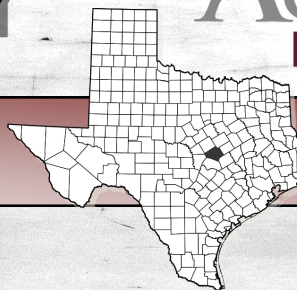


BELL COUNTY

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023

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TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE
EXTENSION SERVICE
BELL COUNTY
1605 N. MAIN STREET
BELTON, TX 76513
(254) 933.5305

FEATURED ARTICLE

WEED & PASTURE MANAGEMENT

Floyd Ingram, County Extension Agent - Agriculture

There is a vast number of things that tells one that spring has arrived in Central Texas - trees budding out, green grass coming back, wildflowers making their yearly debut, weather that changes in a moments notice. But from the desk of a County Agent, one thing that identifies spring that is as timely as clockwork is when the phone begins to ring and the question on the other line is "hey I've got these weeds in my pasture. What are they and how do I kill them?" It's a tell tale sign that old man winter has hung up his coat and a new growing season is in full swing.

I enjoy getting these questions and each year it's different due to a lot of different factors. How dry or wet we were the year before, how cold did it get through the winter, and how much moisture did we receive all plays a role. Central Texas is home to more than 200 invasive weed species and of those about 108 grow in lawn and garden applications. So when the question is asked "what is this and how do I kill it" there is no one size fits all answer and lots of considerations come into play. What works in a pasture setting might not work in a turf grass application, and what might be an ideal choice to eliminate weeds in turf grass may have you replanting tomatoes or rose bushes in a garden setting.

So where does one start? Well let's break down the question we have at hand. "What is it?" Correct identification is crucial when it comes to managing weeds. "How do I kill it?" Once you know what you're dealing with, correct product selection, application timing and application rates are key components of weed management what makes them effective and in turn provides the desired results.

What is it? (Identification):

Right off the bat, the first step in any kind of pest management is knowing exactly what you're dealing with. Think of it as the foundation of a house. If the foundation is off, then the rest of the work put into the building could be a waste of time of time and money. Fortunately, in today's day and age we have a ton of resources at our disposal to help one identify plants and weeds. In range and pasture settings one of the best tools one could use when it comes to plant ID is the Plants of Texas Rangelands website:

<https://rangeplants.tamu.edu/help-identify-my-plant/>. This webpage narrows down plant species based on your region and then goes further into characteristics to help you correctly identify grass and weed species.

Continued on page 2

WEED MANAGEMENT

For turf grass applications such as lawns, sports fields, etc. <https://aggieturf.tamu.edu/> is one of the best resources you'll find. Another one that has a number of resources for plant identification from USDA to EarthKind and the Nobel Foundation, <https://texnat.tamu.edu/about/plant-identification/> is a very good source. Last but certainly not least, your local County Extension Agent is just a phone call or an email away. Emailing a photograph of the plant in question is probably the easiest by far. I always tell people that the best practice is to pull the weed in question and lay it on a white piece of paper or something with a white background. This does two things. 1. It makes sure the correct plant in question is being identified and the picture is void of other species. 2. It usually leads to a better-quality photograph, making identification easier.

How do I kill it? (Management):

Landowners and turf grass professionals alike can benefit by employing an integrated approach to weed management. These approaches should consider; 1) Preventative, 2) Biological, 3) Cultural, 4) Mechanical and 5) Chemical control measures. Chemical weed control demands precision and judicious use of herbicides. Herbicides can injure or kill weeds and choosing the wrong one could possibly do the same to the grass you are trying to keep. Therefore, the individual product label should be consulted prior to use, especially regarding weeds controlled, application timing, and tolerant turf species.

Preemergence herbicides: Undoubtedly the best tool in your toolbox when it comes to weed control is staying one step ahead, and preemergent herbicides allow you to do just that. Preemergent herbicides are applied before the weeds sprout through the soil surface. Generally speaking, to control warm-season annual weeds, apply a preemergence herbicide in early spring (January to March) before the soil temperature has warmed to 55 degrees F. For weeds that tend to sprout throughout the summer, a second application may be required in June or July. To control cool season annual weeds, apply a pre-emergence herbicide in early fall (August to September). It is difficult to target a particular calendar date for preemergence applications due to variable soil temperature and moisture conditions from year to year.

