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Wheat Scout School, Thursday, February 15th

There will be a unique opportunity at the McLennan County Extension Office on February 15th. We will host a Wheat Scout School, from 8 am to 12:30 pm. Attendees can gain 3 hours of TDA credits, or 5.5 hours of CCA credits. Topics will revolve around "Identify and Manage: Wheat Insect Pest-Wheat Disease-Common Weeds & Agronomic Considerations for Small Grain Crops." Speakers will be Tyler Mays, Hill/McLennan County IPM Agent; Dr. Tom Isakeit, Extension Plant Pathologist; Matt Matocha, Extension IPM Program Specialist and Dr. Brandon Gerrish, State Small Grain Specialist. Registration is \$10 and includes lunch. This program is brought to you by the Texas IPM program, Texas Wheat Council and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

Last Chance CEU's, Tuesday, February 20th

We will offer 7 hours total of CEU's on February 20th at the McLennan County Extension Office. 3 Laws & Regulations, 2 IPM, 1 Drift Management and 1 General. Registration starts at 7:30am, cost is \$45 for all day OR \$20 for the first hour and \$10 for each additional hour. The first hour will be Auxin training (Laws and Regulations), followed by another L&R, then 2 IPM, Lunch, 1 Drift by 1:30 pm. If you are a commercial or non-commercial applicator you would be done by 1:30 pm. The last two hours will be another L&R and 1 General. We will adjourn at 3:30 pm. The extra L&R is due to what hours are approved for this course. Registration does cover breakfast and lunch. Space is very limited. Call the office to RSVP at (254)757-5180.

Pecan Field Day, Thursday, April 11th

On April 11th, the Extension offices in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hill and McLennan Counties will host a Pecan Field Day at **Russell's Pecans, 12633 Gholson Road, Waco, Texas**. One (1) IPM CEU will be offered. \$10 to register. Registration will open at 8:30 a.m. Our topics and speaker include *Pecan Grafting – Tools Methods and Demonstrations; Pecan Variety Selection; Irrigation and Other Factors That Limit Pecan Production* by Monte Nesbitt, Extension Pecan/Fruit/Citrus Specialist. The McLennan County Master Gardeners will be providing breakfast. *Seating is up to you! Don't forget to bring your own lawn chair!* All persons must call the office to register. (254)757-5180.

4224 Cobbs Drive – Waco, Texas 76710 – (254)757-5180

Central Texas Small Grain Field Day, Thursday, April 18th

Our Annual Small Grain Field Day will be held on Thursday April 18th near McGregor. There are 10 Hard Red Winter Wheat varieties planted in a side-by-side demonstration located off the North side of Hwy 84, about 1.9 miles East of McGregor in cooperator Kevin Huffmans field. We will have Extension signs out on Hwy. 84 for the field day. On April 18th we will start in the field with registration opening at 7:30 am. AgTrust Farm Credit will provide breakfast. Dr. Brandon Gerrish, Extension Small Grain Specialist, will lead a walking tour of the Hard Red Winter Wheat Varieties. He will be discussing the *“characteristics of each variety entered.”* Mark Nemec of MJN Consulting will provide a *“Scouting Report on Insects and Disease.”* We will move to the McGregor Research Center, located South of McGregor for the remainder of the program. Mark Welch will present on a *“Commodity Market Update.”* Jnani Matson of Vortex Advantage Ag will lead a Drone Demonstration as he discusses *“Agriculture Applications with Drones.”* As always, we will have the famous *ZTD Tenderloin Steak Tips* for lunch. Following a brief introduction of our sponsors, we will offer an additional one (1) hour IPM credit to everyone who will accompany us to the McGregor Small Grain Research plots. Tyler Mays, Hill/McLennan County IPM Agent will lead a tour of the plots and research being conducted at the farm. The full program will offer 2 TDA IPM CEU's and 5.5 Crop Advisor Credits (2.5 IPM and 3 Crop Management.) Please RSVP before April 11th by calling the office at (254)757-5180.

