

Atascosa County Ag Newsletter

Courtesy of: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office
25 E. 5th Street P.O. Box 379 Leming, TX 78050
830-569-0034 Atascosa.agrilife.org

Our Staff:

DALE RANKIN

County Extension Agent
Agricultural & Natural Resources

TERESA LOPEZ

Assistant Extension Agent
Agricultural & Natural Resources

ASHLIE STAYTON

4-H Program Assistant

MONICA ZEPEDA

Office Manager

Inside this Issue:

- Wildlife with Jacob Dykes ...Page 2
Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course... Page 3
Why Should I Get My Soil Tested...Page 4-5
Top Five Tips for Supporting Pollinators
This Summer... Page 5-7
Up coming EventsPage 8-9
Upcoming Events Flyer.. Page 11-15

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.

Wildlife with Jacob Dykes

Jacob Dykes is our Extension Wildlife Specialist he shares with us some amazing facts about wildlife!

This months Wildlife with Jacob Dykes will cover Trapping & Texas Indigos

Pack rats were getting to my tomatoes before I could, so I set some traps. Trapping comes with a lot of responsibility. We owe it to the critters to make sure we are being respectful and humane, even if they're between us and tomato sandwich. One of the best ways to ensure we are doing that is by checking traps daily. It is never okay to leave traps unchecked for extended periods of time because

- 1) it is not ethical
- 2) you never know when you're going to catch a non-target.

Check out my catch from last week -- a beautiful blue indigo. I had to cut a hole in the trap to get it out, but it wasn't injured and made a quick getaway. We have a few that live on the property, and we love seeing them. I do wish they would spend a little more time in my garden, though.

Some cool facts about Texas Indigos:

- They are one of the largest nonvenomous snakes in the country. In fact, Eastern Indigo is recognized as the largest in the country.
- They are more active during the day, which is not typical for a lot of snakes.
- They will eat just about any vertebrate, including small mammals, turtles, frogs, birds, and snakes. They are known to eat rattlesnakes and can tolerate rattlesnakes venom.
- They are listed as a threatened species in Texas, mostly due to habitat loss. It is illegal to harm, kill, collect, or sell them.

Texas Indigos are not only awesome: they're also very important to the ecosystem. If you get a chance to see one, make sure you let it go about its way and take the time to appreciate it.



Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course

The 69th annual Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course, is the largest event of its kind in the nation, dates are set for August 7th -9th and registration is open. More than 1,900 cattle producers are expected to come to the Texas A&M University campus.

The event is hosted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M. From the Texas Aggie Prime Rib Dinner to the Cattleman's College, the nationally and internationally recognized three-day annual event offers producers valuable knowledge about beef cattle production.

"This year's Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course will once again be covering basic beef cattle production information as well as new advanced technologies that are on the horizon," said Jason Cleere, Ph.D., conference coordinator and AgriLife Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in the Department of Animal Science, Bryan-College Station.

Both in-person and online attendance is being offered. The cost is \$260 for in-person attendance and \$160 for online if registered by July 21. A \$40 late registration fee will be charged after that date. To register, go to <https://tx.ag/BCSC23Reg> or call 979-845-6931 for more information.

Recovering after the drought

The program is expected to offer management expertise for everyone, from the novice livestock operator to the seasoned professional, on coping with and surviving the drought and market fluctuations. Cleere said.

"We just went through a very severe drought, and the western side of Texas is still struggling," Cleere said. "We are seeing very solid calf prices now, and ranchers want to begin rebuilding their cow herd as they come out of the drought but are faced with high replacement female prices."

He said some of the questions ranchers must ask themselves are:

What can I afford to pay for a cow?

What does the market look like 3-5 years from now?

Will we rebuild the cow herd as fast as we did after the 2011 drought?

With higher feed, fertilizer, and hay prices, can I afford to stock as high as I have in the past?

More features of three-day event

The annual Ranch Horse Program will be August 6th in the Hildebrand Equine Complex. Registration is included within the full Beef Cattle Short Course registration, or individuals can attend just this event for \$60.

The Cattleman's College will feature more than 20 concurrent sessions, with topics including animal health, nutrition, reproduction, breeding, genetics, selection, research, marketing, and handling. The management sessions will cover business, forage, range, purebred cattle. Speakers will also address landowner issues and fence building.

