

# Pecos County Agriculture/Natural Resources Newsletter

---

December 2009

---

## **New AgriLIFE Extension Agent in Pecos County**

Pecos County has a new Agriculture/Natural Resource Extension Agent on board. Greetings! I'm Norman Fryar your new Texas AgriLife Extension Service agent for agriculture and natural resources here in Pecos County. I'm excited about working with the farmers, ranchers and community members here in the county.

AgriLife Extension's mission is: "To provide quality, relevant outreach and continuing education programs and services to the people of Texas." From my standpoint, that means I'm here to help you by providing the educational programs you want and need, so I invite you to call 432-336-2541, e-mail (rnfryar@ag.tamu.edu) or simply stop by the office at 100 E. Division to share your thoughts on future programming or to just get acquainted.

## **Program Area Committees**

It is time once again to update the Program Area Committees (PAC). The purpose of these committees are to work with the Extension Agent in ensuring that programs are relevant to local needs and are being developed and implemented. Pecos County Agriculture/Natural Resource has three area committees: Livestock & Natural Resources, Field Crops, and Horticulture. These committees usually meet two or three times a year each.

If you are interested in serving on one of these committees or would like to be removed from previous services please contact the Pecos County Extension Office at 432-336-2541 or come by and visit with Norman Fryar.

## **Pecos River Basin Assessment Program**

Meetings were held in Imperial, Pecos, Ozona, and Iraan to discuss the Pecos River Basin Assessment Program. Landowners were updated on the progress of the plan thus far and informed on the upcoming plans.

Currently, financial assistance has been secured to treat saltcedar infestations through precision aerial application of herbicide with a helicopter along the river, burn standing dead saltcedar debris left along the river after previous herbicide treatments, establish 10 saltcedar leaf beetle colonies along the river, deliver educational programs and develop at least 20 water quality management plans for individual properties contiguous to the river. Funding has also been secured to install another real-time water quality monitoring station upstream of the US 67 river crossing near Girvin and to conduct investigations to help determine the cause of and evaluate potential management strategies to address low dissolved oxygen levels in the river between I-20 and US 67.

The entire watershed protection plan is available online at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu> now that all the meetings are complete. Local soil and water conservation district offices also have a limited number of printed copies available.

The process for applying for and obtaining financial assistance to implement practices recommended in the WPP were discussed during these public meetings. As always, the Watershed Coordinator, County Extension Agents and soil and water conservation district personnel can provide information on this process should questions arise.

## **Southwest Beef Symposium**

Texas and New Mexico Extension agencies will hold their sixth annual Southwest Beef Symposium on Jan. 20-21 at the Tucumcari Convention Center in Tucumcari, NM.

Bruce Carpenter, Texas AgriLife Extension Service livestock specialist, said the symposium is tailored for southwestern beef producers. The event centers around four educational sessions and a trade show. It alternates yearly between locations in West Texas and eastern New Mexico.

“Questions about the economy and overall beef industry are on a lot of folks’ minds these days,” Carpenter said. “And with that in mind, in the first session on Jan. 20 we’ll hear from Jason Henderson, Executive VP with the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank about the U.S. economy and its impact on agriculture. We’ll also hear from Josh Weingarner, director of government relations with Texas Cattle Feeders regarding policy issues affecting our industry.”

Other speakers from the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the University of Nebraska will address current animal welfare issues and beef quality assurance.

On day two, in a session titled “The Cattlemen’s Tool Box” Extension specialists from both states will discuss technologies in nutrition, genetics, health, risk management and livestock water. A short stocker cattle session by Dale Blassi of Kansas State University will follow. Lunch will feature Dr. Lowell Cattlett, dean of New Mexico State University’s College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental sciences.

The 2010 symposium will end with an afternoon session titled “Stockmanship and Stewardship.” It will be conducted by Curt Pate, rancher, American Quarterhorse Association professional horseman and clinician from Newell, SD; and Ron Gill, rancher, Associate, Department Head and livestock specialist - Texas A&M University, College Station. Their unique approach covers facility design, stockmanship skills and demonstrations in live cattle handling techniques. They will also offer information on how better cattle handling can improve cattle performance and consumer confidence in beef.

For planning purposes, pre-registration by Jan. 13 would be appreciated. Individual pre-registration is \$50. The fee includes a steak dinner, lunch, refreshments and printed proceedings.

For more information and to pre-register, call Carpenter at 432-336-8585 or Clay Mathis at New Mexico State University at 575-646-8022.

A schedule of events and speaker information, as well as registration materials and lodging information, can be found at <http://cahe.nmsu.edu/ces/swbeef>

## **Texas Hay Hotline**

We all realize that the need for suitable hay has been temporarily offset to a small degree by the current rains and opportunities for some establishment of winter grazing. However, managing livestock will remain a challenge in several Texas counties from now up through next May, 2010.

Some areas of Texas appear to have produced ample forage and harvested significant supplies of round bales throughout the summer months. Hay is also able to be located in other states, ranging from native range, to improved grasses, to alfalfa hay. However, transportation costs are a significant issue.

Commissioner Staples is encouraging Texas livestock producers to go to the Texas Department of Agriculture’s Hay Hotline Web site at <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/>. Those suppliers wishing to donate or

discount hay are encouraged to make their hay available by filling out a hay supplier form on the Hay Hotline Web site.

### **Disease may play role in quail decline**

Disease may be playing a role in the demise of Texas quail, said Dr. Dale Rollins, a Texas AgriLife Extension Service expert.

While many blame coccidiosis (malady caused by parasitic protozoans of the digestive system) for the drop in quail populations it is not currently known if there is a disease causing the problem. Dr. Rollins said other diseases may also be potential threats such as West Nile Virus, avian influenza, avian cholera and avian tuberculosis.

Rollins asks quail hunters to be on the lookout for sick quail this season. If birds taken are too light for their size or if a green discharge from the vent is spotted, he said it would be worth noting. He said to pay special attention to whether the liver has white or yellow nodules in it which are signs of a bacterial infection.

If disease is suspected, Rollins asks hunters to place the bird in a plastic zipper-type bag, refrigerate it and call him as soon as possible at 325-653-4576 or 325-776-2615.

Research is also being done with the Ceasar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute on eye worms and intestinal parasites. Dr. Rollins noted, "When you're a bobwhite, you live on the edge as it is; any debilitating factor like worms under your eyelids can't be good."

### **Pecos County Pecan Show**

Pecos county Pecan Show was held on December 3-4, 2009 at the First National Bank of Ft. Stockton. There were 24 entries in this year's show. Awards were presented to Belding Farms for Champion Classic , Champion Commercial, Overall Grand Champion of Show, Eddy Sullivan for Reserve Commercial and overall Reserve Champion of Show, Wild Horse received Reserve Seedling, and Sun Valley Farms for Champion Seedling and Reserve Classic. Eleven entries will advance to the Western Regional Pecan Show in Abilene on December 17-18, 2009. Those advancing are: Belding Farms and Sun Valley Farms with Barton variety, Belding Farms with Burkett variety, Eddy Sullivan with Cheyenne variety, Belding Farms with Desirable variety, Eddy Sullivan with Kiowa variety, Belding Farms with Pawnee variety, Sun Valley Farms with Seedlings variety, Belding Farms with Western Variety, and Wild Horse and Eddy Sullivan with Wichita variety. We wish each of these producers good fortune at the Regional Show.

### **Varmint Calling contest**

Upton County is hosting a varmint calling contest on January 9<sup>th</sup> and February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Entry Deadlines are December 29<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>. For more information call (432)693-2313 or (432) 693-2159. Entry forms are available at the Pecos County Extension office on 100 E. Division, Ft. Stockton

## **Upcoming Events**

Pecos County Livestock Show – January 8-10, 2010

SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo – January 8-16, 2010

Fort Worth Stock show and Rodeo – January 15- February 7, 2010

San Antonio Livestock Exposition – February 4 – 21, 2010

San Angelo Stock Show and rodeo -- February 18- 28, 2010

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo – March 2- 21, 2010

4-H Parent, Club manager, and Project Leader Training – January 30, 2010

R. Norman Fryar  
Agriculture/Natural Resource  
Texas AgriLife Extension Service  
P.O. Box 1357  
100 E. Division  
Fort Stockton, TX 79735  
Phone: 432-336-2541  
Fax: 432-336-6107