

# Gillespie County

Horticulture Newsletter  
Summer 2020



## Grow It Cook It Program Update

The Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Service is pleased to announce that their Grow It Cook It: Zucchini program, originally scheduled for April 17th, will be held on July 10th from 12 to 1 pm.

Beth McMahon will give tips on growing zucchini in your garden, as well as troubleshooting common problems. Shea Nebgen will demonstrate zucchini recipes and how to preserve zucchini for cooking in the future.

Due to the Covid-19 virus, participants will be asked to wear face masks while attending the program and to keep six feet away from other attendees. Face masks will be provided if participants do not have one. Temperature checks will be performed on participants and speakers before the program. The program will be limited to 20 people. If you have pre-registered for this program, reminders will be sent out. Notification if you do not plan to attend would be appreciated.

Coming on August 28th from 12-1 pm at the Gillespie County Extension office will be the final Grow It Cook It: program of the year, "Cool Carrots".

**Continued on Page 2**

## Preview

**Grow It Program Update** **Pg. 1**

**Seed Saving** **Pg. 2**

**Tomato Trial Update** **Pg. 3**

**Hemp Update** **Pg. 4**

**Lawn Tips** **Pg. 4**

**Pecan Board Elections** **Pg. 5**

**Plants & Pets** **Pg. 6**

**Strange Tales of Horticulture** **Pg. 7**

**Upcoming Webinars** **Pg. 8**

**Upcoming Events** **Pg. 9**

# Seed Saving Basics

If you typically order your seeds in early spring, you may have encountered a long delay in getting your seeds this year. Many seed companies experienced high demand and labor issues due to the Covid-19 situation. Seed demand will probably be high next year as well.

Saving your own seed can help you have vegetable seed when it's hard to get. Check out this guide for quick information.

- Retain cool season crops past their prime to allow them to bolt and produce seed.
- Collect seed from multiple plants of the same variety to preserve variety traits.
- Some flowers will need to be protected to save the seed, otherwise pollinators may make unintentional crosses. (Protect all squashes, cucumbers, and corn)
- Avoid saving seeds from F1 plants. These are hybrids and usually will not come true to type. Some exceptions may exist in tomatoes.

For more AgriLife Extension resources regarding seed saving, please see [aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/vegetables/SEED.html](http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/vegetables/SEED.html) or [plantanswers.com/saving\\_seed.htm](http://plantanswers.com/saving_seed.htm)

## Continued from Page 1

Growing information will be given, as well as carrot seeds for participants to try. Recipes using carrots will be demonstrated.

The cost for individual programs is \$15 each, but attendance at both programs can be purchased at \$25.

Both programs are currently planned as in-person programs, though this may be subject to change due to Covid-19. Online options will be pursued, but if not available partial refunds will be given if the programs are canceled due to State, AgriLife Extension or Gillespie County restrictions. Both programs will be at the Gillespie County Extension Office, located at 95 Frederick Road in Fredericksburg, Texas.

Questions can be directed to Eliza-beth.mcmahon@agnet.tamu.edu or call 830-997-3452.

## Plantastic Survey

If you attended the Plantastic Vegetable Gardening Seminar this year on February 7th, please watch for an email with the post survey link in July. This post survey is to see if the information you learned in February helped you with your vegetable garden this year, and if you have any ideas for next year's Plantastic Vegetable Gardening Seminar. If you didn't attend the program but have ideas for next year's program, please email them to me at Eliza-beth.mcmahon@agnet.tamu.edu

## Easy Plants to Save Seed From

### Common Flowers

- Marigolds
- Zinnias
- Sunflowers
- Cowpen Daisy
- Bluebonnet
- Poppies

### Common Vegetables

- Tomatoes
- Beans
- Carrots
- Dill
- Pepper
- Corn\*
- Squash\*
- Okra
- Lettuce

# Heat Stress Homeowner Tomato Trial Update

Returning from last year, the homeowner heat stress tomato trial kicked off with plant pick up the week of April 20th. Varieties included “Atkinson”, “Thessaloniki”, “Big Beef”, “Purple Calabash”, “Tasti-Lee”, “Bella Rosa”, “Valley Girl”, and “Cherokee Purple”. Additionally, everyone took a “Celebrity” tomato plant. To minimize contact due to Covid-19, plants were left outside the extension building on designated days with the trialer’s name on them.

