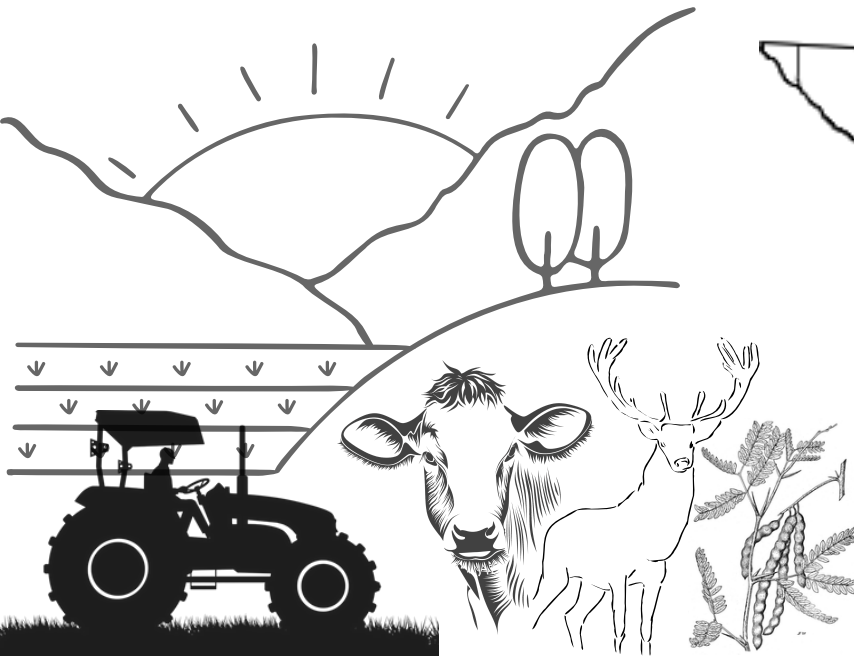


TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

# ZAVALA COUNTY

## AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

June 2024  
Newsletter



Texas A&M AgriLife is committed to providing safe and non-discriminatory learning, and work environments for all members of the AgriLife community. AgriLife provides equal opportunity in all programs, activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law.

Zavala County Office  
Office: (830) 374-2883  
zavala-tx@tamu.edu

Leslie Dominguez  
CEA- ANR  
(830) 374-2883  
leslie.dominguez@ag.tamu.edu



**Friday, June 28, 2024**

**Corner of FM 1436 & CR 4013**

**La Pryor, TX**

**Registration: 9 AM**

**Program Starts: 9:20 AM**

### Topics to be discussed:

- Sorghum, Corn, and Tomato Varieties
- Soil Fertility
- Weed Management
- Pest Management

**Please RSVP by June 17, 2024**

**To RSVP call 830-374-2883**

**or email**

**[leslie.dominguez@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:leslie.dominguez@ag.tamu.edu)**

Lunch sponsored by:



**TEXAS FARM BUREAU<sup>®</sup>**





## Agenda

**9:00 AM** Registration

**9:20 AM** Welcome- Leslie Dominguez, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**9:30 AM** Sorghum & Corn Varieties- Seed Representatives & Dr. Josh McGinty, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**10:00 AM** Soil Fertility- Dr. Peter Omara, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**10:40 AM** Weed Management- Dr. Josh McGinty, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**11:20 PM** Pest Management- Gregory Wilson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**12:00 PM** Lunch Sponsored by Texas Farm Bureau

**12:30 PM** Tomato Varieties- Dr. Larry Stein, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

# Texas A&M Forest Service encourages wildfire preparedness ahead of summer

## Tips to keep in mind as the heat rises in Texas

May 23, 2024 - by Leighton Gibson

As Memorial Day unofficially kicks off summer this weekend, Texans should prepare for wildfires, especially in drought-stricken parts of the state.

The potential for wildfire activity will be limited to the Trans Pecos and western High Plains regions of the state this weekend. Hot and dry conditions continue to dry vegetation in these areas and elevated fire weather may support the ignition of small wildfires.

“Though recent rains have helped decrease wildfire potential across much of the state, we encourage everyone to be careful with outdoor activities this holiday and throughout the summer,” said Wes Moorehead, Texas A&M Forest Service fire chief. “It only takes a few dry, windy days for wildfire potential to increase.”

### **Be cautious and prevent wildfires this summer**

Nine out of 10 wildfires are caused by humans and are preventable. As we head into summer, keep the following tips in mind to help prevent wildfires:

- Always check with local officials for burn bans and other outdoor burning restrictions.
- Pay attention to local guidelines regarding open fires, campfires and outdoor activities that may pose a fire hazard.
- Never leave your grill unattended. Wind gusts may blow embers into dry vegetation, potentially starting a wildfire.
- Ensure your grill is kept clean of excess grease to prevent flare-ups.
- Place your grill in an open space away from tall or dry grass, shrubs, woodpiles or other flammable materials. Also avoid placing your grill underneath a tree or on a wooden patio deck.
- After you are finished grilling, allow time for the coals in your grill to completely cool. Smoldering coals may reignite and release embers, which may be blown into nearby vegetation.
- If you are pulling a boat or camper, make sure the tow chains are properly connected and do not drag on the roadway creating sparks.
- Park in designated spaces and avoid driving over and parking on dry grass. The heat from your vehicle can easily ignite the grass.

For more information about protecting your home, visit <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/ProtectYourHome/>.

Texas A&M Forest Service Contacts: Karen Stafford, fire prevention program coordinator, 936-545-6991, [kstafford@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:kstafford@tfs.tamu.edu) Information Officer, 979-255-0591, [information@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:information@tfs.tamu.edu)

# Mosquito season: How to control and prevent bites

Texas A&M AgriLife entomologist discusses all things mosquitoes – from types to tips to protect yourself

May 16, 2024 - by Adam Russell

That familiar buzz and bite means mosquito season in Texas is here, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife entomologist.

Sonja Swiger, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service entomologist and professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Entomology, Stephenville, said biting mosquitoes are a seasons-long problem that often changes based on the environment.

Swiger said the species present and whether mosquitoes are simply a nuisance or a disease vector likely depends on the environmental conditions. Temperature plays a role in mosquito emergence, but water availability is a major contributor to what mosquito species might be reproducing around your home.

## How to repel mosquitoes from yourself, children and pets

Swiger said reducing mosquito numbers in your location and the use of spray repellents are a good start when it comes to protecting yourself from bites. Covering exposed skin with long-sleeved shirts and long pants help as well.

Making recommendations for protecting people or locations from mosquitoes can be tricky, Swiger said. She does not recommend any repellents or mosquito repelling products that are not approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Anecdotal evidence exists that alternatives like essential oils repel mosquitoes, Swiger said. Spatial repellent devices like TheraCell are popular, however some people may balk at the chemical particles the units emit to create a barrier around a person or space.

Plants like citronella, geraniums, lemongrass, lavender, lantana, rosemary and petunias have been shown to repel mosquitoes, but Swiger said the distribution limits effectiveness for protecting a space. The number of plants and the location among other factors would weigh heavily into their effectiveness.

Candles and other smoke-based repellents fall into a similar category as plants, Swiger said.

“Protecting yourself with any spray-on, CDC-approved repellent like DEET, picaridin or lemon eucalyptus oil is my best recommendation anytime you go outside for an extended period,” she said. “Personal protectants are the only certainty against bites.”

# Mosquito season: How to control and prevent bites

## Continuation

Swiger said pets should be removed from areas with mosquito infestations. Small children should not be taken outdoors for long periods if mosquitoes are an issue because they can have adverse reactions to mosquito bites, and spray products should be used sparingly on them, especially babies. There are age restrictions for most repellents; no repellents on babies less than 2 months old and do not use lemon eucalyptus oil on children 3 and under.

“This time of year, it’s just best to limit their exposure to mosquitoes,” she said.

### How to control, prevent mosquitoes

Controlling mosquitoes after widespread, heavy rains is difficult because their habitat can be so unpredictable, Swiger said. Container mosquitoes are a bit easier – remove the habitat by dumping the water or treat the water with granular or dunk larvicides.

“Empty containers filled with water as much as possible and look for standing water that can be drained or where dunk larvicides can be effective,” she said. “It’s just a matter of, how far do you take it before other options are necessary?”

Sprays or barrier treatments that kill adult mosquitoes are another option, but effectiveness is limited, Swiger said. Products that homeowners can apply only last 24 hours. Professionals can apply longer-lasting barrier products – typically pyrethroid-based or organic products – but their effectiveness degrades with time.

Some groups and municipalities initiate mosquito abatement programs, especially when major outbreaks occur or mosquitoes become a health risk, but they are temporary as well, Swiger said. They typically spray at night to kill adult mosquitoes, and the residue burns off in the sunlight after dawn.

“Some cities and counties do a pretty good job staying on top of mosquito control, but it can be an overwhelming task, and weather can hinder effectiveness,” she said. “The best thing to remember is to protect yourself when outdoors for extended periods, reduce sites where mosquitoes can develop as much as possible in your space and then be mindful of areas nearby that might become problematic.”

For the full article , please visit:

<https://agrifetoday.tamu.edu/2024/05/16/mosquito-season-how-to-control-and-prevent-bites/>

# TEXAS BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE



## BQA TIPS

### **Sulfur Levels**

June 1, 2024  
Emily Lochner

Sulfur is considered a secondary plant nutrient and if soils are deficient adding sulfur can improve forage production. However, overapplying sulfur with ammonium sulfate or in other fertilizers is costly and can have negative impacts on soil pH, animal performance, and animal health.

The sulfur requirement for cattle is estimated at 0.15% of the diet dry matter. However, sulfur levels above 0.35 to 0.5% can result in reduced absorption of other important minerals and have negative impacts on cattle growth and health.

Checking sulfur levels in hay samples can be helpful to ensure sulfur is not being overapplied.

# TEXAS CLIMATE-SMART INITIATIVE

CROPS · FORESTRY · LIVESTOCK



TCSI Website

[CLIMATESMART.TAMU.EDU](https://CLIMATESMART.TAMU.EDU)

A five-year pilot project led by Texas A&M AgriLife Research and funded by USDA NRCS. This groundbreaking initiative aims to foster climate-smart agriculture for all major Texas agricultural commodities and create market opportunities across the commodities.

## PARTICIPATION BENEFITS

- Ability to choose from multiple climate-smart practices
- One-time application for 3+ years of enrollment
- Ability to participate in multiple projects as long as there is no other federal incentive for the same practice on the same land at the same time.
- Support from the TCSI team from start to finish
- Incentives priced at or above EQIP

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Working land must be located in the state of Texas
- Participants must have a Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm number
- Practices must not already be receiving federal incentives
- Participants must be willing to allow TCSI to collect soil and assess GHG emissions

