

LOST PINES COUNTY AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

January 2024



WINTER FREEZE COMING

Dakota Kempken

We are coming into the peak of winter, and next week is already predicted to start seeing the first hard freeze of the winter, with low temperatures reaching the low teens. Having the chill hours will be nice for our orchards but can be dangerous for livestock producers.

Make sure you have plenty of hay stocked up for food and bedding, and shelters are well maintained.

EXPLAINING CHILL HOURS

Chill hours can be a difficult concept to grasp for new (and even established) fruit and nut producers, despite being so necessary for production. Dormant buds of many plants, particularly for fruit-bearing trees and shrubs, require a long enough period of cold weather to properly develop. Naturally, chill hours can impact fruit production by essentially dictating how many productive buds can be expected in the following growing season. Chill hours are typically defined as the air temperature range of up to 45°F.

To calculate how many chill hours your crops have received, you can either calculate the number of hours between 32 and 45°, or up to 45°, experienced between October 1st and February 28th/29th. To help keep track of this data, AgriLife Extension maintains a series of weather stations at <https://texaset.tamu.edu/> which holds a variety of weather data across Texas. Just select the closest station and click "chill units" to pull up the amount of chill hours experienced using both calculation methods.

WEED OF THE MONTH – PRICKLY PEAR



One of the most troublesome brushy weeds seen throughout much of Bastrop County and only seems to be spreading even farther. Prickly pear is probably one of the most difficult weedy brush plants to control on rangeland and pastures because prickly pear, like most succulents, are seemingly indestructible. They can survive harsh droughts, deep freezes, and extreme physical damage by regrowing from the root ball. Additionally, each pad has the potential to develop roots when dislodged, forming a new individual genetically identical to its parent.

Control:

Completely eradicating prickly pear is possible, but is an extremely slow and expensive process. Because of this, a more active, non-intensive management approach should be practiced (unless the resources and time are available). If using physical removal with heavy equipment, prickly pear should be root plowed to 18 inches below the surface to target the root ball. If possible, ensure there are no remaining pads of the ground to prevent resprouting. When using herbicides, keep in mind that it can be months before any damage will be seen, and complete plant death can take up to 2-3 years.

Herbicides labeled for King Ranch Bluestem:

- Picloram + triclopyr ester
- Aminopyralid:clopyralid + picloram + fluroxypyr (Mezavue)
- Picloram + clopyralid

AUCTION BARN REPORTS

Lockhart Auction

January 4th, 2024

Wt	Rng	Avg
Steers		
100-300	180-340	260.00
300-400	180-335	257.50
400-500	160-315	237.50
Over 500	125-270	197.50
Heifers		
Under 300	160-325	242.50
300-400	140-310	225.00
400-500	140-285	212.50
Over 500	120-235	177.50
Packer Cows		
	52-97	74.50
Packer Bulls		
	92-123	107.50
Stocker Cows		
	650.00-1475.00	1062.50
Cow/Calf Pairs		
	1025.00-1350.00	1187.50

TREATING GRASSBURS

Grassburs continue to be a major problem all over the county, and we will soon be seeing them again in the coming months, so now is a good time to begin preparing to deal with it. Grassbur is extremely hardy and can be notoriously difficult to control, however they can be mitigated with pre-emergent herbicides such as Pendimethalin (Prowl H2O), Oryzalin (Surflan), indaziflam (Rezilon), and Prodiamine (Pendulum). Pre-emergents should be applied in late February to mid-march, right before plant germination and when soil temperature (not air temperature) stays around 52°F. To be properly worked into the soil and creating the herbicide barrier, the chemical must be applied up to 7 days before a rainfall event or scheduled irrigation time.



TDA HAY HOTLINE FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS IN NEED OF HAY

Keeping hay stockpiled is of great importance for this time of year, as it can help keep livestock warm during intense winter temperatures like what we are soon to experience. This growing season was once again tough on our local hay growers, but other growers have had success during the season, especially for cool season forage growers.



If you are in need of hay, you can search the Texas Department of Agriculture's Hay Hotline for growers selling bales within your price range. To access the hotline, please go to <https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Production-Agriculture/Hay-Hotline> or contact 512-787-9966 for any questions.

**Giddings Livestock
Commission**

January 8, 2024

Wt	Avg	High
Steers		
150-300	299	390
300-400	296	360
400-500	270	325
500-600	241	275
600-700	220	257.50
700-800	192	220
Heifers		
150-300	256	330
300-400	263	330
400-500	234	310
500-600	223	255
600-700	208	240
700-800	165	220
Yearling bulls		
700-850	170-215	
850-1000	125-190	
Packer cows		
Top	90-108	
Med.	70-85	
Thin	30-65	

TEXAS DROUGHT MONITOR UPDATE

Bastrop County, TX

[Home](#) / [Bastrop County, TX](#)

Map released: Thurs. January 11, 2024

Data valid: January 9, 2024 at 7 a.m. EST

Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

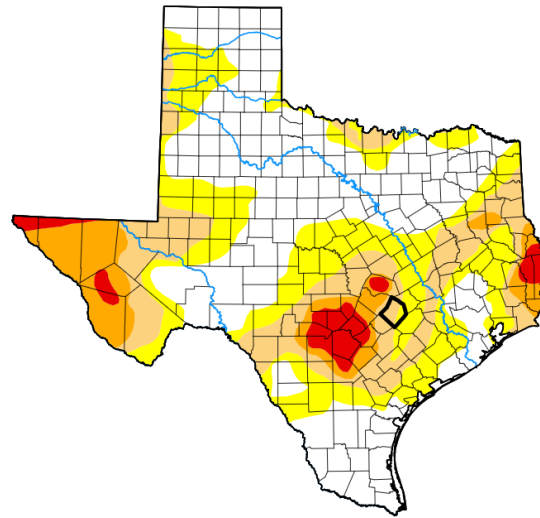
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AROUND THE COUNTY

COUNTY LIVESTOCK SHOWS IN FULL SWING

The spring is always a busy time for our 4-H livestock project exhibitors as they travel around the state competing in livestock shows. Many of our 4-H and FFA members will be competing at the county level as well! Come out and support our county 4-H and FFA livestock exhibitors at the Bastrop Area Livestock Show on February 29th through Marc 2nd at Mayfest Park and the Smithville Youth Livestock Show on April 6th at the River Bend Park in Smithville.

Gonzales Livestock Market

January 6, 2024

Wt	\$ Range
Steers	
150-300	285-335
300-400	295-335
400-500	260-325
500-600	230-290
600-700	200-240
700-800	195-215
Yearling bulls	
700-900	90-155
Heifers	
150-300	285-330
300-400	295-335
400-500	231-259
500-600	210-241
600-700	185-225
Stocker Cows	
750-1,500	
Cow-Calf pairs	
1,100-1,600	