At least nine pesticide continuing education units and 14 veterinarian continuing education credits are available to attendees.

Additionally, over 150 agriculture-related businesses and trade show exhibitors are expected to attend the course. Booth registration is still available.

Article by Kay Ledbetter AgriLife Today

Why Should I Get My Soil Tested?

Learn about your soil health and its nutrient deficiencies to increase soil fertility



This question is asked by everyone from home gardeners planting their tomatoes to farmers planning out their crop rotations and homeowners looking to keep a lush lawn.

Jake Mowrer, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service extension associate professor, Soil Nutrient and Water Resource Management in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, said soil testing is important because it determines three things:

- Existing nutrients of the soil
- Any nutrient deficiencies and needs
- Potential growing constraints.

"Soil testing measures the nutrients and other aspects of soil fertility related to crop, garden and ornamental plant growth," Mowrer said. "Indirectly, soil water is important in that nutrients must be dissolved in it to be taken up by plants."

Establishing the right fertilizer and nutrients

Mowrer said soil tests are important because they provide a guide for your plants' nutrient needs and help maximize yields efficiently.

"Soil testing does two important things. First, it measures the amount of nutrients your soil will provide to a plant during the growing season," Mowrer said. "Second, it establishes the basis for making fertilizer recommendations to make up the difference between what the soil provides and what the plant requires to complete its growth cycle."

Mowrer said soil reports empower gardeners to manage nutrients from fertilizers, manures, composts or other amendments in a way that ensures plant health and avoids nutrient escapes that can harm water resource quality.

Soil tests will commonly provide information on soil pH and salt content, as well as the amount of macronutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and calcium and micronutrients such as zinc, iron, copper, and manganese. Additional test may be performed to provide information on soil organic matter, or the amount of limestone required to correct an acidity problem.

Knowing the soil tests results is a huge first step when looking to improve your overall plant and soil health. Something as simple as knowing which fertilizer to buy for your specific garden soil and plants could make a world of a difference in your own home garden.

When is the best time of year to have your soil tested?

"For example, a farmer growing corn should sample and test in December or January to ensure results are received in time to purchase and apply fertilizer ahead of spring planting. However, wheat sown in October or November should be preceded with soil testing in July or August," he said.

Oftentimes, knowing when to get a soil test done can be half the battle. Mowrer said soil testing should definitely be done prior to any decision about purchasing or using fertilizers. And, the answer depends on what you are growing and when you are planting.

As for home gardeners, Mowrer recommends testing in January or February for something like tomatoes when they need to be transplanted in March.

The benefits of testing your soil as a homeowner

Soil tests can help homeowners avoid applying too little or too much fertilizer and other amendments.

"Many homeowners and landscape service providers tend to over apply fertilizers to ensure a beautiful lawn or productive garden," Mowrer said. "However, soil testing solves the mystery with real data you can avoid both under-application and over-application."

Mowrer said soil test results let homeowners accurately target their garden soil or turfgrass and flower beds nutrient needs and be environmental stewards at the same time.

With soil testing, homeowners can soon have the perfect balance of nutrients and fertilizer to sprout the home gardening projects and landscapes of their dreams.

Get your soil tested today

For more information on testing your soil and submitting a sample, visit the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory at <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/> You can also contact your local AgriLife Extension office and inquire about the process there. Soil test results from the lab will take two weeks to be returned to the sender.

Top Five Tips for Supporting Pollinators this Summer

Mother Nature's messengers need consideration year-round Susan Himes AgriLife Today
<https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2023/06/08/top-five-tips-for-supporting-pollinators-this-summer/>



When we see the first bit of green finally break through the earth or bud from on a tree outside our window, we know spring has indeed sprung. That's when many of us start think of our pollinator friends and what we can do to help them as our plants begin to grow and bloom.

But what about the dog days of summer? Although the Texas climate may have gardens looking less than lovely by August, pollinators will still need us. With a little advance planning

now, we can support pollinators through the sweltering months and into fall.

Some popular garden plants like roses are usually self-pollinated or pollinated by the wind, but most of the flowers you can buy at a nursery are going to attract and need pollinators. Around 80% of flowering plants need pollinators to reproduce, and over three-quarter of the staple crops that feed people and livestock do too.

