

AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

NEWSLETTER



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Beef & Rang Field Day

SAVE THE DATE

August 3

Wildlife Management
Association Sign Up
Meeting

AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Beef & Range Field Day

Thursday, May 9

3:00 pm

Gillespie County Fairgrounds

530 Fair Drive, Fredericksburg

Pre-Registration Deadline: Friday, May 3

3 CEU's (1 IPM hour, 2 General hours)

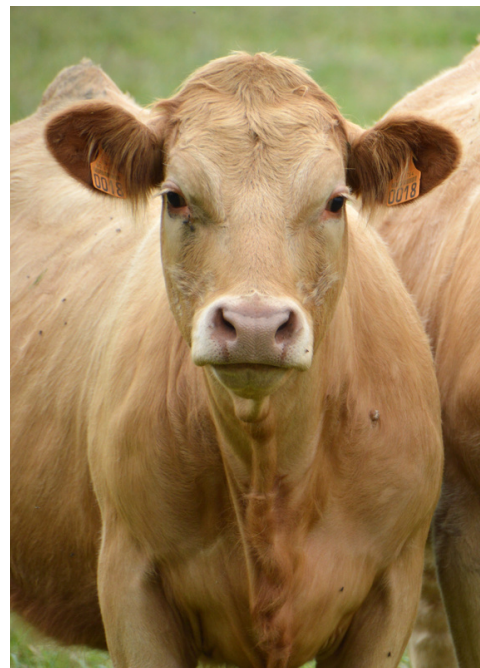
Brad Roeder, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Gillespie County Extension Agent, will discuss Feral Hog Toxicant.

Josh McQuinty, Texas A&M AgriLife Associate Professor & Agronomist in Corpus Christi, will present on herbicides for grass bur control & KR bluestem & Texas Climate-Smart Initiative.

There will also be exhibits and program updates.

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the NRSC/SWCD, 1906 N. Llano, #105, Fredericksburg or at the Extension Office, 38 Business Court, Fredericksburg. Tickets include the program, exhibits, meal, CEU's and a chance at door prizes.

For more information, call (830) 997-3349



AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Multi County Wildlife Workshop

Tuesday, April 23

8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Murchison/Whitehead Memorial Youth Complex
Menard, TX

Registration: \$25

3 CEU's

This workshop will cover horned lizards, new technology using ultrasonic sounds and recordings for predator calls, wild turkeys and their habitat, feral hog management & toxicant updates, and birding basics.

For more information, call (325) 396-4787



Texas Sheep & Goat Raisers Association (TSGRA) Trapping Clinic

April 12-14

Williams Ranch, 322 FM 3023 S.

Goldthwaite, TX

Registration: \$100 for TSGRA members
\$200 for non-members

Breakfast & Lunch Provided

22 CEU Credits Available

For more information and to register

Call [\(325\) 655-7388](tel:3256557388)

Email office@tsgra.com

Visit www.tsgra.com

HORTICULTURE PROGRAMS

Bare Ground to Lawn

Thursday, April 11

5:30-7:00 pm

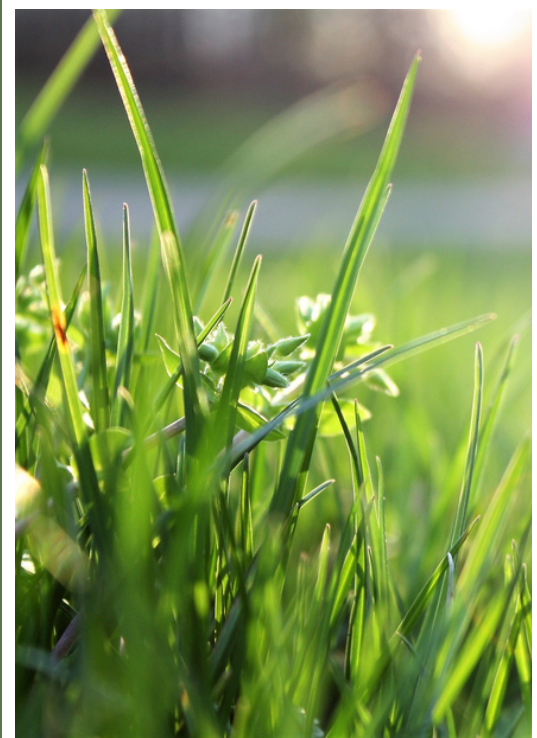
Gillespie County Extension Office

38 Business Court, Fredericksburg, TX

Registration: \$20

1 General CEU

During this program Beth McMahon will speak about the basics of planting a lawn as well as benefits and negatives of local turfgrasses. Then join us outside as we look at the turf demonstration plots. Beth will also demonstrate planting seed, plugs and sod. Meat and cheese trays will be served.



Grow It Cook It- Yellow Squash

Wednesday, April 24

12:00-1:00 pm

Gillespie County Extension Office

38 Business Court, Fredericksburg, TX

Registration: \$15 / session

\$25 / for the series

This is the second session in a three part series. This session will focus on how to grow Yellow Squash and you will sample unique recipes. The final session in this series will be about Broccoli on August 7.

Call (830) 997-3452 for more information and to sign up.

TAM-AAMM

Texas A&M—AgriLife Agronomic Monday Memo

A Closer Look at Soil Health Principle #4—Living Roots in the Soil at All Times

Last week's Soil Health principle #4 implies you must cover crop (no).



