<u>VOL.3 ISSUE 8 • APR. 2024</u>

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION - FRIO COUNTY FRIO COUNTY AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

Dear Agricultural Producers:

We are pleased to be able to provide you with information contained in this newsletter. The Frio County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter is a Monthly newsletter (Sept. 2023 - August 2024). Best efforts have been made to include Agriculture & Natural Resources information that should be of interest to you and helpful in the management of your agricultural operations. A wide variety of educational publications are available upon request or by accessing the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website at <u>www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu.</u> Our office hours are from 8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., (Monday-Friday). It is recommended that office visits be scheduled in advance or by appointment as there will be times that I'm not in the office.

You are encouraged to read this newsletter and keep informed of all ongoing agricultural events and activities. Try to do your best to attend Extension educational programs, workshops, etc., throughout the year as they are sponsored by your local Extension committees for your educational benefit. We would like to acknowledge the Extension Agricultural Specialists and cooperators including: TSCRA, US Drought Monitor, Texas Beef Quality, The Peanut Grower, AgriLife Today, Aggie Horticulture, Tx Ag Law, and the Texas A&M Beef Cattle, who contributed and provided the educational information for this educational newsletter. For any further questions regarding your agricultural operation, please contact the Frio County Extension Office (830) 505-7474, located at 400 S. Pecan St. Pearsall, Texas, or e-mail brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu. Visit the Frio County AgriLife Extension website at <u>https://frio.agrilife.org</u>.



Sincerely,

Binanna Jonnales

Brianna G. Gonzales County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources Frio County A GRILIFE EXTENSION

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Helpful Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Websites:

agrilifetoday.tamu.edu texaswater.tamu.edu soiltesting.tamu.edu aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu livestockvetento.tamu.edu animalscience.tamu.edu texashelp.tamu.edu SouthTexasRangelands.tamu.edu

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<u>APRIL 2024 BQA TIP</u>

By Dr. Jason Banta, Beef Cattle - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



TEXAS A&M GRILIFE EXTENSION

The Importance of Hay Storage:

- Hay storage will impact how much hay is needed and the cost of the hay feeding program. Strategies to reduce storage loss will vary some based on annual rainfall.
- In most environments, round bales stored outside should be stacked in long rows with the flat ends butted against each other. At least 3 feet should be left between rows to allow sunlight and wind to dry the bales out quicker after it rains. Hay should not be stacked under trees as this delays drying. Storage sites with well drain soils will help reduce loss on the bottom of bales.

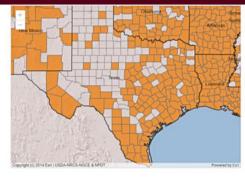
*Beef Quality Assurance monthly tips can be found on the Texas Beef Quality website along with additional resources that include the Texas Beef Quality Assurance Handbook, Group Processing / Treatment Map, & upcoming BQA events.

> For more information: <u>https://texasbeefquality.org</u>

RANGELAND PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Stacy L. Hines, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Rangeland Habitat Management Specialist



Distribution Map Credit: USDA Plants Database @ plants.usda.gov

Sorrel Distribution

Sorrel species are found throughout most of Texas. There are ~10-12 species in TX. Some are native species and some are introduced.



Sorrel Species in South Texas

In South Texas, there åre 5 common sorrel species.

- 1. <u>Creeping Lady's Sorrel</u>has small yellow flowers and the leaflets fold in on themselves.
- 2. <u>Penny Leaf Wood Sorrel</u> is the only Oxalis species in Texas with simple, nonclover-like, leaves.
- 3. Drummond's Wood Sorrel leaves are very narrow and it has purple flowers.
- 4. Narrow Leaf Shrubby Wood Sorrel has many leaflets- the leaves are pinnately compound.
- 5. Yellow Wood Sorrel is resistant to herbicides, such as 2,4-D, that can be effective to control other sorrel species- see link under management section for more details.