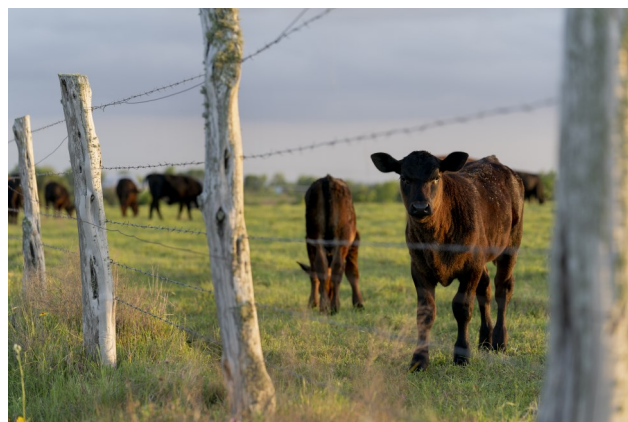
Postemergence herbicides: When I get phone calls about weeds it's typically because they are already a problem. Post-emergent herbicides are typically the first recommendation I give to get the problem under control. Post-emergent Herbicides are applied after weeds have sprouted. They are most effective when weeds are still small: less than 4 inches high. Some herbicides (ex.; atrazine, simazine, dithiopyr) have both postemergence and

preemergence activity if they reach the soil through direct contact or by washing off the foliage.

Whether you are using a pre or post emergent herbicide or a combination of both, one must keep in mind that not every product is the same. Contact herbicides (ex.; paraquat, diquat) cause damage wherever they touch a plant. To work well, a contact herbicide should thoroughly cover the leaves and stems. Contact herbicides work best on small annual weeds. They have little effect on perennial weeds unless applications are repeated. Most contact herbicides work very quickly (1-3 days). Systemic herbicides (ex.; 2,4-D, glyphosate) are absorbed and moved throughout the plant. They are sometimes applied to the foliage and sometimes to the soil although some systemic herbicides such as glyphosate are inactivated by contact with clay particles in the soil. They can be absorbed and translocated (moved) from the foliage, roots or stems to other parts of the plant. Systemic herbicides work well on perennial weeds because the herbicide is moved to parts of the plant other than where it was applied. This feature is particularly valuable for killing root, tuber and rhizome growth on perennial weeds.

It's easy for one to get "deep in the weeds" when it comes to a topic such as this. When you're trying to figure out what you should use and when to use it and at what rate remember two things:

1. When in doubt, check the label out. Each herbicide label will specify an exact answer to each one of those questions, and while they aren't the most thrilling reading material, being familiar with them can save you time and money.
2. THE LABEL IS THE LAW! Misuse of herbicides can cause you a lot of headache and potentially cost you a lot of money. Believe it or not, that label is a legal document and not abiding by it may lead to misapplication, fines, or even legal action. The old saying "if this much is enough a little more is even better" is never the case when applying herbicides. Always follow the label.





Pecan Grafting Clinic

Hosted By Bell County Pecan Growers Association

Thursday, April 6, 2023

Bell County Extension Office

1605 N Main Street

Belton, Texas

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Free to public!

- 9:00 am **Industry Update & Grafting Techniques:**
Dr. Monte Nesbitt, AgriLife Extension Program Specialist Pecan/Fruit/Citrus
- 10:00am **Pecan Grafting Demonstrations:**
Local Growers & Bell Co Pecan Assn. Members

Pecan Graft Wood available to purchase. Limited supply, after the program.

Pecan Growers will be available to discuss various topic of interest.

[Please RSVP by calling \(254\) 933-5305 by April 4, 2023.](#)

For more information, please contact the Bell County Extension Office at (254) 933-5305.



<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
<p>8:00 - 8:30: Registration & Breakfast <i>Sponsored by Capital Farm Credit</i></p>	<p>Blackland Research & Extension Center 720 E Blackland Road Temple, TX 76502</p>
<p>8:30 - 8:45: Capital Farm Credit - Production Loan Update</p>	<p><u>REGISTRATION</u></p>
<p>8:45 - 9:00: Texas Wheat Producers Assn.</p>	<p>\$10.00 at the Door 2 CEU Hours Available</p>
<p>9:00 - 10:00: 2023 Commodity Market Update <i>Dr. J. Mark Welch Professor & Extension Economist</i></p>	<p>R.S.V.P. by calling the Bell County Extension Office</p>
<p>10:00 - 11:00: Hessian Fly Impact & Small Grains IPM Update <i>Tyler Mays, Hill/McLennan Co. Extension IPM Agent</i></p>	<p>254-933-5305</p>
<p>11:00 - 12:00: Tour Wheat & Oat Variety Plots <i>Dr. Regan Noland Professor & Extension Agronomist</i></p>	<p><i>"Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity."</i></p>
<p>12:00: Door Prizes, Evaluations, Adjourn</p>	