Fig. 1. Dryland cover crop mix in Mitchell Co. included canola/mustards (left) and “tillage radish.” The radish is intended to not only foster soil microbial activity as an off-season living root, but also perform physical functions such as breaking up soil compaction. (Calvin Trostle)

In my TAM-AAMM discussion last week, I noted many soil health enthusiasts claim you must have a living root in the soil at **all times**. Think about what this means. If you are in a dry region like much of west Texas, you don't have enough moisture for a cover crop. If you are in a wet region of Texas where soils flood and often remains water-logged for extended periods, you can't plant when it is muddy or soggy.

I agree that a living root is a good thing. *It is* a good thing, if practical.

It is just not feasible in many if even most planting and cropping scenarios.

And it has a cost of time and expense that may be difficult to recapture. The first thought many Texas farmers in drier regions is, “*Will a cover crop take away moisture from my primary crop?*” In fact, that's not a question, it's a statement. “*Cover crops will detract from my primary crop.*”

What about dormant bermudagrass?—Does this satisfy the ‘living root’ criteria? (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Dormant bermudagrass being hayed as stockpiled forage. Does this meet the criteria of a living root in the soil? (It does.) (Alabama Cooperative Extension Service.)

I have asked this question of soil health experts, sometimes with perplexed or amusing responses. *“Hadh’t thought of that before.”* My reply is, ‘Would you expect a Texas farmer or rancher to try to overseed winter wheat or clovers into the bermudagrass?’ *“No.”* Though it can be done (and a few do), I think in this case the soil health/cover crop experts would rightly acknowledge: 1) the soil is stable because it is covered by vegetation/residues and is not subject to erosion, and 2) the roots of a surface dormant crop like Bermudagrass are alive though growing slowly. There is still a good level of soil microbial activity.

What about dead roots in the soil?—Do they count?

Dead roots are also beneficial to soil. Root penetration helps loosen soils for better water infiltration and percolation. That does not go away just because the root is now dead. Also, and

perhaps most importantly, dead roots still foster significant levels of desirable microbial activity as they decompose, and microbes process organic matter and recycle nutrients.

And dead roots don't use water!

What does Texas A&M AgriLife research say about living roots at all times?

The body of research in Texas for soil health, cover cropping, impact on soil microbial activity and other aspects is increasing. Several A&M agriculture faculty have expanding knowledge of soil health, cover cropping, and the many angles involved in assessing if cover cropping is feasible. Water is an important consideration in drier areas of Texas. Until recently most research showed there was a penalty in row cropping systems (especially if fully tilled on an annual basis) due to water use by the cover crop. But with reduction in tillage and preserving any available residues on the surface, cover cropping for that all-the-time live root might be more feasible in your area.

Texas A&M AgriLife Faculty Engaged in Soil Health and/or Cover Cropping Research (incomplete)

- Dr. Paul DeLaune, AgriLife Research—Vernon, (940) 552-9941, Paul.DeLaune@ag.tamu.edu
- Dr. Katie Lewis, AgriLife Research—Lubbock, (806) 746-6101, katie.lewis@ag.tamu.edu
- Dr. Joseph Burke, AgriLife Research/AgriLife Extension—Lubbock, (806) 746-6101, joseph.burke@ag.tamu.edu
- Dr. Ron Schnell, AgriLife Extension/AgriLife Research—College Station, (979) 321-5939, ronnie.schnell@ag.tamu.edu
- Dr. Jake Mowrer, AgriLife Extension—College Station, (979) 321-5916, jake.mowrer@ag.tamu.edu
- Dr. Peyton Smith, AgriLife Research—College Station, (979) 321-5943, peyton.smith@tam.u.edu
- Dr. Anil Somenahally, AgriLife Research—Overton, (903) 834-6191, anil.somenahally@ag.tamu.edu

This weekly agronomic Memo for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension county agents is compiled by Dr. Calvin Trostle, Professor & Extension Agronomist, Lubbock, (806) 777-0247 (mobile), ctrostle@ag.tamu.edu TAM-AAMM tips will be collected at [\(to be determined\)](http://(to be determined)) Permission is granted to AgriLife Extension personnel to use this information as you see fit for Extension education purposes (newsletters, web posting, social media, etc.).

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

OFFICE CONTACTS

Gillespie County Extension Agents

Brad Roeder is the Ag & Natural Resources (ANR) Agent which encompasses hay production, wildlife management, predator control, farming, pest management, CEU's livestock production, Water conservation, brush management, and economic development.

bwroeder@ag.tamu.edu

Beth McMahon is the Horticulture Agent who works alongside Gillespie County residents and business owners with plant and pest related inquiries.

elizabeth.mcmahon@ag.tamu.edu

Shea Nebgen is the Family and Community Health (FCH) Agent who provides programming in areas like nutrition, sewing, food safety, and healthy living.

s-nebgen@tamu.edu

Emily Grant is the 4-H & Youth Development CEA which includes the Gillespie County 4-H program. Gillespie County 4-H members participate in showing/raising animals, food & nutrition, clothing/textiles, photography, livestock judging, BB Gun, archery, meat judging, robotics, gardening, entomology, and horse projects.

emily.grant@ag.tamu.edu

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



**Our office will be closed on
Holiday the following dates:**

Friday, March 29

Monday, April 8

Monday, May 27

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Gillespie County
38 Business Court*

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

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8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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