In May, heat stress tomato trial recipients were queried about how their tomatoes were doing.

Of the people that responded, 25% had planted their tomato plants in containers, 27% had planted them in an in-ground garden and 48% had planted them in a raised bed.

On June 15th, trial participants were surveyed again. Most varieties were above 90% survival, except “Tasti-Lee”. The hail that had damaged some parts of the area had affected some tomatoes. Most plants were recovering, though this may have slowed down blooming and tomato production. “Thessaloniki” and “Tasti-lee” had the lowest set, though hail damage may have



“Valley Girl” Picture taken by Mark Shultz in June 2020.

## Week of May 15th, 2020

Tomato Variety	Responding	Percent Survival	Health Rating	Average Health	Percent Flowering
Atkinson	13	100.00	3.000	Good	0.00
Bella Rosa	15	100.00	2.867	Good	46.67
Big Beef	9	100.00	2.889	Good	33.33
Celebrity	30	96.67	2.867	Good	30.00
Cherokee Purple	12	91.67	2.833	Good	50.00
Purple Calabash	12	91.67	2.917	Good	33.33
Tasti Lee	13	92.31	2.923	Good	46.15
Thessaloniki	11	100.00	2.818	Good	9.09
Valley Girl	12	91.67	2.833	Good	50.00

contributed to “Tasti-lee’s low set this round. One person had harvested tomatoes from “Tasti-lee” and “Bella Rosa” already.

Stay tuned for the fall newsletter or read the Fredericksburg Standard Newspaper for the final results!

## Week of June 15, 2020

Variety	Responding	Percent Survival	Health Rating	Average Health	Percent Flowering	Percent Set
Atkinson	13	100.00	2.71	Good	92.31	46.15
Bella Rosa	15	93.33	2.36	Good	78.57	42.86
Big Beef	9	100.00	3.00	Good	100.00	55.56
Celebrity	29	96.55	2.86	Good	82.14	60.71
Cherokee Purple	11	100.00	3.00	Good	63.64	54.55
Purple Calabash	12	91.67	3.00	Good	72.73	36.36
Thessaloniki	11	100.00	3.00	Good	45.45	27.27
Tasti Lee	13	84.62	2.30	Good	72.73	27.27
Valley Girl	12	91.67	2.73	Good	90.91	63.64



“Cherokee Purple” Picture taken by Rose Marie Belforti in June 2020.

# What Happened to Hemp?

**Last year one of the hottest agricultural topics was growing hemp in Texas. While the excitement has dampened somewhat, there have been developments .**

- AgriLife Extension named Dr. Calvin Trostle, AgriLife Extension Agronomist, as the AgriLife Hemp Specialist in April.
- Texas Department of Agriculture has a list of 306 approved varieties. These varieties, while not endorsed, are hoped to be less likely to have too high an amount of THC, which can cause a field of hemp to be considered too “hot” and thus destroyed. These hemp varieties are a mix of grain, fiber and CBD hemp varieties.
- The Texas Department of Agriculture has an online portal where you can request a license to grow hemp. This opened as of March 16<sup>th</sup> and has around 600 applicants.
- There is a video about growing hemp on the Texas Department of Agriculture that is necessary to watch if applying for a hemp license, but may be of interest to anyone who has an interest in hemp. You can view it here: <https://www.texasagriculture.gov/RegulatoryPrograms/Hemp/OrientationVideo.aspx>
- AgriLife Extension has set up hemp variety trials (grain, fiber and CBD varieties) in the San Angelo, Plainview, College Station and Commerce (North-East Texas) areas. The fields at Plainview and San Angelo are irrigated.



*Picture by Agrilife Extension*

## Quick Summer Lawn Tips

### Bermudagrass

- Mow at 1-2” height weekly, never removing more than 1/3 foliage at a time.
- Water only at first slight signs of drought stress.( at least 5-8 days in between)
- 1 supplemental fertilizer application
- Remove weeds as needed.

### St. Augustine

- Mow at 2” height.
- Fertilize only if soil test indicated need.
- Water at first signs of drought stress.
- Look for take-all root rot (patchy die-off, short roots, yellow leaves)
- Watch for signs of chinchbugs (patches of dead grass, desiccated grass, chinchbugs present)

### Zoysiagrass

- Mow at 2” height.
- Supplemental fertilization only if soil test showed needed.
- Water only at first slight signs of drought stress.( at least 5-8 days in between)
- Remove weeds as needed.





