

Atascosa Ag Newsletter

Courtesy of: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office
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15 Tips to Prepare your Garden for Winter

Texas horticulturalist offers advice to help winterize garden and enter the cool season with confidence

As cooler weather begins around the state, Texans need to start preparing their gardens and yards for the drop in temperatures. A good rule of "green" thumb is the farther north you live in the state, the sooner you need to start preparing.

"Texans should start thinking about preparing their garden for winter in early fall ideally; however its not too late -- even think ahead to spring," said Michael Arnold, Ph. D., director of The Gardens at Texas A&M University and professor of landscape horticulture in the Department of Horticultural Sciences at Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Bryan-College Station.

Winter gardening: How to take care of your garden and lawn in cold temperatures. Arnold shared what he considers to be the key things Texans should be doing now to prepare for the coming seasons.



1. **Remove spent annuals** – plant cool-season annuals for winter color in your gardens. "Annuals are a cost-effective way to add temporary color to your garden year-round by purchasing season-appropriate plants," Arnold said. Also, you should immediately plant wildflower seeds, if you have them.
2. **Weed and Clean**– As we enter the winter season, many gardens will find it is the perfect time to remove unwanted plants. Weeding now will minimize the work your garden will require for the other three seasons. Gardeners should also apply a pre-emergent herbicide, or a 'weed killer,' for cool-season weeds in landscape beds and turf areas, if desired.
3. **Plant trees and shrubs**– Late fall is the ideal time to plant woody plants so roots can be established before the heat of summer. The Texas A&M Forest Service has several web applications that provide good tree species options and recommendations for specific Texas regions and how to care for trees, including managing pests and diseases.
4. **Prune trees and shrubs**– As the weather cools and plants truly go dormant for winter, it is time to prune. Arnold recommends raising limbs on shade trees, removing overlapping branches on trees, setting scaffold branching on orchard plants and pruning shrubs that bloom on new wood by early February at the latest. He cautions about the importance of being aware if a tree blooms on new wood, like crepe myrtle, or on old wood like apple or pear.
5. **Plant grass seed**– Temperatures have cooled enough to overseed turfgrass or spread grass seed directly onto your lawn without turning the soil. "But that's a double-edged sword," Arnold said. "You may get nice, green grass even in the winter, but you need to be prepared to maintain it. Water while the seed germinates, then mow. So maybe think twice if you want to do that."

6. **Divide perennials and transplant true cool-season plants** - Choose cool-season plants like pansies, snapdragons, dianthus, ornamental cabbage, kale and such. Keep in mind that annuals typically only last a season, whereas perennials can come back for years or even decades.
7. **Consider planting winter vegetables**- Many regions of Texas can get in one last late fall harvest, and now is the time to transplant cool-season veggies if you live in warmer parts of the state.
8. **Use fallen leaves as mulch or compost**- Fallen leaves make an ideal mulch or compost. In late fall, after the first few frosts and before the first hard freeze, Arnold recommends considering using those, mulched leaves or shredded bark around the crown of tender perennials for protection.
9. **Take cuttings of any tender, at-risk plants**- If plants are sensitive to the cold, you might want to take cuttings to propagate and overwinter. Arnold recommends watching for cold nights and observing at-risk plants that may need to be protected. Light blankets or tarps may be placed on them overnight to protect them from frost.
10. **Relocate potted plants that are not cold hardy**- "Keep in mind that potted plants have roots that will get colder than those in the ground," Arnold said. Be aware that plants brought indoors may drop their leaves in response to the change in sunlight but will then put on new ones. Tropical plants will need to be in a warmer area of a home with a sunny window, but other plants can be in a garage with a window or on a protected porch.
11. **Visit your local public gardens.**- Now is the season to be inspired, Arnold said. He recommends you plan a visit to your local public gardens to take note of trees, shrubs and vines that provide fall and winter interest; consider planting them for future years. "At The Gardens, we get all types of different forms and colors and textures from different plants to teach people what they can plant in their own garden,"
12. **Clean tools and plan spring plantings**- "Winter is a wonderful time to catch up," Arnold said. In addition to planning future gardens, winter gives gardeners the time to repair and replace tools they won't immediately need.
13. **Prepare your pipes**- Arnold said the single most important thing homeowners can do in advance of winter is to locate their drainage and cutoff valves to preserve and protect pipes and irrigation systems. "find your valves today and make sure you know how to turn them off."
"Purchase or prepare insulation materials for exterior spigots and exposed pipes.
14. **Think delayed gratification**- "Long-term herbaceous perennials and bulbs need to be planted well before you want to enjoy them," he said. "So now is a great time to get some perennials into the ground and established before the cold." With bulbs, Arnold recommended refrigerating them for about 6 weeks to prepare them to be planted around mid-December, so they'll be ready for spring bloom."
15. **Be Patient**- Arnold said that plants that may look dead may still be dormant come spring. As the weather warms, he said you can gently scratch the stem. If it is still green underneath, it's alive. "Be patient," he said. "A little fertilizer and TLC can work miracles."

Inflationary Challenges Affecting Retail Beef Prices

Beef prices below 2021 levels, but remain historically higher

Through retail beef prices are lower than a year ago, prices remain historically higher as inflationary challenges affect the overall U.S. economy and projected fewer cows heading into 2023, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service livestock economist.

"Retail beef prices are lower than a year ago even though the total Consumer Price Index number is 7.1% higher than last year," Anderson Said. "(Retail beef prices) have been lower for several months now. And they are lower than last month. However, the level of prices remains high in comparison to the past several decades."

Anderson said there are signs that consumers are looking at alternative beef cuts as a cost-saving measure at the retail meat case.

"I think there's evidence that consumers are switching to less expensive items," he said "For example, maybe buying fewer ribeye cuts and more less-expensive steaks or more ground beef. Overall, beef demand remains good, and people continue to buy. That's one reason retail prices have remained high since folks are buying. The impact of higher costs throughout the economy and higher interest rates will impact people's budgets and people will buy less of all kinds of goods. That will bring down prices and inflation."

Prime rib will continue to be featured on many dining tables this holiday season despite costing more, Anderson said.

"Prime rib, standing rib roasts make a great celebration/holiday dinner," he said. "In fact, we are doing that at my house. They aren't cheap, though, but we are going to enjoy it and celebrate together."

Record beef production



As 2022 comes to an end, beef production across the U.S. has been at a record pace due to drought conditions over much of the country.

"We are on a pace to produce a record amount of beef this year, over 281 billion pounds," he said. "Production is up because of the drought, and higher production costs are forcing ranchers to cull their herds. So, the increased number of culled cows and heifers are boosting beef production, for now. While production is high now in the future we'll have a lot less beef production as the impact of fewer cows and calves is felt."

Meanwhile, wholesale beef prices are well below a year ago. The lower wholesale prices are very slowly translating into lower retail prices, Anderson said.

"Those lower prices should start to show up at grocery stores," he said. "Beef has actually become relatively less expensive than pork and chicken in recent months as beef prices have declined."

Wholesale chicken prices have declined dramatically in recent weeks and months due to rising production, Anderson said.

"Pork and chicken retail prices have both declined from the previous month in the CPI data, but they remain well above last year," he said.

Fewer cows projected for 2023

Anderson said the overall U.S. cow herd will see a 3% reduction compared to a year ago.

"We are headed to fewer cows in the U.S.," he said. "Beef cow culling is up 28% in our region over a year ago. So, we are headed to tighter beef production and given biology we'll have tighter beef production into at least 2025. Drought recovery and prices/costs that get ranchers back to some profits will be required to rebuild herds."

Hunters Urged to Practice Wildfire Safety

Texas A&M Forest Service: 42% of wildfires occur during major hunting season months

Texas A&M Forest Service reminds Texans to be careful with activities that may cause a wildfire this hunting season.

The general season for white-tailed deer hunting opened Nov. 5 for all but the two westernmost counties in Texas.

From 2017 to 2021, Texas A&M Forest Service responded to 3,682 wildfires that burned 1.4 million acres. During that time 42% of wildfires occurred during the major hunting season months of September through January.

"Texas A&M Forest Service wants all hunters to be safe this season," said Karen Stafford, Texas A&M Forest Service State Wildfire Prevention Program leader. "We all have a role to play in protecting our state from wildfires, so remember to do your part and don't let a wildfire start."

Nine out of 10 wildfires in Texas are human-caused, and 65% of wildfires that occur during hunting season are caused by debris burning and equipment use., which includes parking in dry grass and dragging trailer chains.

Tips to avoid wildfires

Recent rainfall has helped increase the amount of moisture in vegetation across the Texas landscape and reduced wildfire activity.

But even when wildfire activity is low, the possibility of an ignition is a concern. It only takes one spark to start a wildfire, and hunters are encouraged to be cautious outdoors.

Some tips to help avoid starting a wildfire while hunting and camping this fall include:

- *Avoid driving over and parking on dry grass. The heat from your vehicle can easily ignite the grass.*
 - *Always check the local officials for burn bans or other outdoor burning restrictions. Each county in Texas sets and lifts their own burn bans. Make sure you know your county's burn ban status and if it restricts open flames and other heat-causing activities such as using charcoal. View the latest burn ban map here: <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/burnbans/>.*
- *Never leave a cooking fire or campfire unattended, and always make sure it is completely out by drowning it, stirring it and feeling to ensure that it is out cold before you leave.*
 - *When taking a trailer out on your adventures, make sure that the tires are properly inflated, chains will not contact the road and that any loose metal will not continually hit anything else, all which can cause sparks.*
- *Always be ready to put out a fire should one start. Have a shovel and water with you in camp and have a fire extinguisher with you at all times.*

UPCOMING EVENTS & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

2023 Beef Cattle Short Course

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service hosted by Bexar Agriculture/Natural Resources Committee have put together their version of the **Beef Cattle Short Course** to be held on **Tuesday January 10th at the Palo Alto College 1400 Villaret Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78224** registration starts at **3:30pm** and program will begin at **4:00pm** it will include Dinner, Door Prizes and Vendors. **This is a free event.** If you would like to attend please **RSVP by Tuesday January 3rd to Denise at 210-631-0400 or email dspez@ag.tamu.edu**. See Flyer below for more information.

Brush Country Beef 706

Session Two of the Beef 706 program is just around the corner.

Session two will take place on **February 4, 2023 at 9:00am** at the Texas Feeders Ltd. 3493 FM 539 Floresville, TX. Lastly **Session three** will be held as a 1.5 day program on **May 2-3, 2023** at Texas A&M University Rosental Meat Science Center beginning at 9 am on Day 1 and 7:30am on Day 2 ending at 1pm.

To read more about each session and the Brush Country Beef 706 Program see attached Flyer. If you would like to Sign up for session two call the **Live Oak County Extension Office at 361-449-1703 by January 27th.**

2023 Let's Enjoy the Outdoors and Wildlife Photography

Our wildlife photography contest has opened up and will run from October 1, 2022, to April 15, 2023. If you are interested in entering a photo the cost is \$20 per photo for adults and \$10 per photo for the youth. Categories include Wildlife Portraits, Landscape/Scenic, Motion, Game Camera, & Mobile Phone. The Contest is open to all photographers at least 8 years of age and reside in Atascosa County. Age 8-17 years must obtain verified parental or guardian consent regardless of division entered. 18 years or old are prohibited from entering the youth division. Entries must be submitted as digital files and emailed along with the entry form to atascosawildlifephotography@gmail.com



BRUSH COUNTRY BEEF 706

Series of Three Field Trips/Workshops



The Texas Beef Council and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension have teamed up to present the Brush Country Beef 706 program. This three-part series of hands-on sessions, focusing on beef quality management and marketing opportunities, is available for all beef cattle producers. This checkoff-funded program is designed to help producers maximize profits and have a better understanding of the production process after their cattle enter the feed yard.

Session two will be held Saturday, February 4, 2023, at 9:00 am at Texaana Feeders Ltd. 3493 FM 539 Floresville, TX. During this session, producers will get to review their cattle as nearly finished market steers and learn about factors that impacted feed yard performance and impact finished steer value. The program will start with a feedyard tour at 9:00 am. Please RSVP by January 27, 2023 by calling 361-449-1703.

Session three will be held May 2-3, 2023 at 9:00 am at Texas A&M University Rosenthal Meat Science Center beginning at 9:00am on DAY 1 and 7:30am on Day 2 and ending at 1:00pm. This 1.5-day session will allow producers to participate in a hands-on exercise that takes their chosen feeder calves from session 1, now finished steers, through the harvest, grading and fabrication process. Please RSVP by April 21, 2023 by calling 361-449-1703. There will not be a cost to attend the workshop but individuals must participate in the complete series.

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 REQUEST THAT YOU CONTACT THE ATASCOSA COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE EIGHT DAYS (8) PRIOR TO THE EVENT OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ADVISE US OF THE AXILIARY AIR OR SERVICE THAT YOUR REQUIRE 830-569-0034

Questions

Dale Rankin Warren Kopplin
Atascosa County Live Oak County
830-569-0034 361-449-1703

Atascosa County
Live Oak County
McMullen County
Wilson County
Karnes County
Bee County
Bexar County
San Patricio

**To Register Call
Live Oak County
361-449-1703**

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



2023 Beef Cattle Short Course

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Hosted by Bexar Agriculture/Natural Resources Committee

Palo Alto College, 1400 Villaret Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78224

Ozuna Library

Registration starts at 3:30 pm and program begins at 4:00 pm

Tuesday, January 10th

Dinner • Door Prizes • Vendors

3:30 p.m. Registration

4:00 p.m. Pesticide Laws & Regulations (1 L&R CEU)
Vick Alexander, Assistant Regional Director, Pesticides TDA

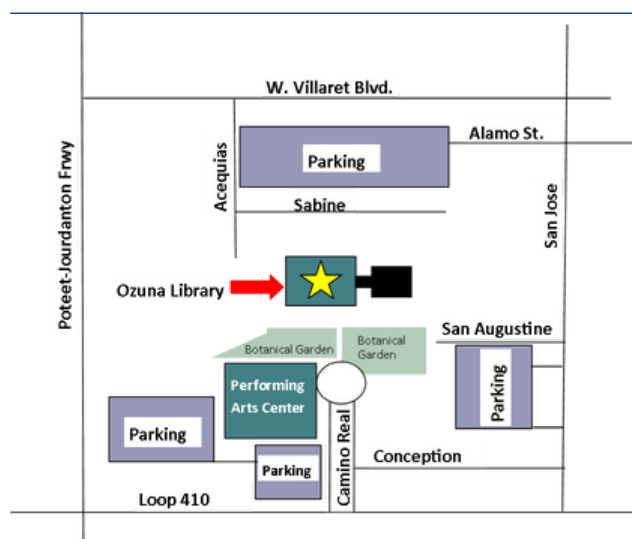
5:00 p.m. Welcome
Meal compliments of Fratello's
Getting the Most Out of Pastures Once it Starts Raining
Ethan Westfall, Wilbur Ellis Range & Pasture Specialist
Break / Visit with sponsors

Border Security Issues—What Ranchers Need to Know
Joey Aguilar, TSCRA Special Ranger



RSVP by Tuesday, January 3rd to Denise at 210-631-0400
or email dsperetz@ag.tamu.edu

Sponsored by:



Let's Enjoy the Outdoors and Wildlife! Photography Contest

Hosted by Atascosa
Wildlife & Fisheries and
Atascosa Wildlife Coop



Get Started Right Away ...

Entry Period is open now through
April 14, 2023

Adult & Youth Categories are

- Wildlife Portraits
- Landscape/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 a digital files and emailed along with entry form to
atascosawildlifephoto@gmail.com

Entry Fees: Youth \$10/photo or Adults \$20/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 Leming, Texas 78050. Payment may be submitted online through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/418067329637>. 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.



Atascosa Wildlife Photography Contest Entry Form



Contestant Information

Name _____ Phone Number : () _____

Email _____ Physical Address: _____

Age Division (check one) Youth ☐ Adult ☐

Payment Method (check one) CASH ☐ Check (# _____) Online ☐

Number of Photos Submitting: _____ Total: \$ _____

I AGREE TO THE RULES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE
PHOTO CONTEST: ☐ INITIALS: ☐

Photo Information

Photo ID or File Name: _____

Photo Description: _____

Category Entered: _____

Edits Made: _____

Photo Information

Photo ID or File Name: _____

Photo Description: _____

Category Entered: _____

Edits Made: _____



2023 SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULE

JUNE

7-11

ROLLING PLAINS BOBWHITE BRIGADE
THE 1687 FOUNDATION

RISING STAR, TX

11-15

SOUTH TEXAS BUCKSKIN BRIGADE
CHAPARROSA RANCH

LA PRYOR, TX

24-28

SOUTH TEXAS BOBWHITE BRIGADE
BUCK HORN CREEK RANCH

MCCOY, TX

24-28

SOUTH TEXAS RANCH BRIGADE
DUVAL COUNTY RANCH

FREER, TX

JULY

5-9

BASS BRIGADE
WARREN RANCH

SANTA ANNA, TX

12-16

WATERFOWL BRIGADE
PINTAIL HUNTING CLUB

GARWOOD, TX

17-21

RANCH BRIGADE
WARREN RANCH

SANTA ANNA, TX

23-27

NORTH TEXAS BUCKSKIN BRIGADE
WARREN RANCH

SANTA ANNA, TX

25-29

COASTAL BRIGADE
SEA STAR BASE GALVESTON

GALVESTON, TX

APPLY NOV.1 – MAR.15 • TEXASBRIGADES.ORG/APPLICATIONS