



Marion County Texas



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April 2008 Texas AgriLife Extension Service Programs:

Date/Day	Program	Time/Location
3rd/ Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Rare/Endangered Animals/Plant species of the Caddo Basin & Predators of the Caddo Basin</i>	6:30 PM/ Karnack
11th/ Friday	Building Communities Series – <i>Entrepreneurship—It's Good for Business, Government and the Civic Sector</i> – Greg Wise	10:00 AM/ Kellyville
17th/ Thursday	AARP – <i>National Cancer Awareness Program</i> – Sheree Williams	2:00 PM/ Kellyville
17th/ Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Mammology & Entomology</i>	6:30 PM/ T.B.A.
17th/ Thursday	<i>Private Applicator</i> Training	8:00 AM/ Linden TX
19th/ Saturday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Ornithology</i>	T.B.A./ T.B.A.
23rd/ Wednesday	Community Development – <i>Welcoming Entrepreneurs to Your Community</i> – Greg Wise & Charlie French	1:30 PM/ Kellyville

Private Applicator Training Class

By Brock Fry

The Private Applicator training is set for April 17, 8:00 AM, at Linden Garden Club building, 300 East Houston Street, Linden TX. Place it on your calendar. If you need more information, contact Gene Bobo, CEA – Agriculture Cass County, 903-756-5391, or by e-mail at ngbobo@ag.tamu.edu.

Stocker Cattle: Nitrogen Fertilizer Cost Per Cow

By Jeff Ball, Noble Foundation

Have you ever stopped to think what your annual nitrogen (N) fertilizer cost is per cow? I am certain that you are aware that fertilizer prices are at a historic high, and, with the amount of corn acres predicted in 2008, the outlook is that prices will climb even higher next spring. So, at what N fertilizer price is it no longer economical to fertilize bermudagrass in a cow/calf enterprise?

First, I will use urea (46-0-0) as the N fertilizer source at a price of \$475 per ton or 52¢ per pound N (2,000 lbs. x .46 = 920 lbs. N/ton; \$475/920 lbs. N/ton).

Second, it takes 9,490 pounds of dry matter forage to support a 1,000-pound cow for one year, but who has 1,000-pound cows? An average cow weighs closer to 1,200 pounds. As a result, 11,388 pounds of dry matter forage will be needed to support a 1,200 pound cow for one year (9,490 lbs. dry matter forage x 1.2 animal unit equivalent).

Third, adjust for grazing efficiency. Under very good grazing management, a cow will consume 70 percent of the bermudagrass forage grown. A total of 16,270 pounds of forage (11,388 lbs. dry matter forage/70 percent) is needed annually to support one cow.

Fourth, the "natural" forage production (without any N fertilizer applied) on an average upland soil will produce 2,000 pounds dry matter forage per acre. Under somewhat normal weather conditions, 30 pounds of additional forage can be produced for each pound of N fertilizer applied.

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Assuming a stocking rate of one cow per 4 acres, a total of 275 pounds N fertilizer is required to produce 16,270 pounds of forage [(2,000 lbs. natural production x 4 acres) + (275 lbs. N x 30 lbs. dry matter forage/lb. N applied)].

Fifth, now we can calculate the N fertilizer cost per cow by multiplying the cost per pound N (52¢) by the amount of actual N to be applied (275 pounds). The cost per cow is \$143.

During 2003-2006, the Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA), a national cow database that records cow economics and performance, marginal input costs to maintain one breeding female averaged \$175. When additional marginal costs and N fertilizer costs are added together, the total is \$318. If the producer is profitable with their current production system, then they can justify the application of N fertilizer as long as calf revenue per cow is higher than \$318.

Due to the variability of land and other input costs, each producer should figure their individual production costs for their cow/calf enterprise.

It is important to remember that this article only discussed N fertilizer cost. It does not include any costs associated with other fertilizer inputs, such as phosphorus, potassium and/or lime. This is why it is critical to always soil test to determine what nutrients may be deficient and those which may already be at acceptable levels.

Northeast Texas Woody Bioenergy Symposium

By Brock Fry

Jefferson will be the site for the series of conferences on June 4, 5, and 6th. A train-the-trainer conference, landowner conference, and community development conference will all be offered.

