



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 beginning January 2023. 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. 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: TSCRA, Texas Drought Monitor, 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) 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 <https://frio.agrilife.org>.



Sincerely,

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



Inside this issue:

- Monthly BQA Tip.....(Page 2)
- RANGE / Plant ID.....(Page 3)
- CROP & WEATHER, Frio County TX Drought Monitor.....(Pages 4-5)
- Why Should I Get My Soil Tested?.....(Page 6-7)
- Program Highlights & Result Demonstrations.....(Page 8-9)
- Turf Workshop Flyer.....(Page 10)
- Texas A&M BCSC.....(Page 11)
- Frio AgriLife Extension.....(Page 12)

Helpful Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Websites:

- agrilifeextension.tamu.edu
- texaswater.tamu.edu
- aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu
- livestockvetento.tamu.edu
- animalscience.tamu.edu
- texashelp.tamu.edu
- SouthTexasRangelands.tamu.edu



JULY BQA TIP

Poultry litter and livestock manure can be lower cost sources of phosphorus and potassium

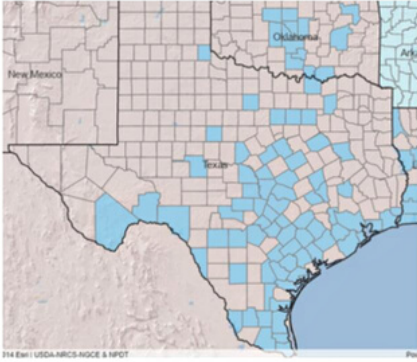
July BQA Tip From Dr. Jason Banta

- Poultry litter and livestock manure can be lower cost sources of phosphorus and potassium for pastures or hayfields that are low in these nutrients and not excessive in zinc, copper, or other minerals.
- However, once phosphorus and potassium levels have been built up to target levels, additional applications of poultry litter and livestock manure will likely not be cost effective.
- Additionally, over application of poultry litter and livestock manure can create mineral imbalances (e.g., an inverse Ca to P ratio in forages) and excessive levels of certain minerals that can reduce animal performance or even contribute to animal mortality.

***For more information please visit:
<https://texasbeefquality.com/bqa-tips/>
or animalscience.tamu.edu.***

RANGELAND PLANT IDENTIFICATION

By: Stacey Hines Ph. D., Assistant Professor, Rangeland Habitat Management Specialist



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

False Ragweed Distribution

False ragweed is often found along roadsides and on ranches throughout much of the central, eastern, and southern parts of Texas.



False Ragweed Look-a-Likes

There are several species that look like false ragweed. Read the descriptions and click on the links for images to learn how to tell false ragweed apart from a few of its look-a-likes.

1. Mariola (*Parthenium incanum*) leaves are not as deeply lobed or double lobed like false ragweed.
2. Gray's feverfew or Lyreleaf parthenium (*Parthenium confertum*) lobed leaf margins are crenate (rounded teeth).
3. Western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*) has double lobed leaves with more elongated, pointy tips and flowers are on long stalks.

During the vegetative state (without flowers), false ragweed looks similar to many ragweed (*Ambrosia*) species. The ribbed stem on false ragweed distinguishes it from these other ragweed (*Ambrosia*) species.

False Ragweed

Parthenium hysterophorus



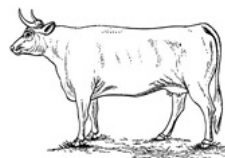
Flowers look like small cauliflower heads.

Deeply lobed leaves

Plant Identification Tips

False ragweed is a non-native, annual forb that grows up to 1.5-4' tall, but may reach heights of up to 6' tall. The leaves are deeply lobed, which is sometimes described as double-lobed. The leaves alternate on the stem.

The flowers look like miniature cauliflower heads. On each inflorescence, there are typically five small, white ray flowers that makes the shape of the flower look like a pentagon.



Livestock & Wildlife Value

No livestock or wildlife value found reported for this species.



Risk and Management

May cause allergic reactions in humans and livestock but is also being studied for its potential medicinal uses ([Patel 2011](#)). False ragweed produces a lot of seed that can be viable for 8-10 years in the soil. Plowing or discing can help control emerged plants, but there is a large seed bank in the soil that will require many years of repeated treatments. Pre-emergent herbicides, such as flumioxazin and oxadiazon, can provide longer-term control with multiple applications. Post-emergent herbicides, such as bentazon and diquat, may also be effective if applied while the plant is small and before it flowers. Some individual plants are resistant to glyphosate. [Click this link](#) for more details.

Parts of this article were derived from:

Richardson & King. 2011. *Plants of Deep South Texas*. Texas A&M University Press.

[Plants of Texas Rangelands Virtual Herbarium](#).

Stacy L. Hines, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Rangeland Habitat Management Specialist

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Texas cotton crop outlook uncertain

"Texas cotton growers whose crops held on through recent weather could find strong prices during a summer of uncertainty, according to a [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) expert."

John Robinson, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension cotton economist, Bryan-College Station, said the 2023 cotton season will be the most uncertain he has ever analyzed. This uncertainty will likely make prices volatile until the market has a good estimate of how many cotton bales will be produced. The uncertainty stems from the Jekyll and Hyde weather across Texas – the nation's top cotton-producing state – that has left early [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) planting estimates in shambles, Robinson said.

Texas had been mired in drought, and producers were not hopeful entering the warm-season crop planting period, which started in South Texas in February and March and ends in mid-June in the Panhandle. Producers became more optimistic after cotton was planted in South Texas, spring rains benefited the young crop and forecasts turned away from a La Niña pattern. But widespread rains that started around May 1 and consistently fell over the next month prevented many producers from the South Plains to Panhandle from planting cotton fields.

Fields that caught rainfall after producers planted seeds into dry soil delivered a mixed bag of results. Some stands emerged well while some young plants were drowned out by standing water and excess moisture levels in the soil, and some never emerged as the topsoil crusted over in the sun and heat following rains. Those issues were followed by severe storms that delivered flooding and widespread hail that damaged thousands of additional acres. One county in the Panhandle reported more than 5,000 acres of emerged cotton lost to hail.

Robinson said half to three-quarters of intended cotton acres in the Panhandle may not be harvested as cotton. Recent high temperatures have put cotton yields in South Texas in question. Temperatures in the upper 90s and exceeding 100 degrees arrived at a delicate time for cotton boll development. There were reports that plants were aborting bolls to survive, which could dramatically change the region's yield potential. "The weather has been strange, and how to aggregate the multiple factors that have created so many wrinkles of uncertainty is beyond me," he said. "Last year, it was drought, and we had a pretty good idea it was going to be bad, and the market could digest that information, but this is the most uncertain season I can remember."

Texas cotton crop creates uncertain market

The USDA estimated U.S. cotton acres to produce 16.5 million bales, based on prospective planting surveys earlier this year. Robinson said those surveys typically put the cotton estimate in the ballpark of what the overall crop result will eventually be. Texas has around 55% of the national cotton production acres and produces half the U.S. crop in a good year and one-third in a bad year. In a normal year, Robinson said the upcoming June 30 acreage report by the USDA would adjust the prospective planting report up or down based on new information. But this year, the picture in Texas is wildly unknown. "It's always challenging to forecast production at the state level because Texas is so big, but this year is the absolute most uncertain because of the extremes the potential crop has been through," he said. "The USDA has probably not accounted for what has been lost. How big is the Texas crop? I have no clue."

Robinson said there is less uncertainty about cotton crops outside Texas other than delayed plantings along the Mississippi Delta due to wetness. Some analysts believe actual planted acres may be lower than prospective planting estimates in the Southeast and California due to historically high corn prices. But there is no way to say losses in Texas might be made up elsewhere, he said. That uncertainty could lead to volatile cotton prices until September, when the USDA will have survey data from certified acres. "Cotton prices have been below 80 cents per pound, and I would think this type of change would mark an increase in prices," he said. "I wouldn't be surprised to see cotton over 90 cents, but I would be surprised if it stayed there. I don't expect prices will be stable with this much uncertainty."

