



Roy Walston

By: Roy Walston – CEA-Ag/NR

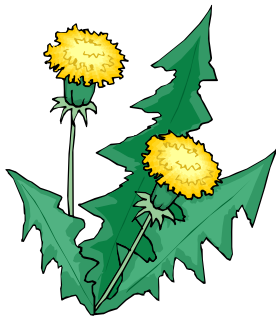
Top of the Windmill News January - April, 2014

Kerr County AgriLife Extension Service
3655 Hwy. 27
Kerrville, TX 78028
(830) 257-6568

Calendar of Events

- Feb 6th– The Truth About Weeds Webinar
- Feb 27th– Estate & Transition Planning Workshop
- Mar 21st– Introduction New Landowner Series
- April 4th– 2nd New Landowners Series
- April 22nd– Pecan Grafting & Production Workshop (3 CEUs)
- Apr 23-25– Bennett Land Trust Stewardship Program
- May 9th– 3rd New Landowners Series (2 CEUs)
- June 13th– 4th New Landowners Series (2 CEUs)
- July 11th– 5th New Landowners Series
- Sept 12th– 6th New Landowners Series (2 CEUs)

If you would like to receive the Top of the Windmill via email, please send an email to: kerr@ag.tamu.edu with the Subject title as: Top of the Windmill.



Livestock Economist Confident for 2014

If you have visited Gillespie Livestock Auction on a Tuesday for their sheep and goat sale or on Wednesday for their cattle sale lately, you would have noticed the prices of livestock have continued to climb over the past several years and continue to climb this year.

There may be several reasons for this but primarily it is supply and demand driven. Livestock populations, especially lamb and cattle populations have continued to decline because of the past years droughts, changes in landownership, labor, predators, feed prices are all just to name a few. For those that have attempted to weather the storm, they are beginning to benefit with the current price trends.

Although the future of domestic beef is unknown, there are many positive factors in the US and abroad for cattle producers to look forward to 2014; one economist says it's time to rebuild the herd.

A University of Missouri livestock economist says corn prices are expected to dip, easing the heavy burden of high feed costs producers have had to carry through drought years.

Scott Brown says "The outlook for 2014 is a lot different than anything we've seen in a long time." Brown notes that the current future feeder calf prices in 2014 are going to be \$50 higher per hundred weight than four years earlier and he is forecasting an increase in fed cattle prices.

The Truth About Weeds – Webinar

Dr. Barron Rector will be presenting an online webinar on Thursday, February 6, 2014 from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. CST to anyone interested in learning more about weeds.

Dr. Rector will discuss management practices that can positively or negatively affect weed production. He will also cover the different resources that are useful in controlling weed problems.

In order to view the webinar it is necessary to go to the following site and configure your computer with the necessary software prior to the event. <http://naturalresourcewebinars.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/rangeonline.pdf>

Want CEUs? Register Now For Only \$10! Don't Need CEUs? Watch for Free!

Estate and Transition Planning Workshop for Agricultural Producers

An Estate And Transition Planning Workshop is scheduled for February 27, 2014 in Fredericksburg, Texas at the Gillespie County AgriLife Extension office at 95 Frederick Rd. in Fredericksburg, Texas.

The workshop will be a hands-on program that will address critical estate, retirement and transition planning issues and resources. Participants will leave the program better prepared to work effectively with their trusted advisors and implement their desired plans.

The target audience is agricultural producers and landowners interested in building an effective and efficient estate, retirement and/or transition plan. This ensures that the rewards of a lifetime of work are preserved for current and future generations or directed as intended.

Topics for the program will include; Estate Planning Concepts, gifting/gift tax considerations, estate planning goals/objectives, retirement planning resources, transition planning alternatives. The workshop will enable sufficient time for questions and discussions in a “safe harbor” learning environment so participants can relate the information to their own individual circumstances and perspectives.

Registration is at 9:45 a.m., cost is \$35 per person and covers all materials and lunch. Workshop runs from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Registration forms are available at the Kerr County AgriLife Extension office at 3655 hwy. 27 and may be mailed to the Gillespie AgriLife Extension office at 95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg. Registration is limited to 30 participants. For more information contact the Kerr County AgriLife Extension office at 830-257-6568.

New law impacts farmers with farm tags.

A new state law requires farmers and ranchers to show their state comptroller-issued Texas Agricultural or Timber Exemption Registration number before obtaining farm license plates and/or temporary excess weight permits at the Kerr County tax office.