## **Texas Pecan Board schedules election for 3 at-large board members for September 1**

By Bob Whitney,  
Executive Director,  
Texas Pecan Board

De Leon, TX — The Texas Pecan Board will hold elections September 1, 2020 to elect three (3) board members. The Board was established in 1998 after pecan growers throughout Texas voted into effect a one-half-cent-per-pound pecan assessment to provide funds for promotion, education and research.

Nine (9) pecan producers serve on the Texas Pecan Board. Board members whose terms will expire in 2020 are: Glenn Honaker of Ft. Stockton, Tami Sorrells of Comanche, and Lance Lampman of DeLeon.

Nomination forms for candidates who wish to have their names placed on the ballot may be obtained[ from Bob Whitney, Executive Director, Texas Pecan Board, 201 S. Houston St., De Leon, TX 76444

or [bob@texaspecanboard.com](mailto:bob@texaspecanboard.com) and your local county extension office. Nomination forms will be available after May 1, 2020 and must be filed with the TPB Executive Director no later than July 15, 2020. (Click Here for a Nomination Form)



Any eligible voter-producer may place his or her name in nomination to serve as a member on the Texas Pecan Board. Nomination forms must be signed by the applicant and by at least ten (10) other eligible voters-producers. Eligible voters are those pecan producers in Texas who are subject to the one-half cent pecan assessment; i.e. pecan producers with at least 500 trees on a minimum of 15 acres.

Ballots containing the names of all persons who have validly filed petitions will be available from the TPB Executive Director on August 1, 2020. Ballots will be mailed to all known, eligible voters in Texas on August 1, 2020 and to Extension offices in Pecan Counties. Voting will be held by mail. Ballots must be postmarked no later than September 1, 2020, in order to be counted. This election is required by Chapter 41 of the Texas Agriculture Code.

The ballots will be counted in early September and results announced shortly thereafter.

The pecan assessment went into effect in September 1998. All pecan producers with at least 500 trees on a minimum of 15 acres are required, under the Texas Commodity Referendum Law, to pay the one-half-cent-per-pound assessment. The assessment, which is refundable, is to be collected by the first handler and submitted to the Texas Pecan Board. Pecan assessments are used to fund promotion, education and research of pecans for pecan growers. The Texas Pecan Board programs help to provide security, stability and research for the continued benefit of pecan farmers and the pecan industry.

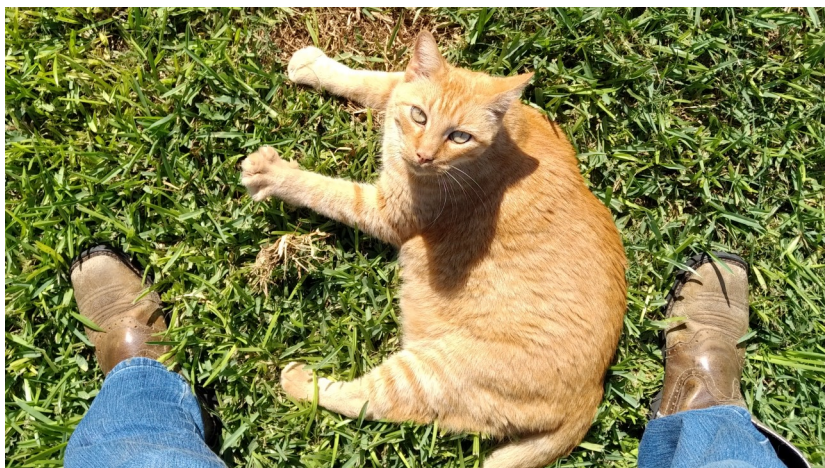
For more information on the TPB election or the pecan assessment program, contact Bob Whitney, Executive Director, Texas Pecan Board, 201 S. Houston St., De Leon, TX 76444 or [bob@texaspecanboard.com](mailto:bob@texaspecanboard.com) or visit the TPB website at [www.texaspecanboard.com](http://www.texaspecanboard.com).



## Pets & Plants

You've just finished planting your front flowerbed and you're ready to end for the day. Only as you are getting up, your pet comes along and lays on the pentas you just planted. Gardening may seem impossible for those who have pets but there are a few tips to make it easier.

