

Program Delivery Opportunity for Everyone

We have a huge opportunity for visibility and educational credibility starting on Feb. 29, 2016, with the All Ag Radio Network and Tony St. James. This network of stations covers the entire North Region, with coverage in Dumas, Amarillo, Floydada, Lubbock, and plans to expand. We have been asked to provide six-minute “educational” presentations, Monday through Friday, beginning at the end of February. This is a commitment and opportunity for all of us to provide timely and educational information to producers about topics important to them. I’m excited for each and every one of you to have these opportunities to add to your educational deliveries.

What I would like to do is assign each cluster to a day, which should come out to each cluster having a program every two weeks. If there are 6 agents in a cluster, each agent would do one program every 3 months and approximately 4 per year. The advantage to this approach is that the listening audience gets to hear a variety of topics and happenings around the region. The reports can be recorded or called in. You can do this in your office or on your iPhone or Android. We can provide training in this area if you need it.

The next step will be to send out a survey and let you volunteer for the dates you want. I need ALL agents with responsibility in Ag/NR to participate including IPM agents. The programs need to be Ag related and educational in nature. We need to take advantage of presenting information related to topics important to your county. I’m not saying you can’t plug-in an upcoming program, but that isn’t the main focus. Take advantage of your trainings and your specialists to get prepared for these. For example, I could see someone from yesterdays weed training talk about “keeping fields clean prior to planting”, or discussion from the Sorghum training in Dumas about water, weeds, or aphids. Be looking for the survey; and pick the dates you want from your cluster and then I will fill in the blanks. I’m excited about this opportunity for you and for our agency to get in front of our clientele with important issues.

Looking back on January

January was a huge positive in regards to programs, attendance, and especially your follow through. If my count is accurate, this month there have been 23 programs conducted with over 1300 participants involved. That is outstanding. Programs covered beef cattle, cotton, corn, sorghum, risk management/marketing, horticulture, diversity, and much more. Great start to a new year. Just for the record, not one program was cancelled and you did a great job of notifying speakers regarding programs. Keep up the great work.

Scanners

The RPLs, along with Dr. Renchie and Dr. Ballabina, recently discussed the use of scanners to register applicators for CEUs at meetings. I know there is some hesitancy in regards to changing what you have always done but it is important that **ALL OF YOU** move forward with this new system. There are reasons for this;

- It's time for our agency and your county to move into the present century regarding technology. We need to model change and new technology. The quicker we display this change, the quicker our clientele will accept it.
- In the long run it will save you and your producers time. No doubt about this. Newly tested applicators and producers that renew licenses will receive a card with bar code on it from TDA. The new cards will also display their license number along with producers name and address on your signup sheet after being scanned.

So, it's time to break out the scanners and put them to work. It is no longer an option for your programs. We need to be the agency, in every county, that utilizes technology. It is also time to start being more efficient with all of our time including your county support staff. If you are having problems or don't understand how to use the equipment, there are numerous training sessions provided by Dr. Renchie and his crew. You can call his office and they will be able to assist. You can also always call me or Jordan for assistance. We are currently trying to secure some scanners for backup and training purposes so that we can assist in the transition. This is no longer an option. It is an expectation of our agency.

Professional Development

This month there were numerous opportunities for professional development and I wanted to make sure we were all on the same page. I was very pleased with the turnout at the Sorghum Program and Weed Pest Lync training. Both were packed with information you could use to educate your producers and learn about Ag topics. I was especially pleased with how the agents were engaged, attentive, and active in these trainings. I want to make sure everyone understands that these trainings should be treated as such. There were still a limited few taking phone calls, texting, working on other projects, etc. and this is unacceptable in regards to our program development goals. The point of utilizing county programs for professional development is to learn from our speakers. It is unprofessional and a waste of time to travel or Lync in and not take advantage. I want to point out that this was a very small number and I will chalk it up to just not knowing the expectations. Thanks to most of you for your willingness to take advantage of the knowledge provided by our experts. I'm excited about this new approach to giving you the information to be successful in Ag/NR programming.

Result Demonstration Summaries

I'm still waiting for these summaries. Thanks to those of you who have provided the updated versions of your demonstration results. I noticed that Dr. Bell and Dr. Byrd both provided results from the cotton trials conducted this year. All you have to do is transfer the data to the appropriate templates. Please don't expect specialists to do this for you. The templates for your summaries can be found on the following link: <http://extensionanr.tamu.edu/>. If you have the results compiled for these tests, send them in immediately. I look forward to seeing your successful work with demonstrations and applied research. I will send you a couple of examples via email of tests conducted and how they need to look. Hopefully this will be helpful in preparing your template and results.

Bridges to Opportunity

Many of you may have been contacted by USDA-FSA to help with a program called “Bridges to Opportunity”. If you are asked to sign any agreement for this program, you will need to forward the agreement from USDA-FSA to our Contracts Office at contracts@ag.tamu.edu. You can also get your questions answered by AgriLife Contracts at 979-847-5821.

Coming Up in the North Region

Feb 2 – Hub of the Plains – Lubbock

Feb 3 – 4-H Webinar with Andy and Shawnte

Feb 4 – **High Plains Irrigation Conference — Amarillo**

Feb 9 – Hale/Swisher Crops Conference – Plainview

NE Panhandle Crops Conference – Perryton

Feb 10 -11 – **Feed Grain Marketing Program — Amarillo**

Feb 12 – OAT Conference – Amarillo

Feb 16 – Beef Program – Quitaque

Feb 18 – Grazing Management School — Canadian

Feb 23 – Right of Way Conference – Amarillo (Rick Auckerman)

Sandyland Conference – Seminole

Feb 24 – **Weed Pests Lync – Incorporation of Yellow Herbicides/Pre-plant Management decisions**

Feb 25 – Crops Profitability Conference – Lamesa

Feb 29 – **Fertility Lync – Soil Sampling, testing, soil types, deep soil testing – Dr. Lewis and T. Doederlein**

Small Grains/Cotton Disease Lync – Disease/Virus differences Dr. Woodward and Dr. French

I know you all will be extremely busy this month with shows and working diligently with youth and leaders. What a great opportunity you have to impact youth through 4-H livestock projects. I hope you take advantage of making a “positive” impact on all the lives you touch this month! Be safe with your travels!