Sorrel

Oxalis species



Plant Identification Tips

Sorrel, or woodsorrel, species are small, clover-like plants. It is estimated that there are 10-12 different species that grow in Texas. Like clovers, the leaves are made up of three, heart-shaped leaflets. Unlike clover, sorrel species grow more upright, like a small bunch or bouquet of clover-like leaves. Sorrels are commonly referred to as a shamrock plant.

The small flowers are made up of five petals. Many sorrel species have yellow flowers, but some are different colors, such as purple.

Check out the Neighborhood Plant Video on Sorrel

Livestock & Wildlife Value



Sorrels provide forage for many wildlife species, including pollinators, birds, and mammals. In North America, sorrel is rarely a problem for livestock, but has been associated with livestock poisoning in Australia.



Management

Some species of sorrels can become pests in gardens. Sorrels produce seeds in capsules that burst open, throwing the seeds away from the parent plant. Check out this link for management tips on pre-emergent and post emergent herbicides.

Parts of this article were derived from: Richardson & King. 2011. Plants of Deep South Texas. Oxalis species. USDA Plants Database.

Stacy L. Hines, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Rangeland Habitat Management Specialist 361-265-9203| stacy.hines@ag.tamu.edu

UNDERSTANDING FORAGE QUALITY ANALYSIS

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Sandra R. Stokes¹ and Eric P. Prostko²

Many dairy producers in Texas do not have the land to grow their own forages. Consequently, they rely on both local and out-of-state farmers for supplies. This gives Texas forage producers an excellent opportunity to expand their markets into the dairy industry.

To take advantage of this opportunity, both dairy and forage producers need more information about the terms associated with forage quality analysis. Understanding forage quality analysis should improve the marketing relationship between dairy producers and forage growers. By collectively developing a suitable price for a forage crop, both parties can benefit.

METHODS OF FORAGE QUALITY ANALYSIS

There are two methods used to analyze forage samples in a laboratory. These include the traditional wet chemistry analysis and the newer, near-infrared reflectance spectroscopy (NIRS) analysis. Wet chemistry analysis, based upon well-established chemical principles, uses chemicals and drying agents to determine the components of a forage. NIRS analysis is a computerized method of forage analysis that uses near-infrared light to determine forage quality. Although NIRS analysis is faster and less costly, there is debate on the complete accuracy and interpretation of the analysis, particularly if a sample contains a mixture of forage species or if the machines are not calibrated with the same species from the same area.

FORAGE QUALITY PARAMETERS

While most dairy producers are familiar with detailed forage quality analysis, many forage producers are not. This is primarily because forage producers have been traditionally paid on the basis of tonnage produced. Understanding quality factors is a key to marketing forages to dairies. Forage quality indicators important to dairy producers include protein, neutral detergent fiber (NDF), acid detergent fiber (ADF), net energy for lactation (NEI), and relative feed value (RFV).

¹ Extension Dairy Specialist ² Extension Agronomist

The Texas A&M University System

ATEXAS A&M GRILIFE EXTENSION

Protein

Crude protein (CP) can be a significant nutrient component of forages, particularly legumes. Unfortunately, many producers (both dairy and forage) use this value as a sole indicator of quality. Laboratories measure the nitrogen (N) content of a forage and calculate crude protein using the formula CP = %N x 6.25. Generally, forages harvested at early vegetative stages of growth have higher crude protein contents than more mature forages harvested at (or later than) flowering stages.

Fiber

Plant fiber consists of three components: cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin. The primary source of ration fiber comes from forages. As the fiber content of a forage generally increases its energy content decreases. The dairy cow needs a minimum amount of fiber to maintain good rumen function by stimulating cud chewing, rumen movement, and the production of saliva for buffering. The forage variety and its stage of maturity at harvest influence the fiber content of the crop.