2 Hours CEU Credits Offered 1-IPM & 1-General. 2 Hours of CCA Credits Offered 1-PD & 1-IPM.



BELL COUNTY SMALL GRAINS FIELD DAY
April 19th
Blackland Research & Extension Center

Bell County Extension will host a small grains field day on Wednesday, April 19th, at the Blackland Research & Extension Center 720 E Blackland Rd. Temple, TX 76502. Registration will begin at 8:00am with breakfast provided by Capital Farm Credit along with a Production Loan Update. Following that will be comments and discussion from the Texas Wheat Producers Association. Extension Economist Dr. Mark Welch will be presenting a Commodity Market Update and Outlook for the 2023 growing season. Tyler Mays, IPM Agent in Hill County, will speak on local research he has done on Hessian Fly Impact with this and previous years wheat crop as well as IPM updates in small grain production. Following this we will move to the wheat and oat plots where we have **12 wheat and 4 oat varieties planted**. Dr. Reagan Noland will lead us on a walking tour of these varieties and discuss characteristics of each as well as other topics relating to this year's wheat crop. This program will offer 2 TDA CEU's 1-IPM & 1-General and 2 Certified Crop Advisor Credits. Please RSVP before April 17th by calling the Bell County Extension Office at (254) 933-5305. Flyer shown on page 4.

CENTRAL TEXAS
SMALL GRAINS FIELD DAY
April 20th
Kevin Huffman Farm, Between McGregor & Waco

There is a second opportunity to view small grain plots in McLennan County. The second field day will be held on Thursday April 20th. There are **11 Hard Red Winter Wheat varieties planted** in a side-by-side demonstration located off Smith Road, which is about halfway between Waco and McGregor, on the north side of the road. We will have Extension signs out on Hwy 84 for the field day. Breakfast will be provided by Lone Star Ag Credit. Dr. Reagan Noland will lead us on a walking tour varieties. He will be discussing the characteristics of each variety entered. Mark Nemecek of MJN Consulting will provide a "Small Grain Insect Scouting Report on Insects and Disease." We will move to the McGregor Research Center, located South of McGregor for the remainder of the program. Dr. Jason Johnson will speak there on "Agriculture Commodities and Current Factors Affecting Markets." Tyler Mays, Hill County IPM Agent will present his findings on local research work with "Hessian Fly and Their Impact on the 2023 Wheat Crop." We are looking forward to the City of Waco Fire Department presenting on "Grain Rescue." Dr. Noland will also be speaking on "planting rate, fertility and other pertinent topics relating to this year's wheat crop." We will have the famous Tenderloin Steak

Tips for lunch. This program will offer 2 TDA CEU's and 4.5 Certified Crop Advisor Credits. Registration starts at 7:30am. The fee to register is \$10. Please RSVP before April 10th by calling the office at (254)757-5180.

6TH ANNUAL
CENTRAL TEXAS VINES & WINES
May 23rd
Valley Mills Vineyard

Multiple county Extension committees will host the 6th Annual Central Texas Vines and Wines program on Tuesday, May 23rd from 8:30 am–2:35 pm at the Valley Mills Vineyards located at 1686 FM 1637 in Valley Mills, Texas. The Bagnasco family will be hosting and focusing on vineyard management. Many topics will be discussed such as Obligations, Money, Time & Labor by Fran Pontasch, Viticulture Specialist; Challenges & Obstacles to Seasonal Vineyard Management by Michael Cook, Viticulture Specialist; Petiole Sample Testing/Results, Interpreting and Addressing Nutrient Deficiencies by Justin Scheiner, Viticulture Specialist. Host and owners of Valley Mills Vineyards will present Our Story by Joey Bagnasco; Site Selection, Design, & Vineyard Tour by Joey Bagnasco; Vertical Tasting of VMV Tempranillo by Dr. John Bagnasco; and What a Winemaker Looks for in a Vineyard by Charlie Walter, Winemaker at Valley Mills Vineyards. A breakfast and a steak lunch will be provided during the program. Registration will begin at 8:30 am with a \$35 registration fee. 2 TDA CEUs will be provided (1 IPM & 1 General). Please RSVP before May 19th by contacting the office at (254)757-5180. To view the full agenda, click [HERE](#).

