

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Prussic Acid
- Hay Samples for McLennan County Hay Show
- Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course
- Grass Tetany
- McLennan County Hay Show
- Small Landowner Series
- Central Texas Turf and PCO CEU Workshop
- CenTex Beef Cattle Symposium
- Harvest Celebration
- CEU Program
- Lunch with the Masters
- Facebook and E-Mail Information
- From the Top Rail by Dr. Shane McLellan

Prussic Acid

Prussic acid in forage can pose a risk to certain grazing livestock. The plants that can accumulate harmful prussic acid levels in our area would be Johnson Grass or Sorghum Sudan. Under normal growing conditions, when these plants are actively growing and healthy, they contain low levels of cyanogenic glucosides (prussic acid) which break down over time, eliminating toxic accumulations. It has always been thought that prussic acid will dissipate/break down when forages are cut and cured for hay. Prussic acid accumulation happens when: plants are in poor growing conditions, recent harvest that slows growth, new growth after a dry period, plant injury from herbicide-frost-hail-other events. Prussic acid accumulates primarily in leaves with the highest concentration in new growth. That is why samples should be mostly leaves but do include some stems. To sample standing forage, you should remove newer, upper leaves from ten to twelve plants. Samples should be sent to ServiTech Labs in Amarillo.

Hay Samples for McLennan County Hay Show

You are being offered an opportunity to test your hay at a reduced price. We will be accepting forage samples at our partnering feed stores and our office. Producers will complete paperwork for each sample and pay the testing fee which enters your sample into our county Hay Show (August 22). The timeline for submitting Hay Show samples is July 8–24. The amount of hay needed is half of a feed sack. Care should be taken not to take samples from the outer 4 to 6 inches of round bales. Samples from square bales should come out of the middle of the bale. There will be a charge of \$5.00 for each NIR (Bermudagrass) Sample and a charge of \$15.00 for other samples. Make checks payable to Ag Program Account

HAY SAMPLES AND CHECKS CAN BE LEFT AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

McLennan County Extension Office - Waco
Brazos Feed - Waco
Buzbee Feed - Waco
Miller Hay and Feed - Elm Mott
McGregor General Store – McGregor
China Spring Store - China Spring
Bar None Ag – Speegleville
Watson Feed - Mart
West Feeds - West

Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course

The largest beef cattle educational program in the world will be held August 5-7 in College Station on the campus of Texas A&M University. Over 20 courses covering basic practices, new technologies, and hot topics. Don't forget the famous Aggie Prime Rib Supper. Over 50 hours of training will be offered. Trade show exhibitors from agriculture vendors will be on site. This year's program will also include a Ranch Horse section on August 4th. For more information and to register online, please go to <https://beefcattleshortcourse.com>

Grass Tetany

Hypomagnesemia or grass tetany, also known as grass staggers, is a serious metabolic disease found in cattle and sheep when the animal does not receive the adequate amount of magnesium. It can be fatal. Low level of magnesium in animals is associated with tetanic convulsions. Grass tetany often occurs in grazing pastures with rapidly growing grass, which usually happens in early spring. Grass tetany can also occur when animals are being wintered on low magnesium grass hay, or corn stover. Quite often no clinical signs are observed and the only evidence is a dead cow. After a few cows die the producer is alarmed and contacts a veterinarian and/or their extension agent. There are tests that a lab can run to identify grass tetany but it's much easier to try to prevent it from occurring. Magnesium is an important mineral because it activates many enzymes in chemical reactions in the body. Without this mineral, cells are unable to produce energy, transport genetic information, transport materials across cell membranes, and nerves cease to respond in a normal manner. Magnesium also plays a role in electrolyte balances in the body. Providing a good mineral to your cattle is extremely important.

McLennan County Hay Show, Thursday, August 22nd

We will have our County Hay Show at Timber Crest Baptist Church, located at 1625 Crow Drive, Waco, Texas on August 22nd. We will begin at 5:30 pm with registration and a meal. This will be followed by Dr. Scott Nolte, Extension State Weed Specialist who will be speaking on "Hard to Control Weeds in Hay Fields." We will be offering one credit hour of TDA CEU's. We will end the program with providing the results of our hay samples that are being collected in July. I am currently soliciting sponsors to pay for the meal and awards. To register for the Hay Show please call the office at (254)757-5180 by August 16th.