McGregor Research Center Field Day, Wednesday, May 1st

Field Day is free and registration will be at 8:30 am and the program is from 9am – 3pm, with a lunch served. Program will be full of Industry Experts and University Researchers sharing the latest information for beef cattle producers. A tour of current research projects conducted at the Center will highlight the day.

Vines and Wines, Tuesday, May 7th

The 7th Annual Vines and Wines program will be at the 15:5 Vineyard. Robert and Donnan Alston will be our 2024 host at **3405 Southwinds Drive, Lorena Texas**. Registration will open at 8:30 am. Breakfast will be provided by Capital Farm Credit. Topics and speakers include: *Moisture Monitoring & Floor Management* by Michael Cook; *Water: Limitations and Opportunity* by Dr. Patrick O'Brien; Fran Pontasch will speak on *Pest and Disease Concerns During a Drought*; Kimberly Frost will present on *TABC License and Permit Process*; Robert and Donna will provide a Welcome and a Walking Tour of the Vineyard; Dr. Justin Scheiner will lead discussion on *“Grape Varieties for Texas;”* and Dr. Amit Dhingra will provide the latest research on BioChar and Soil Health. We will feature an awesome steak lunch, along with 3 TDA CEUs and have applied for CCA credits. Registration is \$40. All sponsors get a table, two chairs and two meal tickets. For more information and to RSVP call the office at (254)757-5180.

4224 Cobbs Drive – Waco, Texas 76710 – (254)757-5180

Central Texas Sheep & Goat Conference, Tuesday, May 28th

The 4th Annual Central Texas Sheep & Goat Conference will be held at the Exchange in McGregor, located at **300 S Jefferson Ave, McGregor TX 76657**. Registration opens at 8 am and costs \$30. Topics and Speakers include: *Managing Internal Parasites in Small Ruminant*, Dr. Andrew Roemisch - Cottonwood Creek Veterinary Hospital; *Texas Solar Sheep*, JR Howard - Owner/Operator; *Nutritional Needs of Sheep Through Out the Year*, Dr. Reid Redden – Center Director and Extension Sheep & Goat Specialist; *Types/Kinds of Goats*, Dr. Jake Thorne – Extension Sheep & Goat Specialist; *Goat and Lamb Market Update: Price Seasonality and Opportunities*, David Anderson – Extension Specialist, Livestock and Food Product Marketing; *Livestock Guardian Dog: Best Management Practices*, Bill Constanzo, Extension Program Specialist. I am working on a Sheep/Goat lunch. We are still accepting sponsors. All sponsors get a table, two chairs and two meal tickets. Call the office for more information and to RSVP at (254)757-5180.

TDA Recertification Requirements

Licensed private applicators are required to recertify every five years by obtaining 15 continuing education credits, including two (2) credits in laws and regulations and two (2) credits in integrated pest management (IPM), prior to expiration of the license. Licensed commercial, noncommercial, and noncommercial political subdivision applicators are required to recertify every year by obtaining five continuing education credits; with one credit each from two of the following categories: laws and regulations, integrated pest management or drift minimization. In McLennan County I offer 50 to 60 CEU credits every year. Reminder letters from TDA about renewals usually go out mid-January.

Harvest Celebration Award Winners, 2023

2023 – Outstanding Volunteers: “The Result Demonstration Helpers” - *Logan Steele, Reese Huffman, Matthew & Jason Wiethorn, Brady Westerfeld*. This group jumps in with both feet and helps with the planting, management, and harvest of our County Result Demonstrations & Applied Research Plots. I have had demonstrations and research plots for 25 years and it takes a lot of people to properly and efficiently plant, manage and harvest field plots. Very thankful for the contribution of this group.

