

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Cotton Management Seminar
- Blackland Income Growth
- Texas Agricultural Sales Tax Number

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Erath Ag Update

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COTTON PRODUCTION SEMINAR

Pre-Season Cotton Production Seminar

Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Comanche, Eastland and Erath County will be hosting a multi-county Cotton Management Program on February 2, 2012 at Hwy 6 Café in DeLeon. The program will begin at 9:30 a.m. with registration and the presentations will begin at 10:00. A sponsored meal will be provided at noon and the program will conclude at 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Gaylon Morgan, State Cotton Specialist will discuss variety selection and provide discussion on the variety trial conducted across the state. Dr. Paul Bauman, Extension Weed Specialist will provide information on weed management for cotton production including management plans to avoid glyphosate resistance weed development. Dr. John Robinson, state cotton economist will discuss market outlooks and marketing your cotton in 2012. Dr. Todd Baughman, agronomist and program coordinator with Oklahoma State University will discuss several topics including water requirements, fertility issues and strip till vs conventional vs. no till production.

Producers in attendance will receive 2 hours of CEU's towards their private applicator license.

Please RSVP by calling your Extension Office by January 30th so we can ensure we have enough program materials on hand. Comanche County – 325-356-2539, Eastland County – 254-629-1093 or Erath County - 254-965-1460.

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or other accommodation in order to participate in Extension sponsored events are encouraged to contact the County Extension office one week in advance to determine how reasonable accommodations may be made.

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts.



BRAND RE-REGISTRATION

Erath County ranchers are reminded that all brands expired August 31, 2011 and if you plan on re-registering your brand you must do so by February 29, 2012 in the County Clerk's office.

Existing brands can be renewed by the owner from August 31, 2011 through February 29, 2012. After February 29th the brand(s) are available to the general public to be registered. Texas brand registration is good for a 10-year period. The new period starts August 31, 2011 and goes through February 29, 2021.

Cost of registering a brand in Erath County is \$16 per brand per location. The same brand can be registered to more than one individual if it is in different locations. An example would be the XL brand can be registered on the left hip to John Doe and on the right hip to Jane Doe. To register the XL brand exclusively to one party, it would need to be registered on all locations on both sides for a total cost of \$224. There are 7 locations on the left and right side.

Brands should be registered in each county where the cattle and/or horses are located. If you run cattle in 3 counties you will have to register that brand in all 3 counties. The same brand can be registered in different counties by different owners in the same location.

Brands need to be registered for both cows and horses. It is a misdemeanor to use a brand that has not been registered. If the same brand in the same location(s) will be used on both animals there is no extra charge for the brand registration for both animals.

Cattle and horse branding is the best way to prevent livestock theft and provides an easy way to identify cattle.

Measuring Feed Efficiency

A recent summary of research looked at measuring feed efficiency in beef cattle. Efficiency in all sectors is important; cost of feed can represent as much of 70% of total fixed costs in growing and finishing cattle. Efficiency has typically been measured as feed conversion (feed:gain) or the inverse, gain:feed (which has the advantage of higher numerical values equaling higher efficiency). Both of these are positively related to growth, so genetic selection for higher efficiency based on either value tends to increase body size, possibly resulting in larger brood cows that require more feed.

Over the last 15 years or so, residual feed intake (RFI) has been advanced as a more useful measure of efficiency. RFI is based on individual feed intake compared to that predicted from an animal's weight and ADG. Thus, animals with lower RFI are more efficient. RFI has been found to be mostly independent of ADG. However, just as with feed:gain and gain:feed, RFI requires measuring feed intake by individual animals. Also, some factors have been found to confound measurement of RFI, including season of the year and diet (growing versus finishing).

In recent years, genetic markers (DNA) have been studied, and some developed, to predict RFI. As is true of all such markers, prediction is more accurate in the group of animals used to develop the markers than in different or larger groups. Several markers are currently available from commercial concerns. The author concluded, "Recent advances in DNA marker technology give cause for optimism that useful marker panels that will have wider applicability across breeds are becoming available." (2011 Beef Improvement Federation Proceedings, p. 42)

January 2012, Texas A&M Beef Cattle Browsing Newsletter, Dr. Steve Hammack

Controlling Cattle Parasites

When managing the cow herd into the fall and through the winter, the primary focus should be on health and nutrition. These two areas of management determine reproductive performance, the number one factor affecting profitability.

A factor that affects the nutritional status and requirements of the herd is internal and external parasite infestation. Parasites increase an animal's nutritional requirements because they get their share right off the top. Negative effects of parasites magnifies during drought stress.

Although internal parasites rely on adequate pasture moisture to maintain development, some species, *Ostertagia*, have the ability to arrest development until conditions are more favorable. Internal parasite control is necessary even when conditions are dry and definitely when wet weather ensues.

The same is true for external parasites. Moisture is an important factor that drives ticks, lice and fly development but all external parasites are able to keep thriving even in drought conditions.

Appropriate control programs should be implemented. Parasite control enhances nutritional status.

Source: November 2011, Veterinary Entomology Newsletter

Texas Cattle Producer Consider Feeding Whole Cotton Plants

Texas beef producers are exploring the use of whole cotton plants as a protein source for cattle due to extreme drought conditions.

A Texas AgriLife Research nutritionist and a Texas AgriLife Extension forage specialist in College Station were both asked to test the nutrition value of cotton plant samples. The preliminary results were quite interesting.

"Although a non-traditional feedstuff for cattle, the presence of the cotton seed with its high fat content and cellulose (lint) provides for a fairly high quality feedstuff," said Dr. Tyron Wickersham. "The fat content is quite a bit higher than would normally be fed to beef cattle and some scouring may occur, but the animals do well with the cotton diet."

Wickersham suggests the cotton could be used as a source of supplemental energy.

Meanwhile, Dr. Gaylon Morgan, AgriLife Extension state cotton specialist, notes most cotton defoliation or desiccation products prohibit grazing or feeding to livestock for at least 30 – 45 days. So be sure to read the product label for minimal restrictions.

Source: November 2011, Veterinary Entomology Newsletter

ERATH COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWSLETTER

It is my understanding that the Erath County Farm Service Agency is transitioning to an ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER.

If you want to continue to stay up to date on Farm Service Agency Programs I encourage you to contact the Erath County FSA Office at 254-965-3715 and complete the appropriate forms to receive their electronic newsletter.



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NEW SALES TAX EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER OPERATIONS

House Bill 268, passed during the 82nd Regular Legislative Session (2011), requires that a person claiming an exemption from sales tax on the purchase of certain items used in the production of agricultural and timber products must provide a registration numbers issued by the Comptroller of Public Accounts on the exemption certificate issued to the seller.

For more information visit:

www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/ag_timber_exemption.html

Or

www.getreadytexas.org

BLACKLAND INCOME GROWTH CONFERENCE—FEBRUARY 7-8

The 50th anniversary of the B.I.G. will be held in Waco on February 7-8, 2012 in Waco. The conference will have sessions on Grain Commodities, Horticulture, Beef Cattle, Cotton, Horse, Forages, Wildlife Management and Rural Land Management. In addition a private applicator training and testing will be offered. For more information visit the web-site at:

<http://stephenville.tamu.edu/blackland-income-growth/conference-information/> or contact our office at 254-965-1460.

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