CENTRAL TEXAS
HAIR SHEEP CONFERENCE
May 25th
BASE, Extraco Events Center

In Texas, there are more hair sheep than wool sheep. Hair sheep tend to require less labor and the lambs are well suited for the non-traditional market. Ethnic consumers and millennials are growing the demand for lamb and mutton. The primary difference between hair sheep and wool sheep is the ratio of hair fibers. All sheep have both fibers; however, a hair sheep has more hair fibers than wool fibers. Due to their size, sheep are the preferred livestock species for small acreage landowners. A small flock or herd is suitable for the land. On May 25th, we will host our 2nd Hair Sheep Conference. This program will be located at the BASE @ Extraco Events Center. Registration will begin at 7:30 am. We will start with Purina Nutritionist Clay Elliott speaking on Visual Selection Fundamentals; Jake Thorne, Extension Sheep and Goat Specialist...

Continued on page 9

BLACKLANDS IPM UPDATE

Tyler Mays, Extension Agent, IPM

Zach Davis, County Extension Agent, ANR

General: The area's wheat crop is progressing nicely and most of the wheat I have looked at will be headed out or in the boot stage by the end of this week. The recent weather conditions have been great for both our wheat and corn crops, but also for the development of some common wheat pests. Both leaf rust and stripe rust are starting to show up in some area fields, and powdery mildew is continuing to be found in area fields. True armyworm moths are still floating around the area, but last week was probably the peak flight or those that would impact wheat, and I still have not found or heard of armyworm issues in the immediate area. Bird cherry oat aphids are still present in some area fields that were not sprayed, and thankfully these numbers are starting to decline. It also appears at this time that most of the Blacklands avoided significant crops damaged from the frost and freezing temperatures on the 19th and 20th of March.

Wheat Disease: Leaf rust, stripe rust, and powdery mildew are all present in the area, and fields should be checked for their occurrence to avoid significant crop loss. All three diseases can greatly impact yields, and they can be easily managed with fungicide applications. Fungicide applications can be economical when they are applied to prevent disease infections on the top three leaves, as these are the leaves that produce over 95% of the energy the plant needs to fill out the developing kernels.

Leaf rust produces pustules that are round to oval in shape, and reddish orange in color (Figure 1), and stripe rust pustules are oblong and yellowish orange in color (Figure 2). Both of these diseases can be managed with resistance genes, and fungicides. Planting resistant varieties is a very economical way of managing leaf rust or stripe rust, however there are very few commercial varieties that have a high degree of resistance to both leaf rust and stripe rust. Due to the lack of varieties with good resistance to both pathogens, fungicides are commonly needed around the time the head emerges to avoid the top three leaves becoming infected with either disease.

Powdery mildew (Figure 3) is a common wheat disease, but typically does not affect widespread acreage of wheat in our area, nor does it usually progress to the point where it is possibly reducing wheat yields. This disease is caused by high humidity and temperatures between 59-71°F, and growth of the fungus slows as temperatures exceed 77°F. Much like leaf rust and stripe rust, there are some varieties that are more resistant to powdery mildew

than others, and your seed representative should be able to provide that information if you ask. Other management options for powdery mildew include avoiding dense canopies, applying proper rates of Nitrogen fertilizer, and fungicide applications. Fungicides can be used to manage powdery mildew, but the cheaper products like propiconazole or tebuconazole are not as effective as some of the other fungicides like cyproconazole (Alto) and those with multiple modes of action.



Figure 1. Wheat leaf rust. Photo credit: Donald Growth, Louisiana State University AgCenter, Bugwood.org

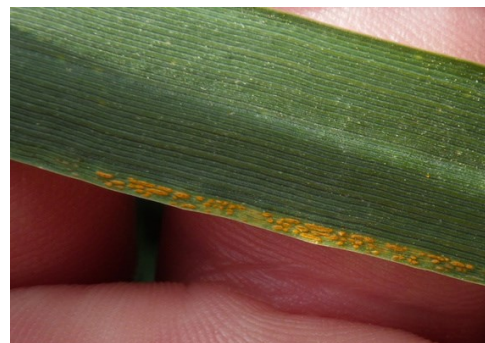


Figure 2. Stripe rust of wheat.



Figure 3. Up close photo of the white mycelial mass produced by the powdery mildew pathogen.

Armyworms: It is not news that moth activity has increased over the last couple of weeks as we have moved into spring. Some of these moths were True armyworm moths which can be a devastating pest of wheat. I have not found an armyworm in area wheat fields yet but have heard reports of them hitting wheat hard in East Texas and Louisiana over the last couple of weeks.