Thinking locally is a great way to help pollinators. Using plants native to your region can add some extra help to support both native and other pollinators, and native plants will be better suited for the soil and climate. With any plant, planting a cluster of several of the same type will make it easier for pollinators to find them. A bonus to attracting pollinators is that your local wildflower populations may also increase.

Top tips for supporting pollinators from a Texas A&M AgriLife expert

Molly Keck, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service integrated pest management program specialist in the Texas A&M Department of Entomology and serving Bexar County, offers some science-based advice to keep pollinators around and thriving during the hottest months.

- Overlap blooms. Pollinators need flowers that bloom at different time of the year. An array of flower varieties that peak after others fade are ideal. Native and drought-tolerant species are also good additions to a garden or landscape. By planting from spring into fall, you can extend pollinators' resources.
- Be colorful. Plant flowers in a variety of colors since different pollinators are attracted to different colors. Keck said bumblebees are attracted to blues and purples, whereas other bees are more attracted to yellows or whites. She suggests adding some really bright colors like oranges and pinks to your garden to draw in butterflies. Red isn't seen well by bees, so red flowers with a contrasting center are usually better bet. If you plant colors, they will come.
- Add shapes and sizes. Pollinators' flower preferences come in all shapes and sizes, so variety is also key. Some like deeper or more open bowls, since pollinators have preferences as to the way they collect pollen or feed on nectar be aware that some of the more modern hybrid flowers with "doubled" flowers -- what looks like many petals or a flower within a flower -- may lack the pollen, nectar and/or fragrance pollinators seek out. In pursuit of the best-looking bloom, some plant breeders have left out what pollinators need. In other words, avoid those that are all show but may lack substance.
- Easy on the pesticide, please. Keck said many people mistakenly believe that if they don't use pesticide, their plant won't flower. She said if you feel you have to apply pesticide, do it in the evening when most of the pollinators have "gone to bed." That will hopefully give the pesticide time to dry before morning. Never spray the inside of the flower. If a plant is flowering, it most likely doesn't need help since it takes a tremendous amount of energy to bloom in the first place, which wouldn't happen if it was stressed. Also make sure to read the follow the label and be aware of toxic ingredients.
- Give them shelter. Providing pollinators with shelter is another way to support their numbers. Houses for bees and other pollinators can be purchased online, at home and garden stores or you can even make your own using tubes. And whereas honeybees group in hives, most insect pollinators are solitary dwellers and most bees actually live underground. Some pollinators, like mason bees, need mud to line their homes. Keeping a bit of mud near your garden is a helpful way to aid with their construction.



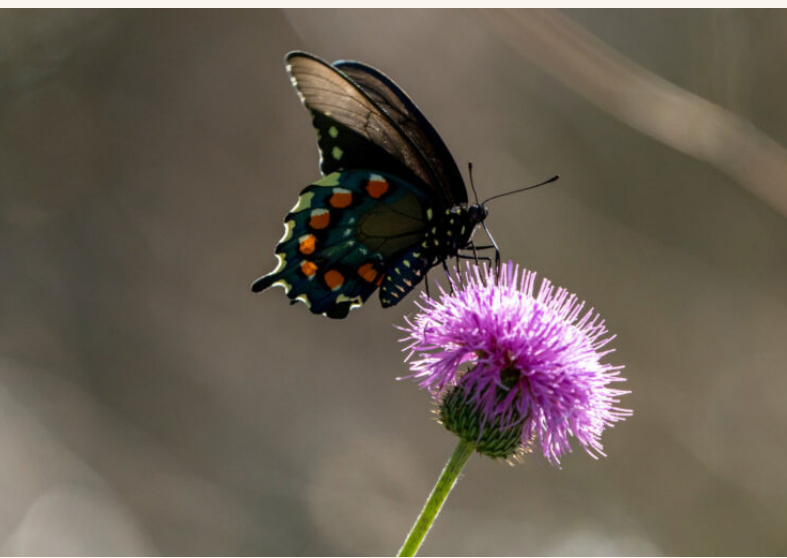
The Bee's Knees

Bees are the "bee's knees" among pollinators, Keck said.

"Bees are the best because they are actively going after the pollen," Keck said. "Their body is really fuzzy, so they pick up a bunch of that pollen and then they accidentally drop it off as they bounce from flower to flower."