- If you have a pet that seems to favor chewing on your plants, avoid planting poisonous plants. Common examples for our area include: daffodils, Chrysanthemums, English ivy, lilies, sago palm, amaryllis, aloe vera, begonia, caladiums, iris, philodendron, lantana, garlic (to animals), onions (to animals) and more.
- Secure your compost bin so that your dog does not "turn" it for you.
- With dogs you may be successful in establishing boundaries. Have a low fence and train the dog to stay out of that area. Raised beds may also help.
- If your pet loves to dig, build a dig pit. For dogs, include treats or toys in the sand and praise the dog when it digs in that area.
- For cats, a sandbox area can serve as an outdoor litter box. Plant cat attracting plants near it to attract the cat's attention.
- Go with the flow and establishing a pathway where the animals naturally walk.
- If you have an indoor cat that prefers snacking on your house plants, grow some cat grass for it. Cat grass is basically wheat or oats sprouts. These should be grown for a few weeks, until the leaf blades are two inches tall before giving to the cat. Replace as you need to.
- If you are having issues with dog patch in your yard, make sure your dog is getting enough water. Also, after your dog urinates dilute the patch with extra water.
- You may be able to train dogs to only urinate in a certain part of the yard. Having a standing post in the middle of it may make it more desirable to them.



*You're here to look at the grass and not meeee??? Picture taken by Beth McMahon.*



*Why yes I'm eating the pecans buried in the lawn. Why haven't you picked them up yet? I'm going to runoff with one of your potted plants next.. Picture taken by S. McMahon.*

### Office Closures

We will be closed on July 3rd, August 21st, and September 7th.



# Strange Tales of Horticulture

## What Causes Smashed Plants?

**In many cartoons there is a scene where a character gets steam-rolled. The character pops back up, but is now perfectly flat. You'd think this is only something that could occur in cartoons, but then you've probably never seen a plant with fasciation.**

Fasciation is a flattening of the stems, leaves, flowers and fruit of a plant. Fasciation can be caused by abnormal plant hormone production in the growing buds. It could also be disease, genetic mutation, frost, animal, insect or other general damage. While strange looking, it usually does not kill the plant. It may be corrected by cutting the flattened stem back down to the ground.



*Fasciation on prairie coneflower. Pictures by Beth McMahon.*

Some plants have been bred to be intentionally fasciated. Crested Celosia was specifically bred to retain its fasciation, in comparison with normal celosia.

Fasciation does not occur very often in the wild, but I have seen it on prairie coneflower a couple of times.

One bad example of fasciation is caused by a disease, Rose Rosette. Rose Rosette is a virus transmitted by a small mite. The virus causes a witches broom look with multiple stems out of one growing point as well as unusual thorns and an abnormal reddening of the foliage. Fasciation may be caused as well.



*Rose Rosette Witches brooming. Picture by Neil Sperry.*

Fasciation on roses isn't a sure meaning that it has

Rose Rosette. Roses can have flattened stems or shoots that look fused. If pruned out, fasciation typically does not occur again, though it is possible if the reason was genetic.

Rose Rosette was found in Llano in 2017, so while it's not an immediate worry, it should be watched for in our area. If you have a rose that is confirmed to have rose rosette, remove the rose plant immediately and burn it.

# Upcoming Webinars

## Aggie Horticulture LIVE

**Wednesdays & Fridays at 1 pm\*** about 30 minutes each. Time may change due to equipment overheating. Various topics covered by AgriLife horticulture specialists across the state. Have a question during the program? The question wranglers will answer it for you while you watch. See [https://www.facebook.com/pg/Aggie-Horticulture-26803072143/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Aggie-Horticulture-26803072143/videos/?ref=page_internal)

## Texas A&M AgriLife Organic Workshop

A collection of videos on youtube highlighting elements of commercial organic production. Geared towards wheat and corn, though the predatory insect and nematode information can be used for home gardens.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQeRtwVwL1DNmiHH8jsVgOfHgACk0JVzL>

## 2020 Generation Next: Our Turn to Ranch Online School

Twelve online classes geared towards setting up an agricultural business. Starts **August 17<sup>th</sup>** and runs until **November 8<sup>th</sup>**. Cost is \$250. Register online at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/3116>

## Bexar County Live Lunch and Learn Gardening Series

**June 30<sup>th</sup> The Basics of Landscape Ground Covers. Live Gardening Q&A on July 14<sup>th</sup>.**

Live from **12- 1 pm**. See here for access information: <https://bexar-tx.tamu.edu/homehort/> Miss a video? Find it on their youtube page at : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWMk6LqNJuB6ZzZyH1UVGFw/videos>

## Beekeeping Basics Online Class

Interested in Bee Keeping? Check out AgriLife Extension Specialist Molly Keck's online class for it. <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/3133> Cost is \$35 dollars. Session are from 6-7 pm. An in-person class is tentatively scheduled for September and October in San Antonio.