The armyworm larvae are green to brown in color with lighter stripes running the length of the body, and can reach lengths up to 1-1/2 inches when fully grown (Figure 4). This pest tends to be higher in areas of the fields with dense canopies, as they try and avoid the sunlight. During the day the larvae will hide around the base of the plants, and under debris that remains on the soil surface. It is important to treat armyworms in a timely manner, and before they get too big, as small worms are easier to control and the armyworm consumes more plant matter as it grows. The recommended economic threshold for true armyworm in wheat and other small grain in Texas is four to five per 1 square foot. There are several insecticides that are labeled for control of true armyworm in small grains including multiple pyrethroids and malathion, both of which are reasonably priced for a wheat crop, but product with the active ingredient of chlorantraniliprole are also labeled for true armyworm management.



Figure 4. True armyworm larva. Photo credit: Roger Schmidt, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bugwood.org

ESTABLISHING BERMUDAGRASS

Vanessa Corriher-Olson

Professor & Extension Forage Specialist

As temperatures rise we often start getting an itch to plant. When it comes to establishing bermudagrass from sprigs there are several things to keep in mind before we start tilling the soil...



Figure 1. Tifton 85 Sprigs loaded in a BermudaKing.

Location: Choose a well drained soil; bermudagrass does not do well on wet-land (except for Jiggs Bermudagrass).

Variety Selection: Match variety to soil type, average rainfall, production goals, and willingness to manage (provide fertility, etc.). Find more information on bermudagrass varieties at [Bermudagrass Varieties, Hybrids, and Blends for Texas](#).

Weed Control: Destroy existing vegetation by spraying actively growing weeds with glyphosate. Ideal time to start is the year prior to actual planting. In late summer/early fall year prior to planting, destroy existing vegetation with 5 quarts/acre of glyphosate. Weed control following establishment can be critical to achieving a stand. Find more information on herbicides for newly established bermudagrass [HERE](#).

Soil Fertility: Obtain a soil sample the fall prior to planting. Apply recommended limestone during land preparation. Any recommended phosphorus should be applied during seedbed preparation to incorporate into the soil. When sprigs begin to green up, apply 40 to 60 lbs of actual N/acre and any potassium (K) according to soil test recommendation. Find soil testing information [HERE](#).

Sprigs: Identify a reliable sprig source well before planting time. Your County Extension Agent may know of someone locally who provides sprigs. Plant into a moist seedbed at 2 to 2 ½ inches deep. Do not plant deeper than 3”.

Planting Date: Sprigs can be planted from March, when danger of a heavy freeze is past, until August. The earlier you plant, the longer you will have to get established and the better chance they will survive a severe winter. The underground rhizomes develop much slower than the above ground stolons and are necessary for winter survival. Planting later into the summer increases the risk of losing newly planted sprigs to drought. For a step-by-step guide see [Establishing Tifton 85 Bermudagrass](#).

Seeded Bermudagrass: To establish a seeded bermudagrass plant about May in northeast Texas. Optimum temperatures for bermudagrass seed germination are when daily low temperatures reach 60F. Planting after mid-June is discouraged because of normally hot and dry weather conditions. Prepare a good firm seedbed and pack with a roller. After the first rain, kill any emerging weeds. After the weeds turn brown, broadcast the bermudagrass seed at 5 to 10 lbs/acre and pack again to press the seed into the soil surface.

URBAN STREAM RESTORATION TRAINING

April 25th

Seaton Star Hall

The Texas Water Resources Institute's Urban Riparian and Stream Restoration Program will host a workshop from 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. April 25 in Temple for professionals interested in conducting stream restoration projects around central Texas. The morning session will be at the Seaton Star Hall. The afternoon session will be outdoors in and along a creek to learn stream surveying techniques. Attendees must register by April 19 to Alexander Neal, program specialist, at (979) 314-2351, Alexander.Neal@ag.tamu.edu or <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/bigelm2023>.

Attendees are encouraged to register early as the workshop is limited due to space limitations. Registration cost is \$50 and includes all training materials, catered barbeque for lunch and a certificate of completion at the end of the course. Workshop presentations will be given by representatives of the Texas Water Resources Institute and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Threats to Water Quality

"Riparian and stream degradation is a major threat to water quality, in-stream habitat, terrestrial wildlife, aquatic species, and overall stream health," said Fouad Jaber, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension program specialist in Dallas. He said proper management, protection and restoration of these riparian areas will improve water quality, lower in-stream temperatures, improve aquatic habitat and ultimately improve macrobenthos and fish community integrity. "The goal of the workshop is for participants to better understand urban stream functions, impacts of development on urban streams, recognize healthy versus degraded stream systems, assess and classify a stream using the Bank Erosion Hazard Index, and comprehend differences between natural and traditional restoration techniques," Jaber said.

