

March 2023

THE PANOLA EXTENSION

A Monthly Newsletter by the Panola County AgriLife Extension office



Panola County AgriLife Extension Service

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 3/3: District 5 Photography Contest - Photos due
- 3/5: District 5 Entomology Photography registration closes
- 3/7: Registration for Spring Fishing Skill-a-thon ends
- 3/8: Late registration for Spring Fishing Skill-a-thon March 8-31
- 3/8: Be Well, Live Well - 10:00-12:00, Panola Senior Apartments meeting room
- 3/10: Master Gardeners meeting- 12:00 at the Expo
- 3/15: Be Well, Live Well 10:00-12:00, Panola Senior Apartments meeting room
- 3/20: Spring Fishing Skill-a-thon begins - fish until May 31
- 3/21: Horticulture in the Evening, 6pm, Expo
- 3/22: Be Well, Live Well 10:00-12:00, Panola Senior Apartments meeting room
- 3/25: Texas 4-H State Indoor Archery Tournament - Carthage Civic Center
- 3/29: Be Well, Live Well 10:00-12:00, Panola Senior Apartments meeting room
- 3/31: Stock Show Supporters Scholarship due
- 4/14: Come Alive in D5 (District Roundup) in Tyler, TX

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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 Extension Service

TEXAS A&M
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Lady BEETLE INVASION



By Mike Merchant Retired Professor and Extension Entomologist

This year Extension offices are receiving an unusually high number of calls about lady beetles inside homes. The culprit is an exotic lady beetle called the multicolored Asian lady beetle (MALB). While not new, high aphid populations in some trees last year are thought to have contributed to this year's higher than normal number of these "naughty lady beetles".

The multicolored Asian lady beetle is normally a helpful insect that eats aphids. Studies of the beetle in its native Asian habitats showed that it was such an efficient predator that for many years the U.S. Department of Agriculture tried to import them. Ironically, after repeated failures to get the beetles to establish here, the beetles mysteriously appeared on their own in a number of states during the early 1990s. Whether these beetles were survivors of earlier deliberate importations, or whether they found their way to the U.S. on their own, no one really knows for sure. But its one bad habit has many homeowners wishing this beetle might have stayed back in Asia.

The multicolored Asian lady beetle is unique among major lady beetles in its behavior of routinely invading homes and buildings in the fall. In its native home in Japan, this beetle quietly disperses into the white limestone bluffs along its riverside feeding grounds. But in the U.S. it has become a significant pest when it seeks shelter in the walls and attics and living areas of homes.

The beetles seem to become pests more often in homes surrounded by trees and forests. They also seem to be attracted to homes of lighter or contrasting colors. The adults enter homes through any available crack or crevice and may aggregate in attics or even living areas of the home.

Although mostly harmless, like some other common lady beetles, MALBs are occasional "nippers," biting skin if they come in contact with humans. They also let off a disagreeable smell when disturbed, and medical reports exist of people developing allergies to the chemicals emitted by lady beetle aggregations. But mostly these beetles are a simple nuisance, unwanted and sometimes cursed.

Although homes were invaded in the fall, this winter's up and down temperatures have caused these beetles to get restless and move about the home in search of a way out. When daytime temperatures reach the 80s outside, attic temperatures may reach the 90s, fooling the beetles into thinking that spring has arrived and sometimes sending them into living areas of the home or building.

Control

There are no easy ways to prevent MALB from entering homes or controlling them once inside. Caulking and sealing outside entry points is perhaps the most effective technique. Use of residual insecticides around areas that are not easily sealed may provide some temporary control of lady beetles attempting to enter homes. Pyrethroid insecticides are usually good for this purpose.

Once inside the beetles are best controlled by vacuuming. Spraying insecticides on aggregations of lady beetles will result in piles of dead insects, and undesirable smells. Discard your vacuum bag after use if you don't want a smelly vacuum. Bug bombs, light traps and lady bug houses are not effective at ridding homes of these beetles.

Once the weather completely warms up, the lady beetles will eventually find their way out of the house and on to their worthy pursuit of aphids. Until that happens, you may have to just continue to vacuum these little guys up as long as they are found.

A Matter of Balance

Increases activity levels among older adults to improve strength and balance and reduce the fear of falling!

March 7, 2:00pm, Winkler Place Assisted Living

513 N. Adams, Carthage

Practicing No Fall-ty Habits & Putting It All Together



Area Agency on Aging of East Texas - Nellie Henry
Panola County Extension Agent - FCH - Clarissa Moon

Be Well, Live Well



Learn how to...