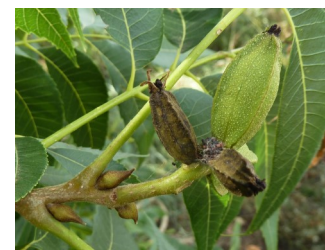
Bee on fava plant. Picture taken by Beth McMahon.

## Chat with Green Aggies

If you run a landscape or nursery business, or are more interested in ornamental plants, check out this web chat/interviews with Texas A&M Horticulture experts. Free, but pre-registration required. See here (<https://greenviion.wordpress.com/webinars/>) for more information and where to register. Upcoming programs include the crape myrtle bark scale, and tour of the Overton Research Station Ornamental Plant Trials.

## Texas Pecan Growers Webinar

Webinar from 9:15-3:00 pm on July 14<sup>th</sup>, with a 1.5 hour intermission. Covering topics including pesticides, pecan scab, IPM for pecans in West Texas, how pecans develop nuts and adjusting pecan crop load. Three pesticide **CEUS** include, one in laws and regs. Cost is \$30. Register online here: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/3152>



Hickory shuckworm on pecan. Picture taken by Beth McMahon.



## Upcoming Programs In Gillespie County

### **Grow It Cook It: Zany Zucchini**

July 10th, 2020. Gillespie County Extension Office, 95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg.  
12-1pm.

Watch recipe demonstrations and learn tips on growing zucchini in your garden.

### **Gillespie County Fair**

August 20th-23rd, 2020. Gillespie County Fairgrounds, 530 Fair Drive, Fredericksburg, TX  
County fair with agricultural and home products show, livestock shows, carnival, agricultural and local organization exhibits and horse racing! See the fair magazine or <https://gillespiefair.com/> for more information.

### **Grow It Cook It Cool Carrots**

August 28th, 2020. Gillespie County Extension Office, 95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg.  
12-1 pm.

Watch recipe demonstrations and learn tips on growing carrots in your garden.

## Upcoming Statewide Programs

### **Pecan Field Day**

September 2nd, 2020. Brownwood, Texas

Day long event covering management, marketing and other pecan growing information. Includes lunch. More details forthcoming. Please see the Texas Pecan Growers Association webpage to register. <https://tpga.org/tpga-events/>

### **Texas State Fruit Conference**

September 21st—22nd, 2020, New Braunfels Civic Convention Center.

All topics fruit. Expanding into ballroom to better allow social distancing. Alternate plan is to hold a webinar instead. Registration will be on <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/>. Submit program ideas to [https://agrilife.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5ulqbq6U26ear0F](https://agrilife.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5ulqbq6U26ear0F)

## Name that Plant!



What is the name of this plant? First person to respond with the correct answer will get their name featured in next quarter's newsletter.

## Last Newsletter's Plant

*Spring Video Newsletter did not have a plant to identify.*

**Check out the Texas Hill Country Gardening Videos at  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/  
UCucOldWSBrJvnxmGgyhVxxw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCucOldWSBrJvnxmGgyhVxxw)  
Includes the Spring Newsletter.**

*Picture policy-Unless specifically cited, all pictures were taken by the author of this newsletter. This newsletter is a publication comes out quarterly, with issues out on February/March (spring), June/July (summer), September/October (fall), November/December (winter). If you would like to stop receiving this newsletter, please contact us me at elizabeth.mcmahon@agnet.tamu.edu.*

*For other questions, comments, and concerns, please contact us at:  
Gillespie County Extension office  
95 Frederick Road  
Fredericksburg, TX 78624  
830-997-3452*

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, sexual orientation or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Information compiled by Elizabeth McMahon, Gillespie County Horticulture Agent, except where indicated.