Continuing Education Units

Neal said participants will receive a certificate of completion and appropriate continuing education unit certificates at the conclusion of the training. He said the workshop offers many types of continuing education units. It offers seven hours for Certified Crop Advisors, six hours for Texas Floodplain Managers, and six hours for Texas Nutrient Management Planning specialists. The program may also be used for continuing education units for professional engineers. Check with your Chapter for Master Naturalist and Master Gardener to see if it is approved for your area.

Neal said the institute is able to offer the workshop at a reduced cost thanks to program funding provided

through a Clean Water Act nonpoint source grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

RAINWATER HARVESTING & TURF MANAGEMENT

May 4th

Burnet County Extension Office

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program will host a residential rainwater harvesting and turf management training on May 4, 2023 for Bell, Burnet, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills, and Williamson Counties.

The FREE event will be in-person from 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. The in-person training will be at the Texas A&M AgriLife County Office, 607 North Vandever, Suite 100, in Burnet. Online registration is required. Attendees who RSVP to the event will receive updates and materials related to the training via email. They can RSVP online [HERE](#) or contact John Smith, AgriLife Extension program specialist, College Station, at john.smith@ag.tamu.edu or 979-204-0573 with any questions. The training is offered in collaboration with the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership. "The Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program aims to improve and protect surface water quality by enhancing awareness and knowledge of best management practices for residential landscapes," Smith said.

Becky Bowling, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension urban water specialist, Dallas, said attendees will learn about the design and installation of residential rainwater harvesting systems as well as appropriate turf and landscape species based on local conditions and other practices. "Management practices such as using irrigation delivery equipment, interpreting soil test results and understanding nutrient applications can help reduce runoff and make efficient use of applied landscape irrigation water," Bowling said. Dean Minchillo, AgriLife Extension program specialist in Dallas, said "Proper fertilizer application and efficient water irrigation can protect and improve water quality in area creeks, and collecting rainwater for lawn and landscape needs reduces stormwater runoff." Lisa Prcin, watershed coordinator for the Lampasas River Watershed, will also discuss updates on Lampasas River Watershed Protection Plan activities to improve and protect water quality in this watershed during the event.

Participants can have their soil tested as part of the training. The soil sample bag and analysis are free to Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program participants. Residents can pick up a soil sample bag with sampling instructions and the Urban and Homeowner Soil Sample

4-H LIVESTOCK

Information Form at the AgriLife Extension offices in Burnet County 607 North Vandever, Ste 100, in Burnet, or in Bell County at 1605 N. Main St. Ste. 102, in Belton, or in Coryell County at 303 Veterans Memorial Loop, in Gatesville. or in Hamilton County at 101 E. Henry, in Hamilton, or in Lampasas County at 409 South Pecan St., Ste 102, in Lampasas, or in Mills County at 1011 4th St., in Goldthwaite, or in Williamson County at 100 Wilco Way Ste. AG 201, in Georgetown, Bags containing residents' soil samples should be returned to the location where they were obtained prior to or by one week after the training, soil samples may also be brought to the training where we will have soil bags to transfer the sample into. Please do not mail the soil sample to the lab. Samples will be grouped into one submission and sent to the AgriLife Extension Soil, Water and Forage Testing Lab in College Station for routine analysis, including micronutrients, pH, conductivity, nitrate-nitrogen, and other parameters. The training will include information on how to understand soil test results and nutrient recommendations so residents can interpret results once the analysis is mailed to them.

Funding for the Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program is provided in part by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality through a Clean Water Act § 319(h) grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The project is managed by the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University.

CENTRAL TEXAS HAIR SHEEP CONFERENCE May 25th BASE, Extraco Events Center

Continued from page 5

...will present on Managing Internal Parasites in Sheep; Reid Redden, Extension Sheep and Goat Specialist will discuss the Benefits of Hair Sheep in Texas. Reid will also introduce new research in the 21st Century Hair Sheep Genetic Selection Technologies; Dr. Elliott will present on Supplementing the Diet of Hair Sheep; we will have Jake Thorne lead a discussion on Management of Weaned Lambs. Derek Poe, the General Manager of the Hamilton Commission Company is going to speak on Market Trends & Opportunities. Finally, Bill Costanzo, Extension Research Associate will present on Livestock Predation Management. Interested participants should contact the McLennan County Extension Office at (254)757-5180. More information will be shared as this program develops.

BELL COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK EXHIBITORS CELEBRATE MAJOR SHOW SUCCESS Whitney Ingram, County Extension Agent Natural Resources/Youth Livestock

There have been lots of big accomplishments for the Bell County 4-H members who have recently competed in the Texas Major Shows which include the Fort Worth Stock Show, San Angelo Stock Show, San Antonio Stock Show, Houston Livestock Show, and Rodeo Austin Livestock Show. As a state, Texas is unmatched in livestock project participation and support from donors. As an exhibitor, parent, or livestock project mentor, it's apparent that success in the show ring goes far beyond the accolades. Raising and exhibiting a livestock project serves as an excellent teaching tool to illustrate animal science principles and promote ethical livestock production practices. The youth livestock program encompasses a whole family approach where each member of the family plays an important role in the success of the livestock project. Instruction in these projects incorporate invaluable lessons of life development skills such as character, ethics, and fair competition. According to An Assessment of the Texas 4-H and FFA Youth Livestock Program: Scope, Perceptions, and Return-On-Investment, all respondent groups agreed life skills (99.5%) and educational outcomes (98.5%) learned through the livestock project are relevant in real-world applications.

42 Bell County 4-H livestock projects qualified for the junior livestock auctions at a Texas Major shows and **26** exhibitors have brought home premium dollars or scholarships alongside their buckles and banners. We will not forget Carson Kirkscey's Grand Champion Market Goat in San Antonio or Cash Parker's Champion American Steers at Fort Worth and San Antonio, but although the livestock are impressive, the success is about the young people and families behind these projects. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Bell County would like to congratulate all of our hard-working exhibitors on their recent accomplishments and share some of the highlights of their big success.

Fort Worth Stock Show

Cash Parker – Champion American Steer
Riley Gowan – Reserve Division Senior Angus Heifer
Cade Harris – Reserve Division Junior Calf Hereford Heifer
Parker Munz – Champion and Reserve Rambouillet Ram, Reserve Supreme Champion Ram
Chandler Kirkscey – Reserve Champion Heavy Weight Market Goat, Reserve Champion Dorper Market Lamb
Keeley Ham – 2nd place Dorper Market Lamb
Macy Morris – 3rd place Finewool Cross Market Lamb
Cater Morris – 5th place Medium Wool Market Lamb

4-H LIVESTOCK

San Angelo

Parker Munz – Champion Ram, Premier Exhibitor of the Junior Show

Hunter Butler – 2nd place Chester Market Barrow

Carson Kirkscey – 3rd place Market Goat

San Antonio Stock Show

Cash Parker – Champion ABC Market Steer; \$10,000

Scholarship

Jackson Bragg – Reserve Champion Red Angus Heifer

Rylie Gowan – Class Winning Angus Heifer

Parker Munz – Reserve Champion Rambouillet Ewe

James Steglich – Scramble Recordbook Winner; \$10,000

Scholarship

Hunter Butler – 3rd place Berkshire Breeding Gilt

Renlee Rakowitz – Reserve Division Heavyweight Duroc Market Barrow

Jackson Cain – 3rd place Crossbred Market Barrow

Madeline Rakowitz – 3rd place Dark Cross Market Barrow

Avri Wells – 4th place Duroc Market Barrow

Carson Kirkscey – Reserve Champion Commercial Doe

Carson Kirkscey – Grand Champion Market Goat

Colton Payne – 3rd place Market Goats

Chandler Kirkscey – 7th place Market Goats

Maren Morris – 2nd place Fine Wool Market Lamb

Kaylee Eaton – 2nd place Fine Wool Cross Market Lamb

Carter Morris – 4th place Fine Wool Cross Market Lamb

Macy Morris – 4th place Fine Wool Cross Market Lamb

Chandler Kirkscey – 8th place Medium Wool Market Lamb

Houston Livestock Show

Jackson Husung – 2nd place Black Cross Market Steer

Cash Parker – 3rd place Hereford Market Steer

Connor McCaffety – 3rd place Brangus Market Steer

Chantz Parker – 4th place Brahman Market Steer

Jackson Bragg – Champion Red Angus Heifer

Cade Harris – Class Winning Polled Hereford

Riley Gowan – 2nd place Angus Heifer

Madeline Rakowitz – 5th place Yorkshire Market Barrow

Hunter Butler – 2nd place Crossbred Market Barrow

Jackson Cain – 7th place Crossbred Market Barrow

Parker Munz – Reserve Supreme Champion Ram, Champion and Reserve Champion Rambouillet Ram, and Reserve Champion Rambouillet Ewe

