

News From Your County Agent
By Marcel Valdez, CEA-ANR
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Zavala County

I must admit I was a little confused when I step out early Monday morning to make my way to the office. The crisp, cool morning with a strong north breeze made it feel a lot like the first week of November and NOT the first week of May. It has been a super cool spring this year, something that has not happened in a very long time. While we enjoy cool temperatures for May many folks in other parts of the state are dealing with flooding and severe weather. We started off with a wet year but have hit a little dry spell here lately. Good thing is that everything around the county is still green but a little drink from above is about due. Greetings to all of you may all of you have a beautiful Mother's Day weekend. Thank you so much for reading this week.

Plans For VFD Educational Meeting Are Under Way

Plans to hold an informational and educational meeting to provide information to livestock producers including 4-H animal project exhibitors are under way. The new Food and Drug Administration regulations will affect all U.S. poultry and livestock producers, including youth exhibitors. Because of this, the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in collaboration with the 4-H leaders in the county are making plans to get ready now, before the new antibiotic regulations take effect on Jan. 1, 2017, just before our county livestock show.

Plans are to involve down area veterinarians and determine what livestock producer and exhibitors need to do to comply with the new veterinary feed directive (VFD) and prescription requirement for water-based medications. Some new requirements, such as keeping original copies of VFDs for two years and other requirements will be discussed. To help keep things simple this educational event will focus on Understanding the new feed(VFD) and water antibiotic prescription rules, strengthen your vet-client-patient relationship(VCPR), Communicating with feed mills, access animal health and welfare strategies, renew your commitment to responsible antibiotic use and ensure your record-keeping compliance. I will be providing additional information once the agenda for the program is finalized and a location, date and time are determined for this important educational opportunity.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Offers Feral Hog Resources

Approximately 2.6 million feral hogs occupy 79% of Texas' landscape. Feral hogs are an invasive, exotic species that cause approximately \$52 million in damages to Texas agriculture producers annually. This estimate does not include damage to habitat used by native wildlife or suburban areas. Feral hog damage can be significantly reduced through effective education and outreach to private landowners.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has a wealth of information regarding feral hogs. This resources include feral hog reporting, feral hog fact sheets, feral hog you tube videos, feral hog mobile apps., feral hog blogs and a large volume of feral hog publications. You may access a lot of these resources online by simply going to <http://feralhogs.tamu.edu/about/> You may also

contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or come by the office at 221 North First Avenue in Crystal City.

Tip of the Week: Six Tips for Cost Effective Weed Control

Recent rains across our area have provided an abundance of lush green forage of many kinds including weeds in places many folks can do without. One of these areas where weeds are not a welcome sight is in pastures that you are trying to use for hay production or grazing livestock. Of course weed control can be expensive but there are things you can do to make the best use of your resources and at the same time control weeds. Herbicides are most effective when they are used correctly and thus getting the best benefit for your buck. I want to share with you six cost effective tips you might want to consider if you are trying to control weeds in pastures.

One: Identify the weed problem. Your choice of herbicides and recommended application rates will vary by weed species and timing. For most broadleaf plants there are a number of herbicides available for your consideration. These include GrazonNext®, Chaparral and others. Since you are paying for these your local herbicide dealers will be glad to assist you for a specific local recommendation.

Two: Use a calibrated sprayer or a professional applicator. Calibration prevents both the waste and expense of over application. This is a great way to get your money's worth.

Three: Spray at the right time and the right rate. Annual weeds in pastures are generally most susceptible early in the season when they are small and actively growing and when soil moisture is adequate. Check the soil residual activity of the herbicide you are applying and select one that has the longest residual activity to control weeds that germinate for several weeks after spraying.

Four: Recognize that drought stressed or mature weeds will be more difficult to control. Effectiveness may be reduced if weeds do not have adequate moisture and are not rapidly growing when you spray. In a dry year, spraying early will improve results and help your grass capture scarce moisture.

Five: Follow the label directions for application and mixing. For most ground broadcast applications apply the recommended rate of herbicide in 10 to 20 gallons of total spray mixture per acre. Use the recommended rate of an agricultural surfactant to thoroughly wet the foliage. You should also consider a drift control additive to reduce drift and improve the deposit of the herbicide on the target weeds.

And six. Remember soil residual activity and plant residue. Many herbicides that provide weed control for several weeks on permanent grass pastures should not be used on cropland or on land to be used for crop rotation. Most broadleaf crops are more sensitive to the residual activity than weeds are. Those crops may be affected if planted within two years or more of spraying. Do not plant a broadleaf crop until an adequately sensitive field bioassay shows the crop will not be harmed. Cereals and corn, however can be planted one year after treatment. Remember that grasses treated with any soil residual herbicide may carry herbicide residue that can be transferred to the soil by hay, livestock manure or urine. Read and follow all herbicide, pesticide and other chemical label precautions and recommendations. It is the responsibility of the user to follow all label directions and comply with application laws and regulations. The information given herein is for informational and educational purposes only. Reference made to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no

endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or this newspaper is implied. Have a great week.

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