When most people think of pollinators, bees in general, they typically think of honeybees and maybe bumblebees, Keck said.

"But there's actually a lot of different species of native bees that are great pollinators that we often overlook because they're small or we just assume they are honeybees because of how they look," she said.



Pollinators: Beyond bees

Although bees may be the most efficient pollinators, plenty of other insects do their share of heavy lifting.

"Beyond bees, there are also butterflies and moths, flies, beetles, and some wasps that are also good pollinators," Keck said. "The sheer number of beetles makes them a substantial, but often overlooked, pollinator."

In addition to insects, birds and bats can also be pollinators. Think about adding night-blooming flowers for nocturnal pollinators.

Supporting pollinators year-round

The majority of pollinators are most active in the spring and summer and then they start to slow things down in the fall. In fact, most insects pollinators, aside from honeybees, will die over the winter.

However, bees and other pollinators often lay eggs in hollow stalks of plants. If you typically cut these plants back or pull them up, find a corner of your garden or yard where you can leave them until next year.

Keck said those eggs pollinators lay and leave behind will hatch sometime between February and April, and the cycle will start over again.

UPCOMING EVENTS & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SHEEP AND GOAT MANAGEMENT WEBINAR

Wanting to learn more about sheep and goat management?

Then come join us on **July 5th from 1-3:30pm** for a webinar brought to you by the Medina and Atascosa County AgriLife Extension Services ! This webinar is directed toward helping provide up to date and relevant information to sheep and goat raisers across the area. This program can be attended from the comfort of your home, tractor, barn, or wherever you may be. There is **NO CHARGE** for this program. To register and receive the link for this webinar please contact **830-741-6180**.

Registration closes July 3rd.

OAK WILT PROGRAM

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension of Atascosa County has Partnered with Texas Forestry Service, to bring you a program on Oak Wilt. This program is scheduled to be held **July 25th at 6:30 pm at the Atascosa County Extension office in Leming, TX** registration will begin at 6. If you would like to come and learn about Understanding Oak Wilt and Best Management Practices **please RSVP by July 24th to the our office at 830-569-0034**

INSECT AND TURF GRASS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Atascosa, Frio & Wilson Counties are hosting a Turf Grass Management Workshop on **July 27th from 9:00 am- 12:00pm** at the **Atascosa County Extension office in Leming Tx**. Some of the various topics being covered are Disease Management, Insect Control, Nematode & Root Rot, Weed Management & Varieties Updates. This Program will be covered by Manuel Chavarria- Extension Turfgrass Specialist, Young-Ki Jo - Extension Specialist, Noel Troxclair- Uvalde County Extension Agent and lastly Envu representative Bob Ducote. This program will have a field portion the last hour, and will offer **3 CEU** credits towards your private, commercial, or non-commercial applicators license. Please **RSVP by July 24th by calling our office at 830-569-0034**

WHITE-TAILED DEER MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Bexar, Atascosa, Guadalupe, and Wilson Counties, brings you a white-tailed deer management symposium on **August 25th from 8:00am-4:30pm at the La Vernia Chamber of Commerce**. This program will offer 2 CEU credits for your private, commercial, and non commercial applicators license. Registration will begin at 8am. The cost of the program is **\$50 dollars** and will be accepted at the door in cash, check or credit card. Topics covered will include Herd Dynamics, Deer Nutrition, Habitat Management, Integrating Deer & Livestock, Wildlife Property Tax, Chronic Wasting Disease, Predator Management, Feral Hog Management, and Antler Scoring/Aging. For registration link see flyer.

