

For News Release
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WILDLIFE & NATURAL RESOURCE NEWS:

Farm Pond Management:

Pond health and maintenance should be a top priority for landowners who want to get the most out of their favorite fishing hole, maintaining ponds is critical to increasing fish productivity and avoiding fish kills. Environmental factors like declining dissolved oxygen during peak summer months or inhospitable pH levels can lead to major problems in stock ponds. Those dog days of summer are upon us, and now is the time for taking action to prevent potential issues in our stock ponds. Pond owners can avoid catastrophe by taking precautionary steps to set their ponds on the path for long-term production and enjoyment. Setting up and maintaining a pond's ecosystem properly results in a thriving food chain that will produce higher levels of sport and food for the family. Panola County AgriLife Extension service provides area landowners with science-based recommendations and steps to create a high-performing stock pond.

Providing supplemental aeration is not necessary all the time, however it is a preventative tool to ensure fish have enough dissolved oxygen. Choosing the right type of aerator is important. AgriLife Extension Specialist recommends the bottom-style aerator because it mixes the entire water column so fish can utilize the entire pond. They cost a little more, but are more reliable than surface aerators, which can be problematic because they mix dissolved oxygen only in the top two to four feet of the pond. Surface aerators do not mix as much dissolved oxygen, and they do not prevent stratification and possible turnover. When the sun heats pond water (typically about six to eight feet deep in Texas) the top layer becomes less dense. This heating results in warm, less dense water sitting there, and the cool bottom layer becomes devoid of oxygen. A turnover event occurs when the water cools down and the water with no oxygen mixes with the top layer. That mix can cause fish kills. No matter the type, all aerators should be on a timer and only run from dusk until dawn, when oxygen is most needed in ponds.

Aquatic vegetation is the cause of 80 percent of low dissolved oxygen fish kills in Texas. So, it is important to ensure that no more than 10-15 percent of the pond's overall area is covered in vegetation. During the day, vegetation produces oxygen, but it also consumes oxygen all night long when there is no light for photosynthesis. So, at some point, especially in summer, the dissolved oxygen deficit can cause fish to die.

AgriLife Extension recommends using herbicides or biological controls for aquatic vegetation. Manual removal of vegetation can cause more problems like causing the plant to spread. Pond owners need to correctly identify the plants to determine which herbicide will be effective. The AgriLife Extension website <https://aquaplant.tamu.edu/> or landowner can contact our office at

(903)693-0300 Ext 161 directly for assistance in helping pond owners identify and choose treatment options for aquatic vegetation.

For more information about aquatic pond management or if you are interested in developing your existing ponds on your property into reliable sources for enjoyment and recreation, feel free to contact your Panola County Agriculture and Natural Resource agent at (903)693-0300 Ext. 161 to set up a home visit for supportive consultation.

BEEF & FORAGE PRODUCTION NEWS:

2021 Panola County Forage Sampling Drive

Residence of Panola County, it's time once again for the Annual Panola County Forage Drive, with the deadline for turning in your samples being **Friday, September 3rd**. Samples may be brought to either the Texas AgriLife Extension Office located at 522 W College St. Carthage, TX, or to the Panola County Groundwater Conservation District Office located at 419 W. Sabine St, Carthage, TX. If you need assistance in the collection of hay samples, please contact the AgriLife Extension Office at (903)693-0300 Ext 160. Results from forages collected will be available for pick up during the **October 21st Winter Beef Management Workshop**. Producers remember that the cost for testing your first two samples will be covered by a sponsorship from the Panola County Soil and Water Conservation District Board. If you have any question pertaining to this topic or any others, contact Lee Dudley at the Texas AgriLife Extension Office at (903)693-0300 Ext. 160.

DATES OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 10th: Panola 4-H Adult Leaders Planning Meeting

August 13th: Panola Master Gardeners Monthly Lunchtime Learning

August 16th: State Fair of Texas youth entries due into office

August 16th: East Texas State Fair Tyler entries due into office

August 16th: Four State Fair, Texarkana entries due into office

August 21st: Panola County 4-H Celebration Awards Banquet