The traditional measure of energy content in feed stuffs was total digestible nutrient (TDN) content. However, this is a vague term and does not accurately describe the plant's available energy. Because a better indicator of energy was needed, a new system was developed for feedstuff analysis. The detergent analysis system was developed to separate the cell solubles (starch, protein, sugars) from the fibrous portion (structural support for the plant). The soluble portion provides most of the energy, while the fibrous portion may limit intake. The fibrous portion is separated into two components, NDF and ADF, which nutritionists use to more accurately formulate dairy rations.

Neutral Detergent Fiber measures all the fiber found in forage (hemicellulose, cellulose, and lignin). The NDF fraction is partially digestible, depending on forage species and stage of maturity. Bulk density and NDF are positively correlated, so forage and ration NDF levels are used to predict feed intake. A high NDF content in forages

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For more information: <u>https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu</u> - Publications

UNDERSTANDING FORAGE QUALITY ANALYSIS

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - (Continued)

not only decreases intake, but limits the effectiveness of a forage in supporting high milk production.

Acid Detergent Fiber measures the cellulose and lignin content in the plant. ADF is also partially digestible. Both animal and laboratory trials have shown that increasing ADF levels decrease fiber digestion. Because of this negative relationship between ADF and digestibility, low ADF is desirable. Factors increasing forage ADF content include increasing maturity, weathering, rain damage, high temperatures and weeds.

Of the fiber fractions (hemicellulose, cellulose, lignin), cellulose is the major one digested by the animal. However, lignin can bind up the cellulose fraction and lower digestibility. This is a concern with southern-grown forages, as high temperatures during the growing season increase plant lignification. The higher the concentration of lignin, the less digestible the fiber will be. For example, compare two forages having similar ADF contents (30%). Forage A is 25% cellulose and 5% lignin, while forage B is only 20% cellulose but 10% lignin. Forage A, containing the lower percentage of lignin, is more digestible and can support greater milk production.

Net Energy for Lactation

This is a calculated value to estimate the energy available to support milk production. This calculation is based on a formula that includes the results of ADF analysis. Net energy is expressed in terms of megacalories per unit of feed. Different equations are used around the country, so caution is required when comparing the NEI of feeds tested at different locations.

Relative Feed Value

A number of factors must be considered to accurately evaluate forage quality. Analyze forages for CP, NDF, and ADF, as well as for mineral content. While each is used directly in the formulation of dairy rations, comparing several forages for quality rank can be confusing. Relative Feed Value is an index (no units attached to values) which combines digestibility and intake potential into one number. The RFV system was developed for comparing forages on the basis of energy. The RFV ranks a forage relative to full bloom alfalfa (full bloom alfalfa is considered to have a RFV equal to 100). For example, a forage with a RFV of 120 contains 20 percent more energy than mature alfalfa. The digestibility and potential intake values are determined from ADF and NDF analysis. Previously, crude protein was also included; however, it was removed from the equation because of its low correlation with digestibility and intake and its considerable variability. Also, protein is much more easily manipulated in the dairy ration than fiber digestibility.

Forages ranked by RFV are assigned a quality grade ranging from prime (highest) through grade 5 (lowest). Values for bermudagrass need to be used with caution, as a high RFV does not always equate to high levels of milk production. Also be careful comparing values from different sources, as there are several different equations for calculating RFV.

Table 1. Hay grades and their relative feed values (RFV)		
Grade	RFV	
Prime	>151	
1	125-151	
2	103-124	
3	87-102	
4	75-86	
5	<75	

SUMMARY

Putting forage quality analysis into use with commercial dairy rations can be complicated. Many environmental and management factors affect forage quality. However, forage quality is critical to the dairy producer as it drives the feed supplementation program and the resulting milk production.

Forage quality should be determined only through analysis from a reputable laboratory. Important quality factors to consider include CP, NDF, and ADF. Both dairy and forage producers must understand forage quality analysis. The dairy producer must know the nutritional content of a particular forage crop to develop the best possible feeding strategies. The forage producer must understand forage quality analysis to grow forage that dairies are willing to pay for. Table 2 summarizes the target nutrient parameters for common forages grown in Central Texas for dairy rations.