Keeley Ham – 6th place Dorper Breeding Ewe

Lila Bratton – 6th place Southdown Market Lamb

Bristol Fisher – 6th place Southdown Market Lamb

Brady Bratton – 19th place Southdown Market Lamb

Macy Morris – 4th place Finewool Cross Market Lamb

Millye Edwards – 2nd place Dorper Market Lamb

Carter Morris – 3rd place Medium Wool Market Lamb

Alexis Lisenbe – 11th place Medium Wool Market Lamb

Mallory Norman – 66th place Pullets

Rodeo Austin Livestock Show

Jackson Husung – 2nd place AOC Market Steer

Riley Gowan – Class Winning Angus Heifer

Jackson Bragg – 2nd place Red Angus Heifer

Carson Kirkscey – Champion Lightweight Market Goat

Chandler Kirkscey – Reserve Heavyweight Market Goat

Macy Morris – 3rd place Fine Wool Market Lamb

Maren Morris – Reserve Champion Fine Wool Cross Market Lamb

Carter Morris – 4th place Fine Wool Cross Market Lamb

Ag Mechanics & Competitive Team Results

Ag Mechanics

Wyatt Young – Blue Ribbon, 2nd in Class (San Antonio);

Division Champion Backyard Cooker (Austin)

Paisley Young – Blue Ribbon, 2nd in Class (San Antonio)

Rance Williams – Class Winning Bumper Pull Trailer (Houston)

Livestock Judging Team

7th place in San Antonio, 3rd place in Houston, and 1st place in Austin

Team members include Kaylee Eaton, Jackson Bragg, Keeley Ham, and Madeline Rakowitz.

Kaylee Eaton – 6th (San Antonio), tied for 2nd (Houston), and 3rd (Austin)

Jackson Bragg – 19th (Houston); Reserve High Point Individual (Austin)

Meats Judging

7th place in Houston

Team members include Jones Brown, Emma Canales, Jane Gauntt, and Emily Gowan.

Jones Brown – 6th (Houston)

Ag Product ID

Champion Team in Houston

Team members include Jane Gauntt, John T. Gauntt III, Emma Canales, and Jordan Candelas.

Emma Canales – High Point Individual Overall (Houston)

Consumer Decision Making

6th place in San Antonio

Team members include Emma Canales, Victoria Canales, and Jordan Candelas.

Emma Canales – 8th place



MASTER VOLUNTEERS

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

The Bell County Master Gardener Association is celebrating their 25th year of service to the communities of Bell County and invite you to stop by and visit. The Educational Center is located at 1605 N. Main, Belton, Texas in the Bell County AgriLife Extension Building. Turn left when you walk in the main front doors.

Meet the friendly Help Desk volunteers **Monday through Thursday, 9am to Noon and 1pm to 4pm.** These volunteers are available to help you with a wide variety of garden, tree, lawn, insect and seasonal topics.



Celebrating 25 Years

While visiting the office you can also check out a number of educational displays, pick up some informative print outs or planting schedules, learn about taking a soil sample and much more.

For more information, visit the chapter website at <https://txmg.org/bell/>.

CENTRAL TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS

Texas Master Naturalist – Central Texas Chapter was chartered in 2010 and has about 90 active volunteers serving Bell County and the surrounding Blackland Prairie area. Many communities and organizations rely on citizen volunteers from the chapter to implement youth education programs; maintain parks, nature centers and natural areas; and provide leadership in local natural resource conservation efforts.

The Chapter meets the **2nd Tuesday each month from 6:00-8:00pm at the Belton Church of Christ (3003 N Main)** in Belton where we have a guest speaker on relevant nature and natural resource topics, as well as discuss our projects and training opportunities. Our monthly chapter meetings are open to the public, and attending chapter meetings is a great way to meet our members and learn about our volunteer efforts!

For more information, visit the chapter website at <https://txmn.org/centraltexas/>.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency that provides programs, tools, and resources on a local and statewide level that teach people how to improve agriculture and food production, advance health practices, protect the environment, strengthen the economy, and enrich youth.

Through a statewide network of professional educators, trained volunteers, and county offices, AgriLife Extension addresses the diverse range of contemporary and emerging issues that affect local communities.

With 250 county offices serving Texans in all 254 counties, County Extension Agents serve families, youth, communities and businesses throughout the state.



Our office in Belton is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am-12:00 Noon and 1:00 pm-5:00 pm.
The office will be closed in observance of Good Friday, April 7th and Memorial Day, May 29th.

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Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.