Small Landowner Series

Are you new to owning your property, or looking to expand your operation in a new direction? Come and join the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office and MCC to learn the basics of owning land, running your new operation, and everything in-between. This year we will offer an online option for individuals to join our class virtually or in person. Once registered we will send out more details. Registration for this course is \$49 for the entire event (all 5 sessions) First session starts August 26th. Registration can be done at: MCC Continuing Education, Scroll down or "Search New Landowner" or type in this url <https://tinyurl.com/bdffffw6> For more information, please contact the McLennan County Extension Office at (254) 757-5180.

Central Texas Turf and PCO CEU Workshop, September 10th

On Tuesday, September 10th there will be a one-day Turf Seminar at the Hewitt VFW located at 724 Sun Valley Blvd, Hewitt, Texas 76643. This program will offer attendees the option of obtaining Structural and/or Agricultural CEU's. Within the Structural offering, attendees will receive four hours (1 General IPM, 1 Pest, 1 General L&R and 1 L&O) and choose between 1 hour of Termite or 1 hour of Weed to receive the 5-hour total offering. Those attending for TDA Agricultural CEU's will receive 5 hours (1 IPM, 3 General and 1 L&R). Registration will begin at 7:30 a.m. and the program will start promptly at 8:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. Lunch is included in the \$90.00 registration fee. Pre-register by September 4th and take advantage of the \$80.00 early registration fee. Interested persons must contact VirKim at (254)420-2456 to pre-register and pay by cash or check.

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

Centex Beef Cattle Symposium, Thursday, September 19th

The annual ten county Extension Fall Beef Cattle Program that rotates to partnering counties will be held September 19th in Roberston County at the Camp Cooley Division of Circle X Land and Cattle Company. If you have not been to Camp Cooley, this will be a unique opportunity to see Camp Cooley from the inside. Camp Cooley is a beautiful oasis of grass, cattle and wildlife. More information on this program will be shared at a later date. This program is offered courtesy of Extension Livestock Committees in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hamilton, Hill, Johnson, Limestone, McLennan and Robertson Counties.

Harvest Celebration, Thursday, September 26th

Our 2024 Harvest Celebration will be held September 26th at the Tonkawa Falls Event Center. I am excited to announce our guest speaker at the 2024 Harvest Celebration will be Dr. Larry Redmon. Dr. Redmon was the Extension Forage Specialist based out of Overton, Texas when I first met him. Today he is a Professor and Associate Department Head of Texas A&M University Soil & Crop Sciences & Extension Program Leader. We will recognize Outstanding Business that Support Agriculture as well as Outstanding Ag Volunteers. The famous David Meyers steak meal is always worth driving to Crawford for. This program is a result of McLennan County Extension Ag Program Area Committees members wanting to host a program to highlight agriculture and no push to buy, sell or adopt anything. It is a time to relax, eat a great meal and celebrate agriculture. We have averaged 120+ in the last three years. It might be the steak, or the great door prizes? All expenses are covered by our gracious sponsors.

