

What and Why

We spend a lot of time on the “what” related to your jobs. Expectations, professional development, programming, marketing, interpretation, utilizing volunteers, demonstration work, CEU scanners, etc. are just examples of annual discussions that happen. I’m hoping to continually focus equal time on “why” we do these things. The “why” is what drives us from the standpoint of personal and professional goals, ownership, commitment, etc. If we have buy in and understand why it is important, we are more likely to complete the task, make sure it’s successful, and develop pride in the results. From an agency standpoint, understanding “why” leads to higher quality programs, employee satisfaction with their job, and ultimately higher retention. The “what” and the “why” have to coexist if we want to reach our goals.

So today and in the future, we will focus on the “why” as part of this blog. I need your help in this! If you have questions about **why** we do something, pass it along to me and we will discuss it here. If you are wondering “why”, I almost guarantee someone else has the same question. If you wish to remain anonymous, that is fine also. This will be a great time to share and learn and who knows, we might even find some things to eliminate. Here goes;

What: Result Demonstrations/Applied Research

Why: This is a great place to start because the expectation is that everyone do a minimum of 2 demonstrations/applied research projects regardless of their position. ***So, what’s the big deal?***

- Have any of you heard the famous quote by Dr. Seaman Knapp that goes, “What a man hears he may doubt, what a man sees he may also doubt, but what he does he cannot doubt”. Dr. Knapp is considered by many to be the father of Extension because of his work to not only teach and show producers the value of new technologies in corn but also to involve them in “demonstrating” these new varieties on their own operations. He took the research to the field and this concept remains viable today as we work with producers in transfer of technology. This continues to be a very key educational delivery for our agency.
- The other key to working directly with producers and demonstration work is the visibility and credibility you gain. You have also heard the saying; “It’s not how much you know but how much you care that matters”. I’m not saying it is not important to be knowledgeable in your subject matter but my experience has been that producers value our willingness to learn with them and they value our commitment to these projects. By being seen and showing interest in the project, you will make huge strides towards being credible in your county.
- These projects are extremely valuable from a professional development standpoint. I always learned a great deal from being in the field, charting progress on plots, and discussing results with specialists, producers, and other agents. It’s a great way to learn by doing.

Non Commercial (Political) Applicators License

I just wanted you to be looking for an email this week regarding the agencies expectations for you to be a licensed applicator. The details will be finalized this week and sent out to you. Be on the lookout for that email. On a similar note, the training related to demonstration/research design for agents without a license will be April 7, in Lubbock. This training may look a bit different with more emphasis on

applied research/demonstration work but is still required for all agents that have not been through the training or that do not have a license. Be sure to mark your calendars for April 7 if you were hired within the past year.

Radio Opportunities and Details

I'm sure by now you have all seen the email about your opportunity to do educational radio presentations for Tony St. James and All Ag; All Day. I have had several of you let me know your dates and I'm waiting for the rest of you to do the same. Everyone will need to select at least one date from the excel file I emailed to you last week. Here are further details on the recordings;

- Educational in nature
- Agriculture topics that are important and timely
- 6 minute recorded presentation. Not an interview format
- Two options to record on your phone or computer and email (mp3 format) or call the station when you can record your presentation
- Recordings are due no later than 2 working days prior to your time slot. They can be done at any time prior to the date you have chosen and that is convenient for you as long as the topics are still relevant
- Recordings will also be put on a website that can be utilized by anyone including other radio stations in the area. It can also be used to view if you want to see other agents presentations
- Programs will run 3 times. Twice the day of your presentation and the morning following by all of the regional stations with All Ag; All Day.
- Suggested format for presentation is as follows;
 - **Start with your Name and Title.**
Example: Michael Wilkes, CEA-Ag/NR, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Roberts County
 - **Identify the topic/issue and its importance to your county**
 - **Presentation on how producers can to address the issue or what they should know**
 - **Summarize and recap the presentation**
 - **Upcoming issues / programs in your county**

This is a great opportunity of all of you and for our agency. This emphasis will go a long way towards showcasing what diverse and quality individuals we have engaged in Agriculture in the region. More details will be coming as I get them. Thanks for all you do.