The past several newsletters have had a little information about biomass and woody biofuels. It has been long known that we can extract sugars from woody trees for ethanol production. Ethanol (white lighting) has become an important commodity over the past few years. Ethanol production from corn and the addition to unleaded gas has driven up food prices, gas prices and other issues that have occurred due to the price of corn moving from \$2 to \$4 and \$5 per bushel. Now scientist, governments and others are exploring other options for fuel and alternative fuel sources.

Woody biomass can be a part of the puzzle. Advances in cellulosic ethanol research recently found it's way to this article from Idaho (*Ag Weekly*) which said, "That's why many experts believe cellulosic ethanol - where lignin from straw to timber slash is converted to ethanol - is the fuel of the future rather than the grain-based ethanol of today. And if that's true, then the work done at the Idaho National Laboratory near Idaho Falls may give the PNW an edge in

future ethanol production."

"The federal support needed to launch the technology, the feedstock supply and the infrastructure, this is what puts the PNW on the map," said Richard Hess, who has worked with cellulosic ethanol production at INL. Outside the U.S.A, 27% of Brazil's transportation energy comes from sugarcane-based ethanol program at competitive prices (Brazilian Energy Balance 2005 (BEN), Ministry of Mines and Energy, Brazil. www.mme.gov.br [Accessed March 13, 2007])

Utilizing more of our woody biomass could mean tree farms are more sustainable. More information is available about the Northeast Texas Woody Bioenergy Symposium at <http://grovesite.com/page.asp?o=tamu&s=ntbs&p=261992> or call Brock Fry at 903-665-2421.

Did You Know? ETHANOL facts in 2005:

- Ethanol displaced 170 million barrels of oil.
- Ethanol lowered consumer gas prices by 8 cents a gallon.
- The ethanol industry produced 4 billion gallons of ethanol.
- Ethanol reduced green house gases by 8 million tons which is the equivalent of taking 1 million vehicles off the road.
- By 2012, ethanol may potentially displace more than 2 billion barrels of oil.



From the Garden - April Moon Phases

6th, Sunday, New Moon



12th, Saturday, First Quarter



20th, Sunday, Full Moon



28th, Monday, Last Quarter



Reflections on Last Month

Cypress Basin Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist

By Brock Fry

During the month of March the chapter met twice. The first meeting was 3 hours. There were 26 Naturalist in attendance for the program. The program was presented by David Sierra, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Penny Pettit, biologist for Texas Parks and Wildlife. They taught the Naturalists about wildlife ecology, how the world we live in is affected

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by the food chain and how things relate in nature and work to form an ecology system in the Cypress Basin.



On March 20, 2008 the topic was Forestry. Dr. Eric Taylor, Texas Agrilife Extension Service, and Wes Moorehead, Texas Forest Service, taught the Naturalists about the five regions of forest in Texas and how they are managed. Information was gained about how forestry has evolved from the beginnings in the 1700s to present and what concerns forestry deal with today. We also worked through exercises on how to measure tree stand density and tree height.

Reflections on Last Month

Pond Management

By Brock Fry

On March 25, 2007 about 37 people gathered on the Arnold Ranch on the East end of Marion County to gain information about the farm pond.



Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Wildlife and Fisheries Specialist with Texas Agrilife Extension Service, and Charles Snowden, Natural Resource Conservation Service, gave talks about pond construction, fish management, weed control and concerns for the pond owner.

We want to thank the Marion/Cass Soil & Water Conservation Service for sponsoring the program.

Welcoming Entrepreneurs to Your Community

By Paulette Cooper

On Wednesday, April 23 at 1:30 PM (EST) the eXtension Entrepreneurs & Their Communities webinar topic will be **Welcoming Entrepreneurs to Your Community**. Communities of all sizes are starting to recognize the value of home-grown businesses as a vital part of economic development. So how can Extension, local officials, and community and economic development professionals help create a climate where entrepreneurs feel welcome and supported? Co-facilitators Greg Wise, UW Extension, and Charlie French, UNH Cooperative Extension, will share tips and tools those communities can implement to encourage entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy.

Those interested are invited to call the AgriLIFE Extension Office to reserve a seat. All local and regional business owners, Chamber of Commerce members, JEDCO members and those serving on local economic development boards, and those hoping to become entrepreneurs are invited to attend to find out how businesses can be strengthened as well as the communities we live in. The meeting is open to the public.

For more information call 903-665-2421.

2008 State Extension Conference Makes Stronger Link with Technology: Cooper Attends, Connors receives Award

Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program county agents from across Texas and headquarters staff gathered at the Omni Dallas Hotel, March 25 through March 28, to attend the 1890 Extension State Training Conference. The 2008 conference theme, "Techno link: Linking Extension Programs through Technology," aimed to showcase the many benefits of information technology usage in extension.

The conference objectives throughout the week were:

- to equip staff with information technology tools needed for effective programming
- highlight outstanding achievements
- enrich minds, sharpen skills, and improve performance.

The highlight of the conference was the presentation of the 2008 Distinguished Service Awards at the banquet. The keynote speaker was Mr. Grant Atai. He is the principal of Paul Laurence Dunbar Learning Center in Dallas.

Atai attested to the benefits of organizations like the Cooperative Extension Program, which has as its mission to provide educational and economic development programs to families, youth, agricultural producers and communities

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through its 4-H & Youth, Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Community and Economic Development programs, and related it to his dealings with inner city youth.

"I have had to personally visit students' homes to ask, 'Why isn't this child coming to school?'" Atai said in an account of occasions when his dedication to service and teaching was tested. "Sometimes the parents are incarcerated, or just gone, so there is no one there to get them up. It's as simple as that," he continued.

Atai's struggles were ultimately turned to successes as the Paul Laurence Dunbar Learning Center was recently listed in Texas Monthly Magazine as one of the top ten schools in Texas.

The 2008 State Extension Conference concluded with the presentation of awards for outstanding service of headquarters and county staffs.

Individuals receiving the 2008 Distinguished Service Awards were from several categories related to extension work and services provided to those that assist extension staff in the county. From Marion County receiving the Supporter of Extension Category was:

Annie M. Conner, Communities in Schools Coordinator, Jefferson I.S.D. Her citation read:

"For outstanding support, participation and assistance in educational activities sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Program through the 4-H and Youth Development and Community and Economic Development components in Marion County."

Reflections on Last Month

Community Development Class Big Hit for Attendees

By Paulette Cooper

March Session on: *Supporting Existing Businesses: The Case for Downtown Business Development* was an excellent presentation taught by expert Bill Ryan, a statewide educator in downtown and tourism business development. His discussion on how local economic development and business leaders can identify retail/service and real estate development opportunities that make market sense fit perfectly with the progress local areas. Places like Longview, Kilgore, Tyler, and Marshall are already improving their communities with economic development tools like website development, creation of avenues for increasing revenue to be used for economic development, and having a person or group in place that makes development their main goal.

Addressing the needs of the small business-owner was Specialist J.D. Milburn of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. Milburn stated that he provides one-on-one

technical assistance to businesses in Wisconsin's Main Street communities and also helps communities with business retention and recruitment, special projects, and local economic returns.

Questions used for our self-evaluation were:

- Why is downtown Jefferson important?
- When thinking of our downtown, what is its single biggest problem?
- What are the challenges that face downtown?
- What makes Jefferson a quality place to visit and how do we strengthen it?
- What does the market analysis look like? What are the methods and tools used to perform the analysis? What are the conditions and how are market opportunities identified by sector? How are they evaluated?
- What brings people back and how do we create a realistic innovative mix of downtown Jefferson businesses?
- How do we recruit and what part does community readiness play in the marketing plan?

Much more information was offered in the one hour class. However, it would take more than an hour to type.

Reflections on Last Month

AARP Gardening Program Termed Successful

By Paulette Cooper

Members of the AARP were both happy and surprised by the number of participants attending their gardening program. Those in attendance gained valuable information from tips and methods of mixing soil, planting various plants, controlling insects and instructions on how to use added nutrition's and fertilizers.

Avid gardener and plant store owner, Dave Shimic, of Shimic's Plant Store on the lake (Lake of the Pines), provided this part of the program. AgriLIFE Extension Agent Brock Fry added to the program by teaching how to graft and the reasons for grafting.

The group presents the gardening program on an annual basis and evaluations have found that even the older gardeners learn and share new information and also share their personal experiences. Some have even found that newer and improved methods work better than the ones they have practiced for years.

AARP meets monthly on the third Thursday at 2:00 PM at Kellyville. The public is invited.

AARP–Health Tips

By Paulette Cooper

The AARP Program is being conducted this month by Ms. Sheree Williams with the American Cancer Society. Sheree will be rolling out the new benefits and programs regarding transportation, prosthesis, assistance with medications and a host of other new and improved benefits provided by the cancer society. The program is open to the public and all are welcome to come. If you, as a reader, can't come, please invite other cancer family members or patients to attend.

--May is Older American month. (Be the best person that you can be by doing a good deed for a senior. Regardless of if they are 60 or more) I know some of us want to be left out. Pamper yourself by making sure you've had the annual exams and have rescheduled the new ones.

--Andrew B. Crocker, Extension Program Specialist—Gerontologist Health, states in a recent article that more than 165,000 people experience cardiac arrest each year and 75% of those episodes happen in the home. A person in cardiac arrest has very little chance of survival unless immediate action is taken to sustain him or her until medical help arrives. It strikes immediately and without warning. Signs may include sudden collapse, loss of responsiveness, and failure to breathe normally. If you should see this happening, there are several things you should know and can do to aid the person in distress. Call for help and use Conventional Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation are two of the most important. If you, or a family member, are not familiar with this process it is advisable that someone learn the practice of doing the necessary heart compresses that could save a life. Information can be obtained from the local Red Cross, the internet, your local EMS (Emergency Medical Service), or from the local library. Heart compresses were also given as a method of helping without using the mouth-to-mouth breathing techniques where one could easily be infected by some of the viruses such as AIDS.

Sheree Williams, Community Manager, Health Initiatives has worked for the American Cancer Society for 5 years. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Community Health and a Master's of Health Education from the University of Central Arkansas. She says, "I have no husband, no kids, no pets and I enjoy reading, singing, and art." She is interested in sharing with area citizens the network of cancer and related resources available for them as cancer patients.

This program is on April 17, 2008, 2:00 PM, at Kellyville. If you need more information, please call 903-665-2421.

North Central Texas Basic Agricultural Field Day

By Roger Skipper

The first North Central Texas Basic Agricultural Field Day is scheduled for Friday, April 25, 8 a.m. to 4 PM, at the

Myers Park and Event Center in McKinney, Texas, for those living in Collin, Cooke, Dallas, Denton, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt and Rockwall counties.



"This new field day is designed to provide all participants – whether they are farmers and ranchers or just interested in agriculture – with a broad-based educational opportunity to learn about many facets of an agricultural operation," said David Annis, agricultural consultant with the Noble Foundation's Agricultural Division. "We've brought together agricultural specialists and consultants from the Noble Foundation, AgriLIFE, Texas Parks and Wildlife, the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and Ag Power (John Deere) to provide the best, most up-to-date information to our attendees."

Registration is from 8:00 to 8:30 AM followed by the morning session, which includes discussions on selecting the appropriate farm equipment for various agricultural operations and farm equipment safety. Attendees will then divide into three groups and rotate between three brief presentations on farmstead planning/resource evaluation, soil sampling, and pasture management.

"The North Central Texas Basic Agricultural Field Day will provide farmers and ranchers with information that can be utilized immediately in their operations," Annis said. "It will also give those who are new to the agricultural field or might be interested in starting an agricultural operation abundant information that they can pull from in the future."

The cost for this field day is \$10. Lunch is included.

David Annis, Noble Foundation, 580-224-6458;
or

Roger Skipper, Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Fannin County, 903-583-7453.

Community Development Entrepreneurship—It's Good For Business, Government and the Civic Sector

By Paulette Cooper

The next Community Development internet training session is Friday April 11, 2008 at 10:00 AM here at the AgriLIFE Extension office where we will be discussing: *Entrepreneurship—It's Good for Business, Government and the Civic Sector*. Greg Wise will address entrepreneurship as a community development solution to enhance our community's quality of life.

Wildlife Food Plots

By Brock Fry



On March 26, 2008 a visit was made to the wildlife food plots. From a month ago there were some new plants coming up. The above photo shows the invasive plant. It is a Texas Groundsel or Texas Ragwort or Texas Squaw-weed. Its bloom period is February – April.



Marion County has received good rains in February and March. The clover populations have increased over a month. About 10% of the food plots have clover.



Evidence of wildlife presence has lessened over the past month. Deer eat about 12% forage or grasses, about 36% forbs, and about 52% browses.



2008 Calendar of Upcoming Events

(Watch the calendar monthly for additions and changes.)

April		
3rd, Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Rare/Endangered Animals/Plant species of the Caddo Basin & Predators of the Caddo Basin</i>	T.B.A.
11th, Friday	Building Communities Series – <i>Entrepreneurship—It's Good for Business, Government and the Civic Sector</i>	Kellyville
17th, Thursday	AARP – <i>National Cancer Awareness Program</i> – Sheree Williams	Kellyville
17th, Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Mammology & Entomology</i>	T.B.A.
17th, Thursday	<i>Private Applicator</i> Training	Linden TX
19th, Saturday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Ornithology</i>	T.B.A.
23rd, Wednesday	Community Development – <i>Welcoming Entrepreneurs to Your Community</i>	Kellyville
May		
1st, Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Aquatic Ecology and Management & Ichthyology</i>	T.B.A.
6th, Tuesday	Leadership Advisory Board meeting	Kellyville
9th, Friday	Building Communities Series – <i>Sustainable Development – Is It Going Mainstream?</i>	Kellyville
13th, Tuesday	Youth Board meeting	Kellyville
15th, Thursday	<i>AARP – Cinco de Mayo Celebration</i> – Jessie Peralta, Manager, Don Juan's Restaurant	Don Juan's Restaurant
15th, Thursday	Texas Master Naturalist – <i>Herpetology & Wildlife and Vegetative Communities of the Cypress Basin</i>	T.B.A.
27th, Tuesday	Pesticide Class: <i>Last Chance Video</i> , 2 CEUs	Kellyville
29th, Thursday	<i>Northeast Texas Woody Bio-Energy</i> Symposium – Dr. Eric Taylor	Cypress Valley Alliance (CVA) Jefferson TX
June		
2nd, Monday	Ag Programs Committee Meeting	Kellyville
4th-6th, Wed-Fri	<i>Northeast Texas Woody Bio-Fuel Symposium</i> – Train-the-Trainer, Conference, and Workshops	Kellyville
13th, Friday	<i>Building Communities Series</i> – Final Class: <i>The Art and Science of Putting It All Together</i>	Kellyville
24th, Tuesday	<i>Forestry Tour</i> Program – Dr. Eric Taylor	T.B.A.
30th, Monday	<i>Bob Bullock Museum</i> Trip – Gladys Jenkins	Austin TX
July		
	<i>AARP</i> – No Meeting	
15th, Tuesday	<i>Disaster Management</i> Program	Kellyville
29th, Tuesday	<i>Garden</i> Program	Kellyville
August		
T.B.A.	<i>AARP – Defensive Driving</i>	Kellyville
26th, Tuesday	Pesticide Class: <i>Last Chance Video</i> , 2 CEUs	Kellyville
September		
9th, Tuesday	Leadership Advisory Board Meeting	Kellyville
23rd, Tuesday	<i>Hay Show</i> – Dr. Jerold Evers	Kellyville
25th, Thursday	<i>AARP – Elder Care</i> Conference – Agency Vendors, Health and Services Fair, USDA Housing Program	Kellyville

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October

7th, Tuesday	<i>Cattle Raisers</i> Meeting – Chute Side – Dr. Jason Banta	David Smith Ranch
16th, Thursday	<i>AARP – Gardening: Preparing for Future the Future Harvest</i> – Dave Shimic, Shimic's Gardening, and <i>Planting Fruit Trees</i> – Brock Fry, Extension Agent	Kellyville
28th, Tuesday	<i>Wildlife</i> Program	Kellyville

November

T.B.A.	<i>Equine Brood Mares</i> – Dr. Brett Scott	Kellyville
18th, Tuesday	<i>Animal Issues</i> Committee Meeting	Kellyville
20th, Thursday	<i>AARP – Health Care Interpretations</i>	Kellyville

December

16th, Tuesday	Pesticide Class: <i>Last Chance Video</i> , 2 CEUs	Kellyville
18th, Thursday	<i>AARP – Celebration</i>	Kellyville

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“Improving Lives. Improving Texas”