CEU Program, Thursday, December 12th

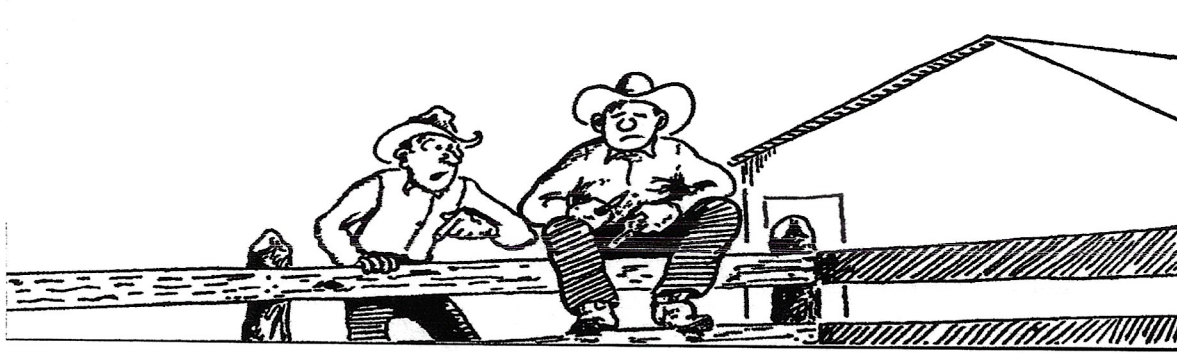
The year of 2024 is going by so fast. The annual all day, 8-hour CEU program is creeping up on us again. This event is held across the entire District 8 Extension offices. All 21 counties are involved in this one-day educational program. The speakers are spread out across the state, and we show them on “the big screen” at 13+ locations. Look for information from your respective county on where this event will be offered near you. Our location is at the MCC Emergency Services Building, located at 7601 Steinbeck Bend Road, Waco, Texas. The cost to attend (breakfast, snacks, lunch, facilities) is \$60. All interested persons should call the McLennan County Extension office to RSVP to attend the Waco site. If you are a commercial/non-commercial license holder you can get all your needed hours the first five hours. This agenda is currently being finalized, but I can share our registration will open at 7:00 am and the program will start at 7:30 am. and concludes at 4:00 pm.

Lunch with the Masters

McLennan County Master Gardeners host the Lunch with the Masters on the third Wednesday of each month. This local gardening workshop is free to the public and provides education and discussion around local gardening topics. The class meets at the Emergency Services Education Center (ESEC), 7601 Steinbeck Bend Road. Please feel free to bring your lunch and learn from the Masters.

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.



Summer Farming

My summers growing up consisted of plowing wheat stubble and hoeing cotton. Summers were busy but very laid back compared to my summers now. As a kid I was a hand, I had jobs to do, I knew my schedule was work from wake up till we got done. Very different from my schedule now, kind of. I think plowing wheat stubble is how most farm kids are introduced to tractors and plowing. It's slow, it's rough and it's repetitive. Doesn't matter if you were using sweeps, chisel, tandem disc, one way, or using a moldboard. It was hard ground, wheat straw and steel. You are forcing a piece of steel into a dry, hard surface and turning it over. This process opens up the soil for moisture to accumulate. It turns over the organic matter and allows it to break down. It makes dirt clouds, and in the hard red clay of home it will bounce you around in that tractor like nothing else. There is plenty of time to bounce on the tractor seat and think as you go back and forth or round and round, depending on what plow you were using. I think more kids (and some adults) today need to be plowing wheat stubble. Hoeing cotton is still the most humbling and hardest thing you can do. Freshly cultivated field, that you walk the long rows from one end to the other. You and an eye hoe, maybe a jackrabbit for company. It is hot, it is dusty, and walking in plowed ground will wear you out. When we started using a three-wheeler to spray Johnsongrass it was an upgrade. Moving up to a four-wheeler was a big change and you could cover lots of ground hoeing weeds and spraying Johnsongrass. I always disliked the term "hoeing cotton." We were not hoeing cotton. We were hoeing weeds but everyone still said, "hoeing cotton." We called them careless weeds, but the proper name is pigweed and there are many types: palmer amaranth, common waterhemp, redroot and smooth pigweed, to name a few. If you really wanted a lesson on hoeing, chop off a pigweed above the ground and not get the root. You get to go back and hoe that field, again. Another word I don't like is sustainability. It's another hype word. Ask ten people what sustainability means and you will get ten different answers. To me, sustainability is what a farmer does every day. A farmer will carefully use what they have today, to produce a product, without jeopardizing the future. I worry about agriculture of today. Input cost continues to increase, yields have improved but the back end (production) of agriculture is slow to keep pace with the front end (cost). More regulation and not a lot of protection. We need a "generational farm bill," now that would be sustainability! sMc

Steve McEllen