Outstanding Ag Business in Support of Extension Agriculture Programming – *Ron Joiner, Pioneer*. Ron has openly allowed me the use of his weigh wagons to harvest and collect yield data. Often a morning after a surprise night phone call, Ron puts down what he is doing and makes time to assist me, with planting, harvest, etc. His partnership and support with the local Extension program adds value to our program. I am very thankful for all of our volunteers and businesses I am fortunate to work with in McLennan County. Harvest Celebration 2024 will be September 26, 2024 at the **Tonkawa Falls Events Center, Crawford TX**.

Call the Master Gardener Hot Line

I am fortunate to supervise 100+ certified and trained Master Gardeners. They have many projects and educational programs throughout McLennan County. One of their programs is our Ask a Master Gardener. You can call the county office on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm and speak to a Master Gardener about your horticulture issue. They are currently not answering phones during the winter months but will be back in the office in late February.

Pre-Emerge in Lawns

Here is my yearly reminder for homeowners to consider putting out a pre-emerge herbicide on your lawn. I like to put out pre-emerge products before or at Valentine's Day and Labor Day. If you have a bad weed problem you may have to put a pre-emerge product out every 45 to 60 days. Do not apply a pre-emerge in gardens or in an area you plan to seed, as you will destroy all seed that is planted. I do not recommend you use a pre-emerge year after year as over application will damage roots. There are several products with various active ingredients like prodiamine, dithiopyr, benefin, indaziflam, pendimethalin that offer good control of grass and some broadleaf weeds. Each active ingredient works different. Research each one before you apply to make sure the need you have can be targeted by the product you use. If you have a weed problem, I recommend that you make a minimum of two pre-emergence herbicide applications a year, until you see the wanted results: one on February 15th target summer annual weeds and one on September 1 to target winter annual weeds. Pre-emergence herbicides will often be the most effective when applied based on soil temperature because soil temperatures play a critical role in weed seed germination. Per the recommendations above, apply your spring pre-emergence herbicide when soil temperatures reach approximately 55°F for several days. Fall applications can be made several months later when soil temperatures decrease to approximately 70°F for several days.

" People in agriculture have to do a better job of telling our story. If we don't someone else will tell it for us and it won't be the truth and it won't do agriculture justice." – Shane McLellan

Soil Temperature

According to Greencast soil temperature maps our current soil temperature on 1/19/24 was 43°F, the 24-hour average soil temp was 42.3°F and the 5-day average soil temp was 32.6°F. Corn requires a 50°F of soil temperature to germinate. Planting into soil with less than 50°F of soil temperature will cause the seed to sit dormant, and lead to increasing seed vulnerability to diseases, insects, and animal predators. We have planted as early as February 4th here. That's a little early but corn planting time will be here very soon.

Tree Pruning

Now to the end of February is a good time to prune trees. If it is a big wound, use a paint to seal the wound.

Facebook and E-Mail Information

Keep up to date with program announcements and follow McLennan County Extension - Agriculture on Facebook **@McLennanAgExtension**. If you are not receiving our updates via e-mail, e-mail Nicole Kosier at nicole.kosier@ag.tamu.edu or call the office at (254)757-5180.

Upcoming Programs/Dates

July 13th- West Side Turnrow Meeting, Crawford

July 26th -Stocker Cattle Program, West Auction

August 22nd- Hay Show, Timber Crest Baptist

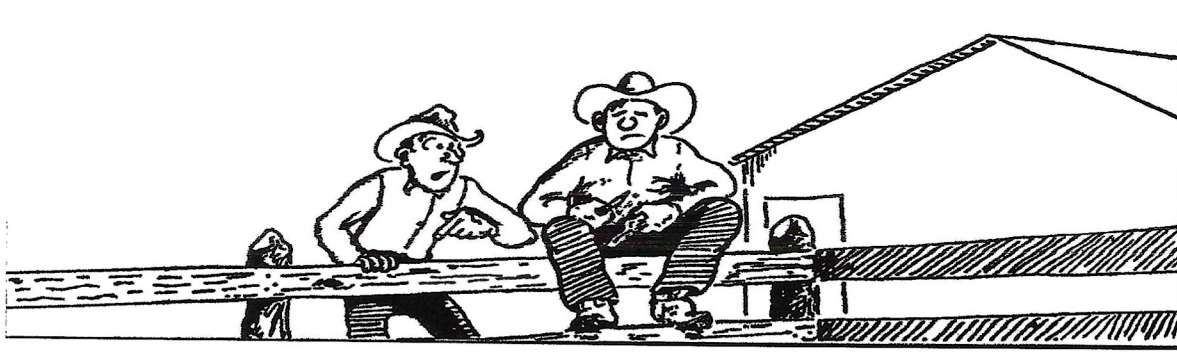
September 19th- CenTex Beef Cattle Symposium, Circle X Camp Cooley, Franklin

