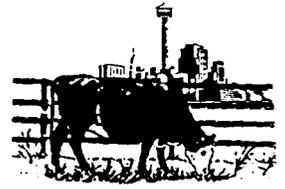




The Bexar County Beef Cattle Newsletter



June - 2003

Bexar County Beef Cattle Scholarship

Congratulations to Andrew Brooks and Casey Geiger. Each recipient will receive \$500 toward their college career.

Atascosa/Bexar Livestock Field Day

A date of May 31st has been set for a Atascosa/Bexar Livestock Field Day at Wilbur Fites Ranch in Poteet. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.. One CEU will be offered. Contact Pam to register, lunch will be served.

Private Applicators Trainings

Bexar County Extension office will be conducting a Private Applicators Training on Thursday, June 5th beginning at 8 a.m. located at 3355 Cherry Ridge Dr. S-208, San Antonio. Class is \$25 which includes the study manual. The next scheduled training will be Thursday, September 4th.

Checkoff's Newest Cut Becoming Widely Accepted

Consumer acceptance of the Flat Iron Steak, a value-added beef cut that the checkoff introduced two years ago, is spreading across the nation through new programs conducted by state-national checkoff dollars.

Beef producers developed the Flat Iron through checkoff-funded research and development. This chuck cut has sold for about \$2 a pound as part of the top blade roast. The checkoff's research developed the cut into a portioned steak and increased its value to between \$4.50 and \$7.50 per pound, depending on quality grade.

Checkoff dollars also helped the industry introduce the new cut to packers and processors in order to create a supply for foodservice and, eventually, retail.

Angus and Charolais - Still Some Differences

Angus and Charolais are the two European breeds most frequently mentioned in today's marketing alliances. While these two breeds have become more similar over the years in size and growth, there are still some big differences in carcass factors. The U. S. Meat Animal Research Center sampled those two breeds and compared them as sires on mature cows. Charolais-sired steers averaged almost 1 sq. in. larger ribeyes with only 0.34 inch fat cover, compared to Angus-sired with 0.58 fat, so Charolais had Yield Grades of 2.7 compared to 3.6 for Angus. On the other hand, Angus-sired graded 95% Choice, compared to 69% for Charolais-sired.

Feed Efficiency vs. Feeding Behavior

We've generally thought that better-doing cattle were more consistent in eating habits. That may not be true. Oklahoma and Canadian researchers collaborated on a study measuring individual feeding activity. Steers were classified into HI, AVG, and LO groups based on feed efficiency. As was expected, HI steers consumed more total feed, but they also had greater variation in daily feed consumption. And HI went to the feed bunk more often, but spent less total time eating.

New Publication

There is a new publication in the Texas Adapted Genetic Strategies (TAGS) series. It is E-180, "Creating Cattle Breeds and Composites". This publication, and all others in the series, is available on my webpage at <http://stephenville.tamu.edu/~shammack/pub.html> or on the Texas Cooperative Extension Bookstore at <http://tcebookstore.org/pubinfo.cfm?pubid=1766>.

A Gathering of Goat Producers III

This gathering will be July 21-23, 2003 at the Guadalupe County Fairgrounds & Coliseum in Seguin, Texas.

The meat goat industry has experienced unparalleled growth over the past decade. Some are new to the industry while others have been at it a lifetime. When they get together, all that are gathered usually learn something. Topics will include: The Future of the Junior Market Goat Program, Selling a Processed Product, Facilities & Fencing, Selling Live Goat and much more.

Pre-registration is due by July 7, 2003. Registration fee is \$75. For a registration form and agenda contact Pam at Texas Cooperative Extension office 210/467-6575.

Ridge Favors National ID System for Livestock

Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge endorsed the concept April 28 during a conference of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters. "Some of these thoughts are certainly preliminary in nature," Ridge said, "but given the economic significance of the livestock industry it seems to us to be a very good initiative to undertake." A national animal identification plan, developed by a task force representing more than 30 livestock organizations, was approved in October 2002 by the Livestock Identification Committee of the U.S. Animal Health Association. Agriculture Department officials are currently meeting with livestock industry representatives in hopes of completing specific plans and timetables to present at USAHA's 2003 convention in October.

West Nile Virus in Texas

West Nile activity could pick up soon in Texas, reports Dr. Jim Olson, entomologist with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. By mid-April the virus was already being reported in birds throughout Louisiana and in the mosquito population around Baton Rouge. "This is probably one of the earliest records of a mosquito-borne virus (becoming active) in the South," Olson said. He added that activity normally begins in May or June. State health officials are still encouraging horse and mule owners to vaccinate their animals. If the animals were vaccinated last year, a booster is recommended, Olson said. He urged owners to vaccinate immediately. There can be a delay of up to six weeks from the time of vaccination to when the animal has built up a protective immunity, he cautioned.