Growers can expect opportunity, volatile prices

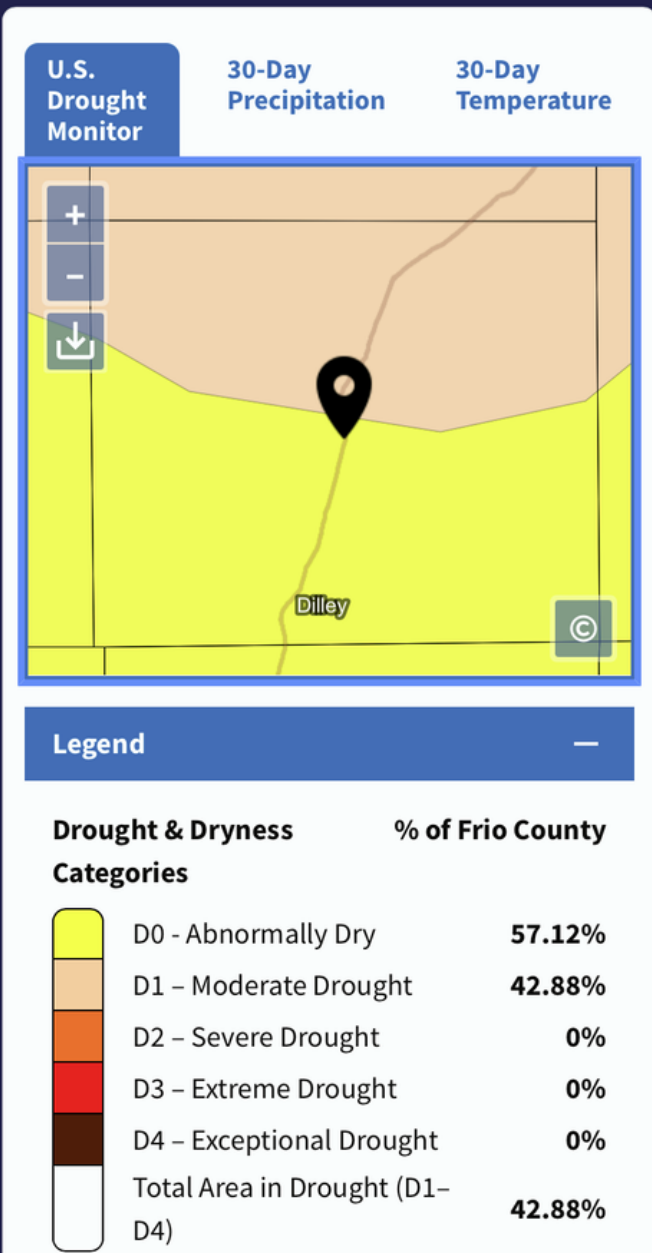
Uncertainty can drive price speculation, but speculation is likely to trigger roller coaster prices throughout the season, Robinson said.

Last year, three out of four cotton acres in Texas were not harvested, he said. The market reached \$1.50 per pound in May and June before falling 50 cents and then rising again to around \$1.15 per pound by late summer. Yet, when the 2022 crop production was clearer, prices settled down in the 80-cent per pound range.

Robinson said price increases are good news for Texas growers with crop potential. He doubts 80 cents per pound is a breakeven price due to inflation on inputs like seed, fertilizer, management chemicals and diesel. Growers should lock in at prices they feel will be profitable for their operation, he said.

“The market will live with uncertainty all summer long, and there should be an opportunity or two for good prices,” he said. “But you don’t want to be holding on when the air goes out of the balloon.”

Current Conditions for Frio County



Weekly Crop Report - South Region

Topsoil and subsoil conditions had deteriorated due to the heat wave. All crops were under irrigation due to high temperatures and no rainfall. Every facet of agriculture was suffering due to the extreme heat. Cotton crops continued to develop under irrigation and were in the blooming stage. Corn crops were reaching maturity and in the denting stage. Hay grazer and Bermuda grass fields were being cut and baled. Wildlife and cattle were finding enough to eat to maintain good body condition but could need supplemental feeding soon. Pasture and rangeland grasses burned up rapidly, and some producers were already beginning to supplemental feed. Ponds were beginning to dry up. Producers had to supply livestock with water in some areas. Earlier planted row crops were reaching maturity quickly. Forage conditions and grazing availability were declining. Cattle prices were high and consistent, but some markets reported lower sale volumes. Feed prices remained high. Row crop producers were harvesting. Whitetail does were fawning, and quail hatchlings were seen scurrying along and across rural roads

FARM & RANCH - agrilifetoday.tamu.edu



Why Should I Get My Soil Tested?

This question is asked by everyone from home gardeners planting their tomatoes to farmers planning out their crop rotations and homeowners looking to keep a lush lawn. Jake Mowrer, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service extension associate professor, Soil Nutrient and Water Resource Management in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, said soil testing is important because it determines three things:

- Existing nutrients of the soil.
- Any nutrient deficiencies and needs.
- Potential growing constraints.

“Soil testing measures the nutrients and other aspects of soil fertility related to crop, garden and ornamental plant growth,” Mowrer said. “Indirectly, soil water is important in that nutrients must be dissolved in it to be taken up by plants.”

Establishing the right fertilizer and nutrients

Mowrer said soil tests are important to home gardeners because they provide a guide for your plants’ nutrient needs and help maximize yields efficiently. “Soil testing does two important things. First, it measures the amount of nutrients your soil will provide to a plant during the growing season,” Mowrer said. “Second, it establishes the basis for making fertilizer recommendations to make up the difference between what the soil provides and what the plant requires to complete its growth cycle.”

Mowrer said soil reports empower gardeners to manage nutrients from fertilizers, manures, composts or other amendments in a way that ensures plant health and avoids nutrient escapes that can harm water resource quality. Soil tests will commonly provide information on soil pH and salt content, as well as the amount of macronutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and calcium and micronutrients such as zinc, iron, copper, and manganese. Additional tests may be performed to provide information on soil organic matter, or the amount of limestone required to correct an acidity problem. Knowing the soil test results is a huge first step when looking to improve your overall plant and soil health. Something as simple as knowing which fertilizer to buy for your specific garden soil and plants could make a world of difference in your own home garden.