Table 2. Targeted nutrient content (dry matter basis) of selected forages for dairy rations.				
Feed	CP %	NDF %	ADF %	
Alfalfa hay	20	40	30	
Bermudagrass hay	14–16	65	30	
Corn silage	8	51	28	
Sorghum silage	6-8	63-69	33-38	
Wheat silage	12	49-57	27-34	

For more information: https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu - Publications

APR 2, 2024 TEXAS CROP & WEATHER REPORT

Texas fruit growers cautiously optimistic about yields

While it is too early to tell about the impact of chill hours for fruits grown in higher chill areas of the state, current conditions are good for the low-to-mid chill areas, said <u>Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service</u> experts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILLING OUT

Larry Stein, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension horticulturist and professor in the <u>Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life</u> <u>Sciences Department of Horticultural Sciences</u>, Uvalde, said fruit trees like peaches and apples depend on cool, cloudy weather in the winter to promote proper physiological growth in the spring. Stein said fruit growers in most areas of the state were "cautiously optimistic" that chill hours and other conditions are and will continue to be favorable for this year's fruit crop. Fruit growers in different regions of the state have plants with different chilling requirements, he said. Orchards along and near the Gulf Coast might have trees that require 200-300 chill hours, while trees in the Winter Garden region need about 400-500 hours, and varieties in the Hill Country and North Texas might require 700-1,000 hours. "If plants do not receive the required number of chill hours, they can be slow to leaf out, which typically leads to poorly developed fruit or no fruit at all," he said.

Stein said chill hours begin to add up after the first freeze each fall. Trees go dormant for the winter, but chill hours promote hormones that dilute growth inhibitors throughout the winter and prepare the plant to break dormancy and begin new growth, bloom and set fruit. Typically, temperatures between 32 degrees and 50 degrees can meet the chilling requirements of many fruit plants, with the most effective temperature range being 32 degrees to 45 degrees.

SEEING DOUBLES

Stein said chill hours have been sufficient in the mid-to-low chill areas, but were marginal in the higher chill areas, with a lot of growers reporting "doubles" on plant blooms. Doubles, also called conjoined fruits, are not an uncommon occurrence, especially in stone fruit, with some fruit varieties more prone to it than others. "Doubles or multiple fruit come about as the result of stress during the flower initiation stage, which would have been May and June of 2023," he said. "These doubles seem to be the consensus when talking to area producers, with some saying they are getting three and four fruit from a single bloom."

Irregular or inadequate watering has also been identified as a likely cause of fruit splitting and doubling. "Consumers usually consider conjoined fruits less visually appealing," Stein said. "For producers, sometimes the extra piece of fruit is so small as to be insignificant and can be safely removed without harming the main fruit. To avoid the conjoined fruit, producers typically thin their fruit trees to get as many double or multiple fruits back to singles as possible."

For more information: AgriLife Today - Farm & Ranch

CROP & WEATHER

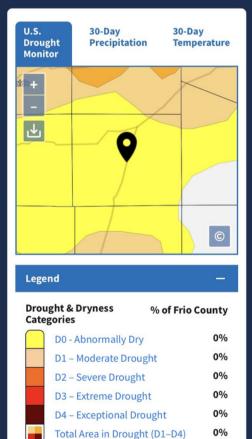
CONTINUED-

GROWTH REGULATORS AND CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Jim Kamas, AgriLife Extension fruit specialist based in Fredericksburg, said many fruit growers in the Hill Country and Central Texas, where chill hours were marginal, have benefited from the use of a chemical growth regulator that mimics chill hours. "This helped the fruit plants to overcome insufficient chilling, and the extra effort and expense for these producers paid off," he said.

The use of these growth regulators helped many producers get to this point, but Kamas said the real elephant in the room when it comes to overall fruit production is drought. "We are hearing that our brief and disappointing El Niño event is over and that the forecast is to be hot and dry," he said. "The soil moisture is currently adequate for fruit crops as the fruit trees develop and expand canopy, but as the temperatures become warmer, drought could soon become a problem for producers."

If the hot, dry weather arrives early, fruit producers may be at risk for lower yields, misshaped fruit with lower market appeal, and possibly delayed or inconsistent harvests. "They also have to hope that spring thunderstorms do not hinder the progress of their fruit production," he said.



Current Conditions for Frio County

Weekly Crop Report - South Region

Conditions were favorable, with enough rain to encourage planting row crops and to allow pastures to green up. More rain was needed to help those pastures fully recover. Strawberry production was in full swing. Corn crops emerged while wheat and oat crops were in the dough stage. Onions and citrus were being harvested. Most cotton has been planted. Producers were busy spraying weeds, fertilizing pastures and planting hay grazers. Local beef cattle markets were sustaining average to aboveaverage offerings of cattle with notable price increases for all classes of beef cattle. Wildlife was doing well.

FARM & RANCH - agrilifetoday.tamu.edu

TEXAS A&M CREEEENSION EXTENSION MULTI-COUNTY WATER WELL SCREENING

HOSTED BY: ATASCOSA, DIMMIT, FRIO, LA SALLE, MCMULLEN & ZAVALA COUNTIES

Have you tested your private Water well?

Private water wells should be tested annually. The Multi-County Water Screening Program is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, McMullen, LaSalle, and Zavala counties. The offices are hosting a water well screening on April 17, 2024 to give area residents the opportunity to have their well water tested. The cost is \$15.00 per sample.

Samples will be collected on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Well owners may pick up a sample bag and instructions from their County Extension Office.

- Atascosa County AgriLife Extension Office, 25 E. 5th Street, Leming, TX 78050 | P: (830) 569-0034
- Dimmit County AgriLife Extension Office, 539 Industrial Blvd., Carrizo Springs, TX 78834 | P: (830) 876-4216
- Frio County AgriLife Extension Office, 400 S. Pecan Street, Pearsall, TX 78061 | P: (830) 505-7474
- McMullen County AgriLife Extension Office, 604 River Street, Tilden, TX 78072 | P: (361) 274-3323
- Zavala County AgriLife Extension Office, 221 N 1st Ave, Crystal City, TX 78839 | P: (830) 374-2883
- La Salle County AgriLife Extension Office, 119 S. Front Street, Cotulla, TX 78014 | P: (830) 483-5165

Results will be available on April 18, 2024, at your County Extension Office. There will be a virtual educational program to discuss water quality presented by Extension Specialist Joel Pigg.

Samples will be screened for:

Fecal Coliform Bacteria

Presence indicates that feces (bodily waste from humans or animals) may have contaminated the water. Water contaminated with this bacteria is more likely to have pathogens present that can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea or other symptoms.

Nitrates

Levels above 10 ppm may cause infants, pregnant or lactating women, the

elderly, and the immune-suppressed to be at risk for methemoglobinemia, a

condition which inhibits the ability of blood to sufficient carry oxygen to tissues and cells.

Salinity

Measured by Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). Water with high TDS levels may leave deposits and have a salty taste. Using water with high TDS for irrigation may damage the soil or plants.

Hydrocarbons

Presence indicates that oil contamination has occurred



UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS IN YOUR DRINKING WATER & PROTECTING YOUR WELL HEAD

HOSTED BY: FRIO, ATASCOSA, LA SALLE, MCMULLEN, DIMMIT, & ZAVALA COUNTIES

<u>WHEN</u>: **Thursday, April 18, 2024.**



Γεχάς Α&Ν

FNSION

<u>WHERE</u>: Frio County Extension office at 6:00p.m.

<u>TOPICS</u>: Bacteria Contaminates, Saline Levels, Hydrocarbons, Nitrates, Recommendations for each positive element. Attendees will be able to understand what is in their drinking water and learn how to protect their well head.

SPEAKER- DR. JOEL PIGG, EXTENSION PROGRAM SPECIALIST, COLLEGE STATION, TX.

For More Information: Brianna Gonzales, Frio County Extension Agent, (830) 505-7474 or <u>brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu</u>.

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Texas Olive Conference 2024

Friday, May 3rd 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Presented by the Texas Association of Olive Oil Hosted by High Pasture Olives at Dogleg Ranch (2724 Kyle Ranch Road, Bandera, TX 78003)

For more information, agenda & registration, please visit

www.txaoo.org

Note - Registration deadline is April 30, 2024

Contact us at info@txaoo.com



2024 MULTI-COUNTY REPRODUCTION MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

ATASCOSA, WILSON, FRIO, MEDINA, MCMULLEN, LIVE OAK, AND BEXAR COUNTIES

Location:

Tom Brothers Ranch

770 Co Rd 412 Campbellton, TX 78008 Date/Time:

May 7th 9:00 am — 2:00 pm

Taught By:

Bruce Carpenter, Professor & Extension Livestock Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Ft. Stockton

Karl Harborth, Assistant Professor and Extension Livestock Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Center Corpus Christi

Yuri Calil, Assistant Professor & Extension Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Center Corpus ChristiCorpus Christi

Atascosa, Wilson, Bexar, Frio, Live Oak, McMullen, and Medina County Extension Agents Ag/NR

SPACE IS LIMITED SO SIGN UP EARLY!! RSVP BY: May 3, 2024 to (830) 569-0034

TOPICS

Understanding The Bull Breeding Soundness Exam

Breeding Soundness Exam Procedural Example

A Bull's Value to the Calf Crop

Nutritional Requirements for Bull Maintenance

Bull Selection



For more information:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Atascosa County Office Dale Rankin (830) 569-0034

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

Dimmit, Frio, Kinney, Medina, Uvalde and Zavala Counties Present

Online Soil Education Workshop

Date: May 7, 2024

Time: 6 PM

Zoom Link: <u>https://agrilife.zoom.us/j/914794811</u> <u>61?</u> <u>pwd=YjhGZE5wdzBvOC9JMjVPbVp</u> <u>BToFjQT09</u>

TEXAS A&M

<u>Speaker:</u> Dr. Jake Mowrer- Extension Associate Professor- Soil and Crop Sciences

<u>Topics to be discussed:</u> Proper sampling techniques

- Importance of soil sampling
- Results interpretation
- Choosing the right fertilizer
- Fertilizer calculator
- When and how to apply fertilizer

Educational Programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact Zavala County AgriLife Extension office at least a week in advance of the meeting to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

MAY 9, 2024 COWBOY FELLOWSHIP 561 FM 3350 JOURDANTON, TX 78026



THIS PILOT PROJECT OPPORTUNITY IS OPEN TO THE FOLLOWING COUNTIES: ATASCOSA, BEXAR, FRIO, KARNES, AND WILSON

Agenda

7:30 a.m.	Registration	
8 a.m.	Soil Health: Why Does it Matter	
9 a.m.	Introduction to Soil Health Principles	Register Here
	Protect the Soil	,
	Encourage Diversity	
	Keep Living Roots in the Soil	
	Optimize Disturbance	
	Integrate Livestock Grazing	
	Rainfall Simulator	
Noon	Lunch Provided	
1 p.m.	Grazing Management	
	Estimating Forage with the RAP	
	Setting the Stocking Rate	
	Estimating Animal Demand	
	Stocking Rate vs. Carrying Capacity	
	Grazing Strategies vs. Grazing Systems	
	Effective Use of Available Practices	

PRIORITY POINTS IN EQIP RANKING FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF CLASS



ISDA

Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management





TEXAS A&M GRILIFE EXTENSION



100/

*Join our mailing list! For more information please contact:

Brianna G. Gonzales

Frio County Extension Agent, at (830) 505-7474 <u>brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu</u>

Website: <u>https://frio.agrilife.org/agriculture-natural-resources/</u>

Frio County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension