjust to our new normal our FCH Agent Dru Benavides has some awesome resources on our Facebook page to help stay active, manage stress, adhering to guidelines on social distancing, and how to safely shop at the grocery store. When out shopping for essential items it is important to remember the following tips:

1. If possible go by yourself, the less people out minimizes the chance of exposure and spread
2. Only touch products you will buy
3. Sanitize cart and cart handles before shopping
4. Keep your distance from others, CDC Guidelines say 6 feet apart at all times.
5. Go with a paper grocery list, be prepared so you minimize the amount of time at the store, and throw away your list when you're done shopping
6. After you get home thoroughly wash produce and disinfect items such as boxes and cans with sanitizing wipes, or make your own sanitizing solution with 1/3 of a cup of bleach to a gallon of water
7. Sanitize commonly touched items such as, door knobs, light switches, refrigerator door handle, faucets, car keys, and counter tops. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using cleaning products.

Children: As home becomes school and school becomes home, 4-H has some amazing educational resources to help facilitate school lessons with agriculture, learn about 4-H projects, and some at home projects to help the community. Join District 12 4-H with 12 at 12. A Facebook Live event every Tuesday and Thursday at noon. There will be quizzes, project exploration, and interaction with other 4-H'ers. Also Checkout the Texas 4-H Facebook Page for daily activities and videos! Contact Ashlie Stayton at the extension office for even more 4-H resources.