The law will help ensure no one can infringe on the privileges extended to our qualified farmers and ranchers who deserve them. Unfortunately, as the state has grown so have the number of reports of people abusing the farm plate and permit privileges.

Vehicles that do not qualify for farm plates include regular passenger vehicles; those used for gainful employment (driving to and from work) or for hire; vehicles owned by farmer cooperatives; and ones used to transport livestock for non-retail purposes.

Types of farm plates include truck, truck tractor, and trailer/semitrailer.

Here are the different types of farm plates and how you may use them:



- Farm Truck/Farm Truck Tractor Plates. You can use these plates to transport your own poultry, dairy, livestock, livestock products, timber in its natural state, and farm products to market or to other points for sale or processing. You can transport laborers from their place of residence to your farm or ranch. You can also move materials, tools, equipment and supplies from the place of purchase or storage to your

farm or ranch, providing you do not charge to move these items and they are exclusively for use on your farm or ranch. The vehicle also may be used to allow you to participate in equine activities or attend livestock shows.



- Farm Trailer/Semitrailer Plates. You can haul seasonal agricultural harvests or livestock from the place of production to the place of process or storage and transport farm equipment to your farm or ranch. You can also transport fertilizer and haul cotton seed (as long as you aren't charging) between the place of supply or storage to farms and ranches. If you own a cotton gin you may take it to other farms,

providing you are not charging for the gin's usage and it is being used by the farmers and ranchers to haul agricultural products (harvests) to a process or storage location or to market. You may also use trailers/semitrailers to participate in equine activities or attend livestock shows.

New Landowner Series

SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS — The multi-county 2014 New Landowner Series, presented by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, will be held in four South Central Texas counties from March through September.

A total of six sessions will be held in Blanco, Gillespie, Kendall and Kerr counties.

A total of six different sessions, constituting the multi-county 2014 New Landowner Series, will be presented from March through September at locations within Blanco, Gillespie, Kendall and Kerr counties. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo)



“These sessions are designed for the novice who just acquired property or is looking into purchasing land in the Hill Country,” said Brad Roeder, AgriLife Extension agent for Gillespie County, one of the series coordinators. “At these sessions, attendees can meet and speak with some of the top experts in their respective fields, as well as get hands-on experience in learning how to get the most out of their property.”

Roeder said topics addressed in the series will include learning how to make wildlife, livestock and the environment work; live oak wilt and decline; how to drought-proof pastures; taxes, permits and property regulations; growing your own food; facts about the best hay, forages and grains for the area; and herbicides/pesticides for home and commercial use.

“We will also make site visits to operations in all phases of agriculture and have hands-on activities,” he said. “And participants will be provided a new landowner notebook full of timely information and handouts.”

All programs begin with registration from 1-1:30 p.m., with presentations from 1:30-5 p.m.

Dates, towns and topics for the sessions are:

- **March 21**, Fredericksburg, Introduction, Neighbor Relations, Tax Valuations, Well and Septic Permits, Grazing and Hunting Leases.
- **April 4**, Kerrville, Live Oak Wilt, Home Use Pesticides, Turf, Tree and Landscape Maintenance, Rainwater Harvesting.
- **May 9**, Stonewall/LBJ Ranch, Forage Production, Livestock Production and Handling, Crop Production. **(2 CEUs)**
- **June 13**, Stonewall, Commercial Horticulture, Vineyards, Orchards, Produce (hands-on pruning). **(2 CEUs)**
- **July 11**, Boerne, Back to Basics, Home Gardening, Chickens, Natural vs. Organic.
- **Sept. 12**, Kendalia, Wildlife and Range Management, Brush Work and Sculpting. **(2 CEUs)**

Specific session sites are being identified, with maps and directions to each location to be provided to attendees prior to each session.

The cost is \$30 per session or \$100 per person, \$150 per couple, for the entire series, payable in advance or at the door. Make checks out to Gillespie Ag & Natural Resource Committee and drop off or mail to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg, Texas 78624.

Advance notice for each session is requested so adequate quantities of take-home materials can be prepared.

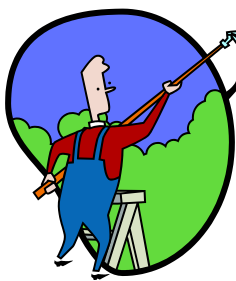
For more information, contact the AgriLife Extension office in Gillespie County at 830-997-3452.

Pecan Grafting and Production Workshop

A Pecan Grafting and Production Workshop is scheduled for April 22nd at 9:00 a.m. at Bill Hathaway's Orchard. This will be an informative and educational opportunity for those pecan producers interested in grafting pecans. Early season insect and fertilization management will also be discussed by Dr. Larry Stein, Extension Horticulturist from Uvalde.

The orchard is located on Texas highway 173, approximately 4 1/2 miles from Kerrville-Schreiner State Park. Turn left on Center Point River road and enter the first gate on the right; signs will be posted. Three hours of CEU's will be offered to Private, Commercial and Non-Commercial applicators.

Anyone interested in learning more about pecan production will benefit from this field-day. Registration for the field-day is \$10.00 and is payable at the field-day. Please contact the Kerr County Extension office to pre-register for the field-day at 830-257-6568.



When Can I Prune?

With the onset of winter following several good freezes we are set for pruning here in the Hill Country. While many trees may be pruned any time of the year, for example, pecans, cedar elms and ashe juniper, the live oak must be pruned during the winter months following several good freezes. These freezes should slow down the movement of any insects, in particular, the nitidulid beetle that transmits oak wilt from Spanish Oaks to Live Oaks. Oaks just as any shade tree require pruning for several reasons: prune out excess branches to prevent rubbing together, removal of broken or damaged branches, double leaders or narrow v-shaped crotches. Annual upkeep on many trees helps to maintain a strong structural support and reduce the breakage of limbs during the growing season. Most home owners should limit their tree pruning to small branches which can be reached from the ground. The pruning of large branches and work off the ground should involve professional tree experts with proper equipment.

Many folks are under the impression that large shade trees need pruning just because they're getting too big and pretty or because it's a certain season. We witness this all across the state. Before having a tree trimmed, know why and how it should be done. Many pruning jobs could be avoided by knowing the growth habit of a specific tree and planting in a location that is sufficient for the mature size of the tree. Find out how fast and how large a tree normally grows. With this information you can avoid many maintenance requirements. Logic and reason also apply. For example, don't plant a white oak directly beneath utility lines. As the tree grows and interferes with the lines, the tree will be pruned. This completely destroys the natural character of the tree and often leads to its early decline. The same is true when choosing a tree for a planter or other limited space. Consider small or intermediate size trees such as Crape Myrtle, Foster Holly, or Redbud.

Trees planted in proper locations in the Hill Country should not need to be topped. Topping shade trees may often be recommended to prevent causing damage to the home. However, shoots which grow after topping are weaker than the original limbs. Shoots then must be selectively pruned to train for a main branch. Shoots left alone will be more likely to split off and cause damage unless they are removed every few years. Also, wood rots are more likely to be a problem in topped trees, resulting in poorer tree health and greater likelihood of limb breakage.

The only time wound dressing or paint is essential is in the pruning of oaks, especially when pruning is done out of necessity during the growing season. During this time pruning paint helps to deter beetles from being attracted to the freshly cut surface. Painting fresh cuts during this time should be done with a latex paint. Wound dressing or tree paint on all other trees is not essential; recent research has pointed out that tree paint or wound dressing is not as advantageous as previously thought. Dressings may actually harbor disease organisms rather than exclude them. It has also been determined that wound dressing slows the wound callusing (often called healing) process, rather than speeding it up. A good, clean unpainted pruning cut, while unsightly at first, will probably callus faster than a painted one. If you have any questions concerning this article contact Roy Walston at the Kerr County Extension office at 830-257-6568.

Bennett Land Trust – Stewardship Program

The first Bennett Trust Land Stewardship educational program, “Protecting the Legacy of the Edwards Plateau,” will be hosted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service April 23-25 in Kerrville.

The event at the Inn of the Hills Resort and Conference Center, 1001 Junction Highway, Kerrville, is designed to “bring the best and wisest, accomplished stewards, visionaries and legacy-leavers together as educators,” according to organizers.

Registration prior to March 23 will be \$75, and thereafter, \$95. Registration can be completed at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/> or by going to <http://bennetttrust.tamu.edu>, selecting the “Events” tab and choosing either of two links on the page. A conference rate of \$99 per night will be available at the Inn of the Hills Resort and Conference Center until March 23.

“This conference will offer landowners the opportunity to not only hear from and engage with an outstanding group of presenters, but be able to pick sessions and tours that would be the most helpful to their operation,” said Todd Swift, AgriLife Extension regional program leader in Uvalde.

“This is a great opportunity to learn best management practices, regardless of enterprise, size of the property and knowledge level,” Swift said. “I think this program will offer something for every landowner. I am proud a program of this quality will be offered in the South Region.”