Why Should I Get My Soil Tested?

When is the best time of year to have your soil tested?

“For example, a farmer growing corn should sample and test in December or January to ensure results are received in time to purchase and apply fertilizer ahead of spring planting. However, wheat sown in October or November should be preceded with soil testing in July or August,” he said.

Oftentimes, knowing when to get a soil test done can be half the battle. Mowrer said soil testing should definitely be done prior to any decision about purchasing or using fertilizers. And, the answer depends on what you are growing and when you are planting.

As for home gardeners, Mowrer recommends testing in January or February for something like tomatoes when they need to be transplanted in March.

The benefits of testing your soil as a homeowner

Soil tests can help homeowners avoid applying too little or too much fertilizer and other amendments.

“Many homeowners and landscape service providers tend to over apply fertilizers to ensure a beautiful lawn or productive garden,” Mowrer said. “However, soil testing solves the mystery with real data you can use to avoid both under-application and over-application.”

Mowrer said soil test results let homeowners accurately target their garden soil or turfgrass and flower beds nutrient needs and be environmental stewards at the same time.

With soil testing, homeowners can soon have the perfect balance of nutrients and fertilizer to sprout the home gardening projects and landscapes of their dreams.

Get your soil tested today!

For more information on testing your soil and submitting a sample, visit the [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory](https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/) at <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>. You can also contact [your local AgriLife Extension office](#) and inquire about the process there. Soil test results from the lab will take two weeks to be returned to the sender.

Learn more:

<https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/>



2023 Texas Beef Quality Assurance Training - Frio County



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

The 2023 Texas Beef Quality Assurance Training in Frio County was held on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Attendees and beef cattle producers were educated on BQA topics by Dr. Ron Gill, Extension Livestock Specialist, which included Residue Avoidance, Vaccine Handling, Proper Injection Technique, Genetic Selection, Environmental Stewardship, and Cattle Handling & Welfare. Special thanks to the Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Beef Council, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and Texas BQA for making this event a great success!



2023 Peanut Variety & Peanut Breeding Trials

Photo Credits: Gary Boyd Farms

FRIO COUNTY RESULT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS:

Result demonstrations and applied research projects are effective teaching tools and should be used to address the agricultural issues and program needs of the county. Frio County Extension Agent, Brianna Gonzales had the pleasure of working again with Texas A&M AgriLife Research of Stephenville during the month of June as 2023 Peanut Variety Research Plots were put down at Tech Farms and Gary Boyd Farms in Pearsall, Tx. A Peanut Herbicide Trial is also being conducted along with these applied research efforts with Texas A&M AgriLife Research of Corpus Christi. The entire team is extremely excited to disseminate the results during our upcoming 2023 South Texas Peanut Growers Association Annual Peanut Tour set for September 28, 2023.





Insect and Turf Grass Management Workshop

Atascosa, Frio, and Wilson Counties

1- IPM 2 General CEUs to be offered toward Private,
Commercial, and Non-Commercial Applicators License

Location:

Atascosa County Extension Office
25 East 5th Street
Leming, TX 78050

Date:

July 27, 2023
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

SPACE IS LIMITED SO SIGNUP EARLY!!

**RSVP BY: July 24, 2023 by calling the Atascosa
County Extension Office at 830-569-0034**

Guest Speakers:

Manuel Chavarria - AgriLife Extension Turfgrass Specialist

Young-Ki Jo - AgriLife Extension Specialist

Noel Troxclair - County Extension Agent Uvalde County

Bob Ducote - Envu

We request that you contact the Atascosa County Extension Service eight (8) days prior to the event or as soon as possible to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you require.

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.

Topics

Disease
Management

Insect Control

Nematode & Root
Rot

Varieties Updates

Weed Management

Field tour to be held
last hour

Lunch sponsored by



For more information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Atascosa County Office
830-569-0034

Frio County Office
830-505-7474

Wilson County Office
830-393-7357



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REGISTRATION

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(\$300 after August 2nd)

Online - \$160

(\$200 after August 2nd)

979-845-6931 | extansc@tamu.edu

WWW.BEEFCATTLESHORTCOURSE.COM



**For more information please contact:*

Brianna Gonzales-

Frio County Extension Agent, at

(830) 505-7474

brianna.gonzales@ag.tamu.edu

2023 Texas A&M
**Beef Cattle
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Save the Date!

**August 7th - 9th, 2023
College Station, Texas**



Frio County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension