



**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 Bi-Monthly newsletter beginning August 2022. 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 [www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu](http://www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu). 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 on-going 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: The Cattleman, TSCRA, The Peanut Grower, AgriLife Today, Aggie Horticulture, and the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Browsing, 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) 334-0099, located at 400 S. Pecan St. Pearsall, Texas, or e-mail [brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu). Visit the Frio County AgriLife Extension website at <https://frio.agrilife.org>.



Sincerely,

**Brianna G. Gonzales**  
**County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
**Frio County**

# **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION**

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## **Helpful Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Websites:**

- [agrilifeextension.tamu.edu](http://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu)
- [texaswater.tamu.edu](http://texaswater.tamu.edu)
- [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu)
- [livestockvetento.tamu.edu](http://livestockvetento.tamu.edu)
- [animalscience.tamu.edu](http://animalscience.tamu.edu)
- [texashelp.tamu.edu](http://texashelp.tamu.edu)
- [SouthTexasRangelands.tamu.edu](http://SouthTexasRangelands.tamu.edu)



## BQA TIP

### **MONITORING WATER SUPPLY:**

- It is always important to make sure cattle have access to a quality water source. If water troughs are used make sure they are in the shade if possible or large enough to prevent water from getting hot. Make sure troughs are big enough to allow multiple animals to easily drink at one time. Increased water intake during hot weather is one way cattle help cool themselves. If pond water levels are low, ponds may need to be fenced off to prevent cattle from getting stuck. Due to evaporation pond levels can drop quickly during droughts or hot, dry conditions.

***For more information please visit:***

***<https://texasbeefquality.com/bqa-tips/>***

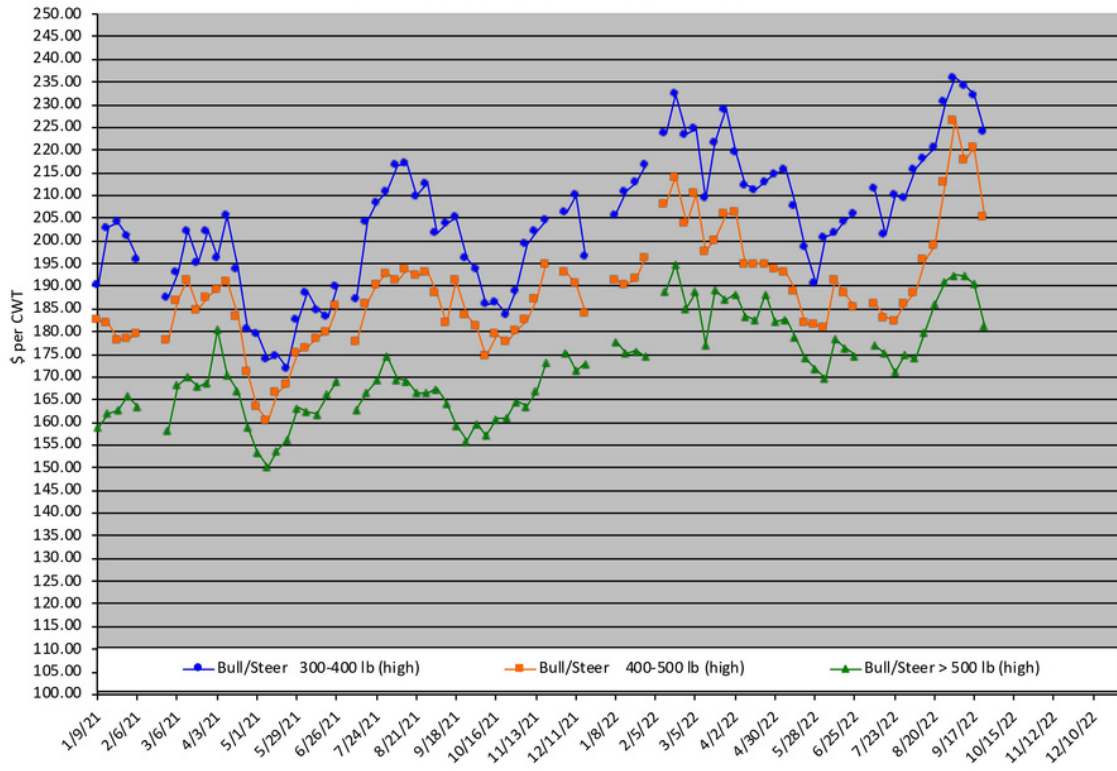
# Beef Fax:

Have you been keeping up with beef cattle prices lately? Below are the cattle price trends for the week ending 9/24/22. The graphs show the average of the highest prices reported for 6 livestock auction markets located in East and Central Texas. *For more information:* <https://beeffax.tamu.edu>

## Calf Price Trends

Trend of the Highest Price Reported for Various Weight Calves, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

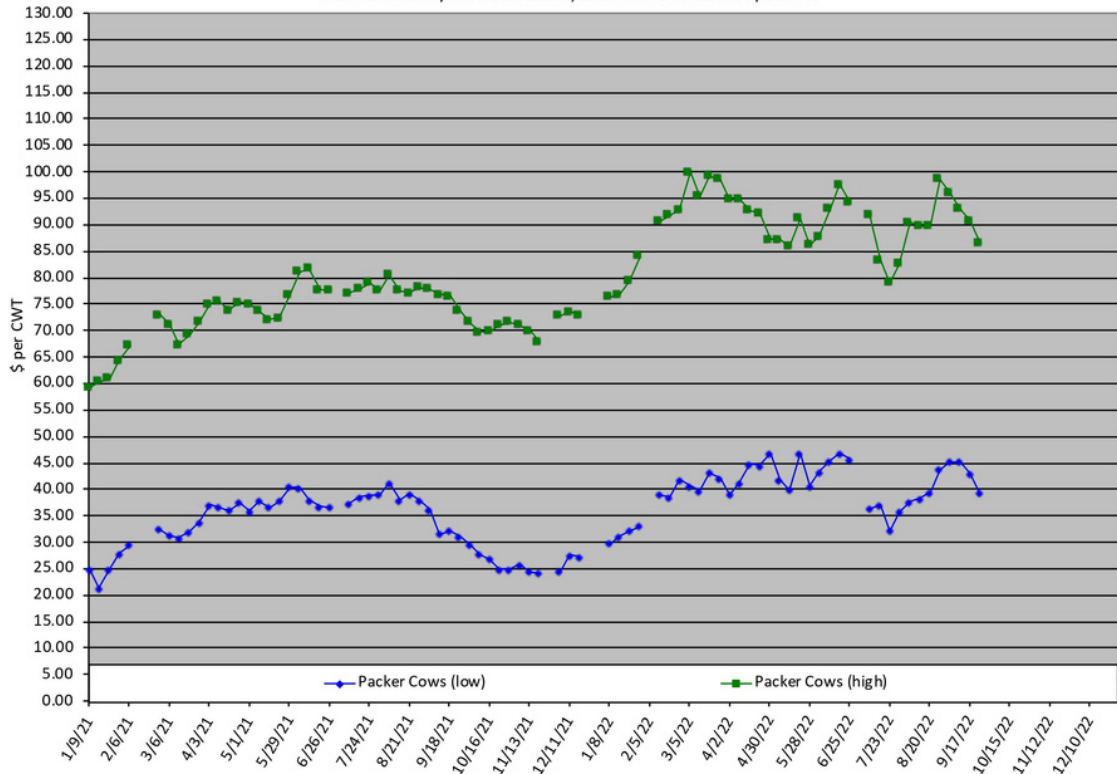
For a weekly email copy of this chart please subscribe at <http://beeffax.tamu.edu> or contact a Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension Agent  
Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist



## Packer Cow Price Trends

Trend of High and Low Prices Reported for Packer Cows, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

For a weekly email copy of this chart please subscribe at <http://beeffax.tamu.edu> or contact a Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension Agent  
Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist



# Fall Armyworm Control in Pastures

Dalton C. Ludwick, Sonja L. Swiger, and David L. Kerns  
Extension Entomologists, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

## Biology and Damage

There are two strains of fall armyworms (FAW): the corn strain and the grass strain. The corn strain usually appears in the spring and early summer and feeds on crops such as corn, sorghum, and cotton. The grass strain, which is the strain that infests hay fields and pastures, generally shows up after significant rain events from mid-July through fall. The corn strain is known for being resistant to pyrethroids, while the grass strain is susceptible to pyrethroids. FAW caterpillars survive and develop better in areas with fertilized or well-watered grasses which can lead to outbreak scenarios. Multiple generations can occur in a short time-period.

FAW caterpillars live for two to four weeks depending on the temperature. Freshly emerged caterpillars will begin to feed on the leaves and make small transparent areas (windowpanes; Fig. 1) giving the grass a frosted appearance. As they grow and molt, the caterpillars will begin to consume the entire leaf. The larger the caterpillar, the more damage they cause. Smaller caterpillars are easier to control. During their last few days as a caterpillar, when they are 1-1.5" in length, they consume about 80% of all the leaf tissue they will consume in their lifetime.



Figure 1. Window-paning by FAW caterpillars. Image by Holly Davis.

## Identification and Scouting

FAW caterpillars are primarily identifiable by two features. The head will have apparent white markings that form an upside down "Y" pattern (Fig. 2). The second feature is that the last couple segments of the caterpillar will have black bumps that form a square or rectangle.

There are multiple methods that are available to scout for FAW caterpillars. The more common method is to get on your hands and knees and closely inspect the grass. During hot days, check the lower parts of the plant or soil surface where they may be hiding from the harsh temperatures. Sweep nets are a very good and easy to use tool for sampling for FAW in tall grass (Fig. 3). Another method is to run your hands across a 1-2 square foot area and knock the caterpillars



Figure 3. FAW caterpillars in a sweep net. Image by Gus Lorenz, University of

# **Fall Armyworm Control in Pastures (cont.)**

to the soil surface. Then, simply inspect the soil for dislodged caterpillars.

Regardless of the scouting method, take note of the size of the caterpillars. Smaller caterpillars (<1/2 inch) are less damaging. Larger caterpillar (>1/2 inch) should be treated soon to prevent greater damage. If using a sweep net, then treat at 2 or more caterpillars 1/2 inch or larger per sweep. If making visual inspections, then treat if you have 2 or more FAW caterpillars per square foot. If you are picking up larger numbers of small caterpillars, then treatment is also justified. Most of the time fields are either well below or well above threshold.

## **Control Options**

If the grass is being used for hay and is near harvest, then harvest early to prevent extra feeding damage. However, be aware that the caterpillars may consume the cut hay, so this is not always a wise option.

Insecticide applications should be made early in the morning or late in the evening if possible, to ensure caterpillars come into contact with insecticide. During hotter parts of the day, caterpillars may be out of the canopy and avoid maximum insecticide exposure.

There are many insecticides that can be used to control FAW caterpillars. Pyrethroids are relatively cheap and readily available. These insecticides take roughly three days to achieve maximum effectiveness against small and large caterpillars. Pyrethroid insecticides tend to have a short residual period and can be washed off by rains. This lack of rain fast protection can be a problem with the recent weather and possible overlapping generations of fall armyworm caterpillars. Addition of a product like Dimilin (or generic products with diflubenzuron) can increase the residual control period to 10-12 days, eliminating caterpillars that emerge in that timeframe. Neither pyrethroids nor Dimilin will continue providing control if rain occurs though. Another fairly inexpensive option is Intrepid (or generic products with methoxyfenozide). This product will provide residual control for about 7 days, but it must be eaten to kill the caterpillar and is not rain fast.

If rain is a continuous issue, the only truly rain fast options are products such as Prevathon, Vantacor, or Besiege. All of these products contain the active ingredient chlorantraniliprole, but Besiege also contains a pyrethroid. These products are absorbed by the leaf tissue and are rain fast upon drying. While these products are more expensive, they do provide excellent residual activity and will persist longer at the higher rate. For example, Prevathon at 14 fl-oz/ac will typically provide 14 days control, and a 20 fl-oz/ac rate will provide 20-21 days of control.

*\*For additional questions about FAW control, please reach out to your local County Extension Agent, IPM Agent, or Extension Entomologist. Always use an insecticide according to the label. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is not responsible for insecticide applications, damages, or other issues encountered.*

# DOVE



TAYLOR, B., D. ROLLINS, J. JOHNSON, J. ROBERSON, T. W. SCHWERTNER, N. J. SILVY, AND R. J. LINEX. 2006. DOVE MANAGEMENT IN TEXAS. TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION B-6185, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS, USA.

*Doves are some of the most well-known game birds in the state. Dove hunting is a great gateway into the world of hunting and is enjoyed by thousands of Texans annually. It is important that hunters and land managers understand the basic biology and ecology of this popular game bird so that we can ensure they continue to be abundant in the in the future.*

## **Identification**

At first glance the mourning and white-winged doves look very similar, but several key characteristics distinguish them.



**Mourning Dove**

- Long tapered tail
- Slightly smaller than white-winged dove
- Faster wing beat, more erratic flight pattern than white-winged dove



**White-winged Dove**

- Medium-long rounded tail
- Slightly larger than mourning dove
- Black wingtips, white bar on top of wings

## **Food**

Mourning dove feed mainly on hard-coated seeds, which must be present on the surface of the ground because dove will not scratch or dig for food. This means that land owners who wish to attract doves to their harvested grain fields should not immediately till the fields. White-winged dove also feed on fruits (mast) in addition to the seeds that mourning dove prefer. The following is a list of some of the common seed producing plant species that dove prefer.

### **Woody**

- Hackberry
- Pricklyash
- Sumac
- Wolfberry
- Bumelia

### **Grasses**

- Switch grass
- Panic grasses
- Plains bristlegass
- Yellow Indian grass

### **Forbs**

- Annual sunflower
- Croton (dove weed)
- Western ragweed
- Pigweed
- Snow-on-the-mountain

# DOVE



TAYLOR, B., D. ROLLINS, J. JOHNSON, J. ROBERSON, T. W. SCHWERTNER, N. J. SILVY, AND R. J. LINEX. 2006. DOVE MANAGEMENT IN TEXAS. TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION B-6185, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS, USA. (CONTINUED)

## Habitat requirements

Doves, like any animals, require food, water, cover, and space. Because doves have such a large distribution, the habitats they utilize to meet these requirements are varied. Still, some basic trends can be seen throughout their distribution.

## Water

Water can be a major dove attractant, especially during drought years when shallow stock tanks dry up across the state. Water sources should be no more than 4 miles apart and deep enough to outlast droughts. Water sources located between roosting and feeding areas may see higher utilization by doves than water sources unassociated with feeding or roosting areas. There are several things you can do to make your water sources more attractive to doves:

- Make water troughs overflow a little bit so that doves can drink at ground-level
- Clear vegetation from around stock tanks, doves prefer exposed shorelines
- Situate water sources around a tall perch (tree or power line) or plant a tree near an existing water source that will grow into a good perch tree
- Floating platforms or ramps can make open water troughs usable for doves
- 

## Nesting

Mourning dove can be found nesting everywhere from man made structures such as light poles and storefront letters to trees and even the ground in some regions. They nest in isolated pairs, with both genders sharing nesting duties. Nests usually consist of 2 eggs. Incubation lasts for about 14 days. Squabs, as the young are called, are fed crop milk from both parents early on and then are weaned onto regurgitated seeds. Squabs can leave the nest after as few as ten to fourteen days, but remain nearby for a few more days. Depending on the weather, mourning doves can nest year-round, making up to 5 nesting attempts a year.

White-winged doves have similar nesting strategies, except they typically nest in colonies, only occasionally nesting in isolated pairs. Nesting sites can be anything from native brush to cultivated trees. They generally attempt 2 nests a year, with the nesting season lasting from April till July/ August.

For hunting regulations visit: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/regulations/outdoor-annual/>

**For More Information Please Visit:**  
**<https://wildlife.tamu.edu/>**

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# OCTOBER CHECKLIST

Dr. Larry Stein

- There is still time to divide and reset such perennials as phlox, violets, hollyhocks, irises, day lilies, and shasta daisies.
- October is a good time to reduce the insect and disease potential in next year's garden. Clean up the garden, removing all annuals that have completed their life cycle. Remove the tops of all herbaceous perennials that have finished flowering or as soon as frost has killed the leaves.
- Holly plants with a heavy set of fruit often suffer a fertilizer deficiency. An application of complete fertilizer late this month can be helpful and provide a head start next spring.
- Plant seeds of sweet peas in south and east Texas during October/November. Select a site where there is at least a half-day of sun and protection from north winds.
- Now is prime time to scatter wildflower seed; remember to put them in sunny locations. Also, since wildflowers could technically be called weeds, you will have to remove other weeds from around them in order for them to get established.
- Be on the lookout for turf diseases and treat accordingly. Remember to reduce water frequency as temperatures begin to cool. Also, now is good time to "winterize" your lawn with a fertilizer like 19 – 5 – 9.
- Strawberries can continue to be planted; the goal is to establish the plants and carry them through the winter for fruiting next spring. Remove runners and/or fruit as they form.
- Container ornamental trees and shrubs can be planted if there is good soil moisture. If exceedingly dry, one may want to wait for the fall rains.
- Citrus will begin to color as the temperatures cool. Most times the fruit does not need to be totally orange to have good eating quality.
- Prime time to plant cool season crops; transplants best on cole crops, but spinach is best direct seeded.

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**Learn more: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>**



# **Frio County AgriLife Extension Program Highlights: 2022 South Texas Peanut Growers Annual Peanut Tour**



**The 2022 South Texas Peanut Growers Annual Peanut Tour was held on Thursday, September 22, 2022 in Pearsall, Tx. Over 25 agricultural producers were in attendance and had the opportunity to tour Tech & Gary Boyd Farms. At the tours, peanut varieties and peanut herbicide trials were discussed by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialists. Huge thank you to our peanut team Dr. John Cason- Assistant Professor of Peanut Genetics-Stephenville Research & Extension Center, Dr. Emi Kimura- Associate Professor, Extension Agronomist, and State Extension Peanut Specialist, Dr. Josh McGinty- Assistant Professor & Extension Agronomist Districts 11 & 12, Mr. James Grichar- Senior Research Scientist, Corpus Christi Research & Extension Center, Brianna Gonzales, Dale Rankin, and Teresa Mendieta- Frio & Atascosa AgriLife Extension Agents, Bennett Partnership, Bill Slomchinski Farms, Tech Farms, Wilmeth Farms, Gary Boyd Farms, South Texas Peanut Growers Association, and the Texas Peanut Producers Board for their continued support in making this annual peanut tour a great success!**



# How well is your **WELL?**



## **PRIVATE WATER WELL SCREENING**

*(Private water wells should be tested annually)*

**When:** Wednesday, October 12, 2022

**Where:** Frio County AgriLife Extension Office  
400 S. Pecan St. Pearsall, Texas

**Cost:** \$15.00 per sample  
**(Please bring samples in by 9:00 AM)**

### **Water Screening Results**

Friday, October 14, 2022 / After 4:00 PM

For More Info Contact: Brianna Gonzales at 830-334-0099

*(Samples screened for: Bacteria, Nitrates, Salinity, & Hydrocarbons)*

***\*For more information please contact:***  
**Brianna Gonzales-Frio County Extension Agent, at**  
**(830) 334-0099 or [brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu).**

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