ATASCOSA COUNTY 4-H FAN DRIVE

The Atascosa County 4-H has decided to take some action to help with this crazy summer heat. by hosting a FAN Drive to help local Atascosa County Residents. If you would like to support the Atascosa County 4-H kids you are welcome to drop off New in the box fans, at the Atascosa County Extension office before July 21st if you have any questions feel free to contact our office at 830-569-0034



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

SHEEP AND GOAT MANAGEMENT WEBINAR

JULY 5, 2023-1:00 PM-3:30 PM

Wanting to learn more about sheep and goat management? Then come join us online! This webinar is directed toward helping provide up to date and relevant information to sheep and goat raisers across the area. This program can be attended from the comfort of your home, tractor, barn, or wherever you may be.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS PROGRAM

**To register and receive the link for this webinar please contact
830-741-6180**

Registration closes July 3rd

**This program is brought to you by
the Medina and Atascosa County
AgriLife Extension Services**

Topics and Speakers

BEST INTERNAL PARASITE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Dr. Reid Redden
*AgriLife Extension
Sheep and Goat
Specialist*

SHEEP AND GOAT GRAZING MANAGEMENT



Dr. Megan Clayton
*AgriLife Extension
Range Specialist*

LIVESTOCK GUARDIAN ANIMALS



Mr. Bill Costanzo
*AgriLife Research
Livestock Guardian
Dog Associate*

OAK WILT PROGRAM

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION
Improving Lives.
Improving Texas.

Tuesday July 25, 2023 6:30 p.m.
Atascosa County Gillespie Annex
(Atascosa County Extension Offices)
25 East 5th Street Leming Texas, 78050



6:00 pm

Registration Starts:

6:30 pm

Understanding Oak Wilt and Best Management Practices
Erin Davis Texas Forest Service

Please RSVP to 830.569-0034 by Monday July 24, 2023

For more information please contact the Extension office:

Atascosa County Extension Office
25 East 5th Street
Leming Texas, 78050 830-569-
0034

Dw-rankin@tamu.edu

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. 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 eight days (8) 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.



Insect and Turf Grass Management Workshop

1-IPM 2 General CEUs to be offered toward Private,
Commercial, and Non-Commercial Applicators License
Atascosa, Frio, and Wilson Counties

Location:

Atascosa County Extension Office
25 East 5th Street
Leming, TX 78050

Date:

July 27, 2023
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

SPACE IS LIMITED SO SIGNUP EARLY!!
**RSVP BY: July 24, 2023 by calling the Atascosa
County Extension Office at 830-569-0034**

Guest Speakers:

Manuel Chavarria - AgriLife Extension Turfgrass Specialist
Young-Ki Jo - AgriLife Extension Specialist
Noel Troxclair - County Extension Agent Uvalde County
Bob Ducote - Envu

Topics

**Disease
Management**

Insect Control

**Nematode & Root
Rot**

Varieties Updates

Weed Management

**Field tour to be
held last hour**

For more information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Atascosa County Office 830-
569-0034

Frio County Office 830-505-
7474

Wilson County Office 830-
393-7357

We request that you contact the Atascosa County Extension Service eight
(8)days prior to the event or as soon as possible to advise us of the
auxiliary aid or service that you require.

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.

White-tailed Deer Management Symposium



Friday, August 25th, 2023

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

La Vernia Chamber of Commerce, 12201 U.S. Hwy 87 W, La Vernia, TX 78121

Hosted by Bexar, Atascosa, Guadalupe and Wilson Counties

2 Hours of General CEU for Commercial, Noncommercial and Private Applicators

Registration will begin at 8:00 AM

Program at 8:30 AM

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Program cost is \$50.

Payment will be accepted in advance or at the door (Cash, check or by credit card)

Make check payable to 'Bexar Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee' and mail to 3355 Cherry Ridge, Ste 212, San Antonio, TX 78230.

**To register scan QR code.
For questions contact Kennedy Green at 210-631-0400**



Topics Include:

- ❖ Herd Dynamics
- ❖ Deer Nutrition and Supplemental Feeding
- ❖ Habitat Management and Food Plots
- ❖ Integrating Deer and Livestock
- ❖ Wildlife Management Property Tax Valuation
- ❖ Chronic Wasting Disease
- ❖ Predator Management
- ❖ Feral Hog Management
- ❖ Antler Scoring/Aging

**Catered Lunch
Door Prizes
Vendors**

Sponsored By:



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, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.



LET'S HELP RESIDENTS OF
ATASCOSA COUNTY FIGHT THE HEAT.

ATASCOSA COUNTY 4-H IS HOLDING A FAN DRIVE

PLEASE DROP OFF, NEW IN THE BOX FANS,
AT THE ATASCOSA COUNTY AGRILIFE
EXTENSION OFFICE BY JULY 21, 2023

For questions please
contact: 830-569-0034

