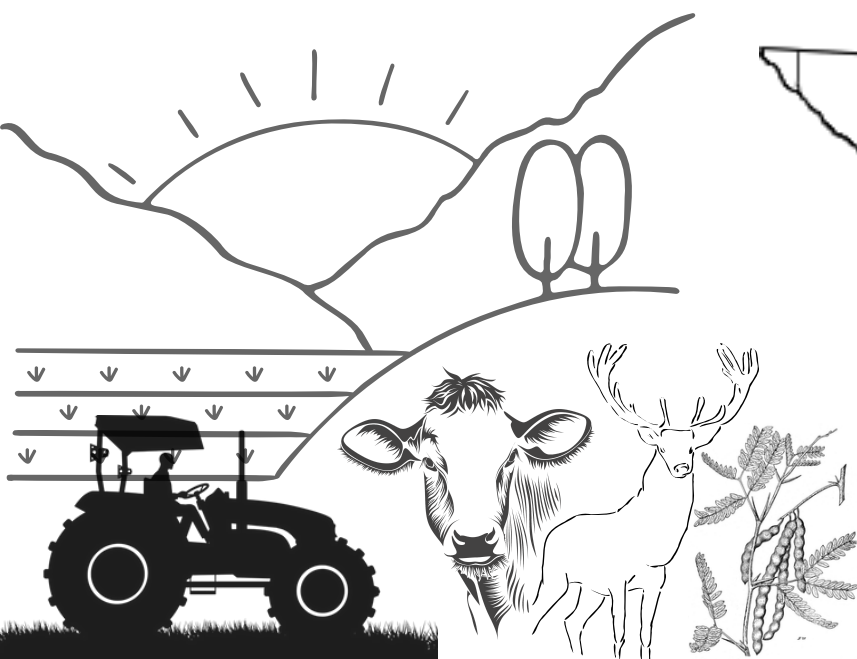




# ZAVALA COUNTY

## AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

December 2023  
Newsletter



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# SOUTHWEST TX BEEF CATTLE KICK-OFF

HOSTED BY: FRIO, LA SALLE, MEDINA, ZAVALA, BANDERA, DIMMIT, KERR & UVALDE COUNTIES

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023**

**Frio County Extension Office  
400 S. Pecan St.  
Pearsall, TX 78061**

**Registration–8:30 A.M.  
Program–9:00 A.M.–2:00 P.M.**

**Come out and join us for the morning to discuss beef cattle topics that will include nutrition decisions, body condition scores, pasture management, market updates, and more!!**

## Topics

- Pasture Management
- Nutrition Decisions
- Increasing Stocking Rates through Brush Control
- Beef Cattle Market Outlook

## RSVP Information

- Registration cost will be \$10 (CASH ONLY).
- To RSVP please call 830-505-7474.

## 2 TDA Pesticide Applicator CEUs

- 2 General CEUs

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



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# TEXAS BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE

## BQA TIPS



### BQA Tip for December

Emily Lochner

12/1/23

There is a common misconception that increasing phosphorus intake will improve reproduction in cattle. However, research from Texas, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Utah didn't show any benefits in reproduction once phosphorus requirements were met. Feeding additional phosphorus above requirements only increases cost.

Loose mineral supplements with higher levels of phosphorus are more expensive and less palatable than similar products with lower phosphorus levels. In most situations feeding a high-calcium, low-phosphorus mineral is desired. Even when cattle are grazing dormant native range a high-phosphorus mineral is not needed if cattle are receiving cottonseed meal, DDG, or similar supplements. ~Jason

Banta





# Districts 11 & 12 CEA's Rangeland Monthly Digest November 2023

## Maintaining Healthy Rangelands

I recently put together a presentation called, Reading the Landscape: Rangeland Management 101. The presentation walks landowners through the 3 essential things they need to obtain, record, correlate, and calculate to help sustain healthy rangelands.

1. Rainfall Records

2. Forage Production

3. Correct Stocking Rate

Understanding seasonal expected rainfall and comparing this with actual rainfall received helps landowners start to see patterns when they correlate this with forage production and management decisions on stocking rate. Forage production should be estimated for each pasture or management unit. The ability to calculate correct stocking rate based on available forage is essential to maintain healthy rangelands that are sustainable.

## November by the #s



### 8 events

Presentations (brush/weed control, herbicides mistakes to avoid, plant ID contest), professional development opportunity, retreats



### 1 research plot

Investigating new herbicide mix for cut stump and stem spray



### 1,071 miles

in support of county extension programming, research, collaboration, and training professionals.

## Conservative Grazing

Research | Hot Off The Press



Diverse grasslands help maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems, productivity, and resistance to invasive species. Conservative grazing is essential to maintain these healthy, diverse grasslands. But what is conservative grazing? A lot of research never estimates actual grazing intensity to determine the amount of forage that can be consumed while still maintaining a healthy rangeland. We just published research on what that conservative grazing value is to maintain those healthy, diverse South Texas rangelands.

I started the research as part of my Ph.D. program and it was continued for 4 additional years under two Master's students that I had the pleasure of training when they were undergraduate students. We conducted our research all across South Texas (Kenedy, Willacy, Jim Hogg, and Starr counties) from 2012 to 2019. We determined forage production, grazing intensity, and plant species richness at a total of 2,400 pairs of sampling plots (grazed and ungrazed biologically paired sites) across all study sites and years of the study.

Plant species richness increases with increasing grazing intensity from 0% to 27-30%, then declines when grazing intensity goes beyond 27-30%.

Conservative grazing in South Texas truly corresponds to Franklin Crider's rule of 50 - allow livestock/large ungulates to graze 25% of forage, 25% of forage is lost to trampling/insects, leaving 50% of forage standing to maintain healthy plant roots and, thus healthy grasslands. Grazing intensity up to 27-30% helps to maintain diverse TX rangelands which are more resilient and sustainable.

[Click here](#) to read the full article (Fulbright, Ortega-Santos, Hines et al., 2023).

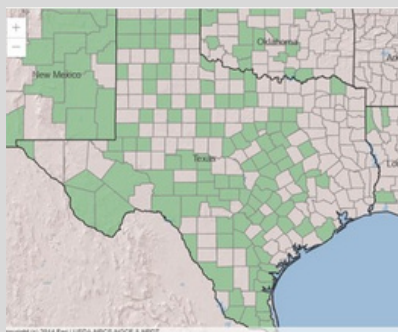
### Stacy L. Hines, Ph.D.

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### Website:

<https://ccag.tamu.edu/extension/rangeland-habitat-management/>  
Teams Phone #: 361-360-4533

# Districts 11 & 12 CEA's Rangeland Plant Identification November 2023



Distribution Map Credit: USDA Plants Database @ plants.usda.gov

## Buffalograss

*Bouteloua dactyloides*



### Buffalograss Distribution

Buffalograss is found throughout most of Texas. It is found throughout the central states in the USA (USDA Plants Database).

### Buffalograss Look-a-Likes



In the vegetative state, blue grama (*B. gracilis*) looks like buffalograss. To distinguish, wait for the dew to fall in the morning and you will see buffalograss shine a lot because dew sticks to hairs on buffalograss while blue grama is not as shiny because it has fewer hairs.

Common curly-mesquite (*Hilaria belangeri*) has hairy stolons while buffalograss' stolons are not hairy. Common curly-mesquite is more hairy overall with a rougher texture compared to buffalograss

Click on the plant name or link below to learn more about buffalograss look-a-likes.

1. [Blue Grama](#)
2. [Common curly-mesquite](#)

## Plant Identification Tips

Buffalograss is a native, warm-season perennial grass. It does not grow very tall, only reaching 4 to 12 inches in height. The leaves are very slender and buffalograss has male (pictured above) and female plants. Rarely, the same plant will have both the male and female reproductive parts.

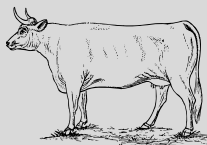
Male plants have a grama-like seedhead and female plants have a bur hidden in the leaves of the grass. See [Plants of TX Rangelands](#) for image of the female plant.

### Livestock & Wildlife Value

Good grazing for livestock, fair grazing for wildlife.

Provides seeds and nesting material.

Larval host plant for Green Skipper butterfly.



## Management

Buffalograss is a low maintenance, native, sod-forming turfgrass. It can be mowed, but there are varieties that can be planted in lawns that grow only 4" tall. It is very drought tolerant and can survive on 1.5" of rain per month. It will turn brown and go dormant during extended periods of summer drought, unless it is watered.

Parts of this article were derived from:

[Lady Bird Johnson Plant Database: Buffalograss](#)

[Plants of TX Rangelands: Buffalograss](#)

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