Co-planners Dr. Larry Redmon, AgriLife Extension state forage specialist in College Station, and Dr. Rick Machen, AgriLife Extension livestock specialist from Uvalde, said the first day will include discussions on recognition and management of encroaching plants, native tree health and care, water as wealth and managing competition between wild and domestic herbivores.

Also on April 23, a workshop entitled “Retaining Your Piece of Texas – Creating/Sustaining a Heritage” will address issues related to estate planning and elder law.

“We are blessed to work with landowners in the Edwards Plateau that understand the importance of caring for the land in ways it can be passed on to other generations,” said Roy Walston, AgriLife Extension agent in Kerr County. “Ranchers are always willing to lend a helping hand to others, and this program is no different. We are fortunate to have a great set of producers who are willing to share their stories on how they have accomplished their goals.”

Day 2 of the conference will allow attendees to take one of three behind the scenes tours.

“Explore with us some of the agriculture-based businesses who have prospered on their Hill Country property while maintaining the charm and character of the land we love,” said Brad Roeder, AgriLife Extension agent in Gillespie County. “Whether you own 5 or 5,000 acres, become informed on how you can employ a vineyard, a wildlife operation, a traditional ranch or other ag-based venture to keep this a place we want to call home.”

Tour A, centered on natural resource stewardship, includes a visit to the historic Hillingdon Ranch in Kendall County, with a pasture walk and demonstration of various types of equipment in brush management and how live oak wilt is combated.

Tour B visits sustainable vineyards, orchards and gardens in Fredericksburg and Gillespie County to provide a glimpse of essential elements for stewardship success.

Tour C will highlight wildlife management and the hunting industry in the Edwards Plateau, featuring landowners with a reputation for being good stewards of their wildlife resources.

“Come join our tours to discover a type of progress that will hopefully create a lifestyle and heritage worth protecting,” Roeder said.

Continued on next page

The final day of the event will feature insight on keeping a legacy alive by focusing on legacy threats such as protection from wild fire and how to use prescribed fire to enhance both livestock and wildlife habitat Redmon said. In addition, vendors and exhibitors will be available for participants to visit with throughout the event.

More information on the Bennett Trust, established through a posthumous endowment provided by Eskel and Ruth Bennett to AgriLife Extension, can be found at <http://bennetttrust.tamu.edu/>.

For more information regarding the upcoming event, contact Redmon at l-redmon@tamu.edu , Machen at r-machen@tamu.edu , Roeder at BWRoeder@ag.tamu.edu or Walston at rwalston@ag.tamu.edu.

Top of the Windmill Newsletter Survey

In an effort to provide information that fits the Top of the Windmill audience and aid us in providing educational programs and information to landowners in Kerr County, I would appreciate your help in completing the quick survey on the following page.

Top of the Windmill Newsletter Survey

Your assistance in completing the following brief survey will greatly be appreciated and aid us in addressing issues of importance to Kerr County Homeowners and Landowners. Please complete the following three sections.

- I. Please indicate the areas of interest you would like to receive information via newsletters, news articles, publications and other mass media outlets.

<input type="checkbox"/> Beef cattle	<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep (wool type)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep (hair type)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meat Goats
<input type="checkbox"/> Angora Goats	<input type="checkbox"/> Swine
<input type="checkbox"/> Beekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/> Table Grape Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Wine Grape Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Vegetable Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Vegetable Prod	<input type="checkbox"/> Poultry
<input type="checkbox"/> Range management	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Forage Production (Hay)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pecan Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit tree production	<input type="checkbox"/> Turfgrass horticulture
<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Horticulture	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Applicator (CEU)

- II. Please indicate the areas of interest you would be willing to participate in an educational meeting, seminar, or field-day.

<input type="checkbox"/> Beef cattle	<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep (wool type)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep (hair type)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meat Goats
<input type="checkbox"/> Angora Goats	<input type="checkbox"/> Swine
<input type="checkbox"/> Beekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/> Table Grape Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Wine Grape Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Vegetable Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Vegetable Prod	<input type="checkbox"/> Poultry
<input type="checkbox"/> Range management	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Management
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<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit tree production	<input type="checkbox"/> Turfgrass horticulture
<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Horticulture	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Applicator (CEU)

- III. Would you prefer to attend educational programs during:
Please rank the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> weekday 8 am – 5 pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturdays half-day (8 am – 12 noon)
<input type="checkbox"/> weekday 5 pm – 8 pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturdays half –day (1 p.m– 5 pm)
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturdays all day (8 am – 5 pm)	

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