House Votes to Lift Horse Slaughter Ban

The Texas House of Representatives approved a bill April 23 that would allow two North Texas companies to continue processing horses for human consumption overseas. The practice has been forbidden by Texas law since 1949, but the law has not been enforced. Taking away the plant's ability to ship horse meat overseas could force them to shut down or consolidate--effectively removing a humane option for horse owners who put down animals that can no longer be used for work, recreation or breeding, said Rep. Betty Brown, R-Terrell, the bill's author. The new legislation also requires horse auctions to notify sellers that their animals could be sold for slaughter.

Need Help? Call TSCRA!

Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association has the following contact sites if you need information.

Beef Information Hotline: We have resources to answer questions or respond to unfavorable comments about beef. 1/888-830-2333, email: beef.info@texascattleraisers.org.

Attorney Referral Program: Puts TSCRA members with legal questions in touch with attorneys in their area who are also members of TSCRA. 1/800-242-7820, ext. 147.

TSCRA Toll Free: To report missing or stolen animals or inquire about any of TSCRA's programs and educational meetings. 1/800-242-7820.

Stolen Horse Web Site: Photos and descriptions of missing horses enrolled in TSCRA's Horse Identification Program. Go to www.texascattleraisers.org, click on "stolen horses".

TSCRA Web Site: Membership information and application, staff contacts, press releases, activity calendar and links to other industry organizations. www.texascattleraisers.org.

What started out as a good crop is now in question due to late freezes and dry conditions. The impact of the freezes in March and April probably won't be realized until late May and early June. Many areas of the state are very dry and obviously in need of a rain.

Insects-

Phylloxera: Galls caused by this group of insects become apparent during May and depending on species can cause some defoliation. Once these galls are apparent there is nothing that can be done. Even as these galls open during May and June insecticides should not be applied to control the emerging adults. With the pecan stem phylloxera there is only one damaging generation per year.

Sawfly: The small round holes in the leaflets were caused by sawfly larvae. These larvae have finished feeding and are gone for the year.



Pecan Catocala: Some of you might have seen very large dark gray caterpillars that closely matches tree bark. These larvae can reach a length of 2 ½ to 3 inches. Larvae feed on foliage and never present a problem.



June Bugs: I received several inquires this month concerning disappearing foliage. Adult June "bugs" (they're actually beetles) come out at night to feed and hide during the day. This group of insects presents more of a problem to young trees where a higher percent of the foliage can be consumed than to older larger trees. Not much can be done here except to apply a protective spray of a non-selective insecticide to the young trees during periods of June bug activity.



When these insects start swarming around the porch light at night you know adult flights are underway and protect those young trees.

Cottony Scale: I've received several inquires concerning the insect pictured below. There are several scales that produce the cottony egg mass and at this time I'm not sure of the exact species in the picture. It does not represent a treat to pecan.

Sign up time for producers wanting to use the newly registered avian toxicant DRC-1339 is just about over. Presentations about this material have been given at many county field days this spring where some producers have signed up. The last chance to sign up will be at the Texas Pecan Growers annual meeting in Midland, Texas July 13-16, 2003. During the meeting there will be a presentation on the use of DRC-1339 and producers will be able to sign up at that time.

Contact Texas Pecan Growers Association at 979/846-3285 for more information on this meeting. Web site is <http://tpga.org/>.

Today's Media - Friend or Foe

The media, sometimes in an effort to boost ratings fails to deal responsibly with issues concerning agriculture and often adds to the confusion, conflict and problems surrounding agricultural issues.



For example, just recently a local media outlet reported on the USDA-APHIS Screwworm Eradication Program that successfully eradicated the screwworm in 1966 from the U.S. It then initiated the program seen on television for the US-Mexican border in 1972.

The reporting was good, concise, solid and researched information that talked about the program, etc. The problem was the dramatic headline "Flesh Eating Flies". For those that have been involved in agriculture, most are well versed in the Screwworm Eradication Program and know what was said but, for someone new to agriculture or from a non-agriculture background all they may have seen was the graphic pictures and heard the headline.

Calls to the local extension office were made by people who though they had screwworms but turned out to be blowflies that live on the surface of the skin of animals rather than eating live flesh. Sanitation and visual care/inspections of livestock are usually good remedies to treat blowfly problems and these infestations usually occur in dry years following wet winters.

You be the judge, should the media be held accountable for causing hysteria in the agricultural sector? It would certainly be better to educate them and have them be friends, rather than foes.

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June 2003

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OPPORTUNITIES

<u>Opportunity</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Private Applicator Trainings	Bexar County Extension office Bexar County Extension office	Jun. 5 Sept. 4	Pam 210/467-6575 “
Atascosa/Bexar Livestock Field Day	Wilbur Fite Ranch, Poteet	May 31	Pam 210/467-6575
A Gathering of Goat Producers III	Guadalupe County Fairgrounds	July 21-23	Pam 210/467-6575