September 10th- VirKim Turf Conference, Hewitt VFW

September 26th- Harvest Celebration, Tonkawa Falls

October- Robertson CEU Program

December 14th- 8 Hour CEU Program



Cold Weather Memories

The recent cold snap was a reminder that I like cooler weather over warmer weather but I don't like cold or hot weather. I would rather be comfortable than uncomfortable. I have so many memories of agriculture activities in cold weather. Getting in the old International Scout and going with my dad to run traps was fun. Bundle up, because the Scout was cold. Then roll up to a trap spot and get the surprise: coyote, bobcat, raccoon, or just an old possum. I enjoyed those trips and that is why I probably still like putting out a few snares and leg traps myself. Most of my cold weather memories revolve around feeding cows. The 4020 with the add-on doors and windows blocked the wind but that's about it. No heat and putting out hay for cows was always a cold trip. Load up buckets or tubs with cottonseed and spread them out in troughs, dodging hungry cows. I think it was December 1983, dad had cows at different places and stockers at one main place and we had to go feed them daily and break ice on stock tanks multiple times a day. The stock tanks were froze thick and it was bitter cold. I heard stories of people driving vehicles out on stock tanks and lakes but we didn't do any of that crazy stuff. Breaking ice repeatedly taught me how to do it correctly. You chop a square big enough for livestock to drink. You go back and re chop the same spot over and over. After several times the water level has dropped and the ice becomes easier to chop. The remaining/elevated ice level forms insulation over the lower water level. I see people break all the ice in a trough and I just shake my head, rookies! You have multiple livestock, break multiple spots. I remember all the little calves that were born during that cold spell would grow up with half an ear, or just the tips gone due to the freezing temps. The ground was froze and I think frozen ground is harder than concrete. I grew up North of Abilene in Jones County America and the winter months always had a really cold spell and most mornings were cold anyway. You had to haul water out of the house to horses and show animals. For a little kid with a 5 gallon bucket of water in both hands, carrying sloshing water is not fun. You'd fill it up in the bathtub and carry it out to the pens and do it over and over multiple times a day. I can remember coming back from Ft Worth pig/steer shows and the house water had froze up and I was little so I crawled under the house with a heat lamp to try to thaw the line. Going to the Ft Worth steer/pig shows it was always icy and snow was everywhere back then. When I became an agent there were a few icy years but only one that was anywhere close to what it did back in the 80's. The bathrooms in the old barns at Ft Worth were the warmest spot in the facility. I remember dad and poppa Pete stripping cotton a few times around Christmas and I was stomping cotton in cotton trailers. I would take the cotton gloves off my hands so I could grab the expanded metal sides and pull myself around. The cold air would be hurting on my unprotected hand but I couldn't get my gloved hand in the expanded metal side. Tough decisions for a little kid, flop around in the loose cotton or grab the cotton trailer with a cold hand. Living in Central Texas, temperatures here are always a bit warmer than they are out West. We have a hot box built for our show goats and lambs now. They have insulated blankets on, and they can get under the multiple heat lamps to stay warm. Its warmer in the hot box than it is in my house. I could go on and on about fixing busted water lines in the cold but I don't even want to write about such evil. Hope you escaped the cold temps with water lines intact, livestock fed and sanity restored. sMc

Shirley McCallan