Reduce your risk for disease

Engage in a healthy lifestyle

March 8-April 12

Every Wednesday, 10:00-12:00

Panola Senior Community Meeting Room
101 Senior Ave, Carthage

Free to attend | Free Snacks | Gifts



NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

Eat a Rainbow!

By Clarissa Moon

Why are fruits and vegetables in different colors?

“The color of fruits and vegetables is an important indicator of their nutrient content and their underlying health benefits” says Dr. Sumathi Venkatesh, a Health Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Each color implies specific phytonutrients present in them. Phytonutrients are natural compounds produced by plants that are present in foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, and grains. Phytonutrients have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Consuming a diet rich in phytonutrients will improve blood circulation and heart health, promote bone and joint health, and strengthen the immune system to fight against infections and diseases.

There are five main color groups:

1) **Red** e.g., tomatoes, pink grapefruit, red peppers, watermelon, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, cherries, red cabbage, apples, beets, red grapes, and red onions.

2) **Orange and yellow** e.g., carrots, yellow pears, yellow peppers, corn, winter squash, sweet potatoes, oranges, peaches, cantaloupe, and apricots.

3) **Green** e.g., asparagus, zucchini, artichokes, broccoli, avocado, green peppers, green beans, spinach, kale, kiwi, brussels sprouts, cabbage, green tea, and green herbs.

4) **Blue and purple** e.g., eggplant, purple cabbage, black beans, blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, plums, prunes, figs, and raisins.

5) **White and brown** e.g., cauliflower, mushrooms, onions, parsnip, radish, garlic, leeks, black-eyed peas, and bananas.

Include a variety of colored fruits & vegetables in your diet!

For a 2000 calorie diet, you should eat at least 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables including dark green, red-orange, beans, peas, and lentils, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. Simply fill half your plate with colored fruits and vegetables in fresh, frozen, canned, and dried forms to meet your daily recommended amounts. Try not to peel fruits and vegetables that have edible skin because the skin is a good source of dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Many fruits and vegetables with seemingly inedible peels (like oranges) can actually be pureed whole and made into a juice. By doing this, you can even more nutrients that aren't always present in the “fruit” part. While preparing your shopping list try to include at least one fruit and one vegetable from each color. Eating home cooked meals as often as possible will allow you to cut your food cost and choose healthy ingredients for your meals.

DinnerTonight.org is a really good resource through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. They have tons of recipes, useful tips for meal planning/management, food safety, and more. They also have a monthly newsletter with great tidbits!

District 5



Spring Flowers Photography Contest

Registration closes March 26, 2023
Upload photos March 1 - April 1, 2023

<https://d54-h.tamu.edu/district-photography-contests/>



APRIL 14 - 15, 2023



COME ALIVE IN DISTRICT 5



CROSS BRAND COWBOY CHURCH
11915 FM 2015 • TYLER

Registration closes March 21 • \$15
Late registration March 22-24 • \$30



Fishing Skill-a-thon Spring Tournament

Fish at your location March 20 - May 31

Registration: February 1 - March 7
\$50 flat fee per division per 4-H participant

Saltwater: Spotted Seatrout, Sheepshead, & Redfish
Freshwater: Bass, Crappie, Catfish



Spring Calf

Management Tips

By: Joe C. Paschal,
Livestock Specialist Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Texas is one of the few states where it can go from the dead of winter to the beginning of summer in just a few days. Fortunately, the calves that are being born now on Texas pastures will be the prime beneficiary of the better weather as well as the green that is beginning to appear in pastures from the Red to the Rio Grande River. Now is the time to consider a few economically beneficial calf management tips that will pay dividends at weaning and marketing time.

First, when possible, your calves should be identified. A good ear tag will help you remember birthdate and the dam of each calf, and later at weaning and marketing, his growth rate and market value. As a rule of thumb, calves born early in the season weigh more at weaning (about 2-2.5 lbs. more per day of age) and calves that are born earlier are generally out of more productive cows. Calf weight at weaning and marketing will assist you in deciding which cows are more productive, producing more valuable calves.

Second, as soon after birth as possible, castrate bull calves that you are not intending to raise and dehorn all calves. Doing these practices at a very young age reduces the pain of the procedure and increases the speed of recovery. Castrated calves are more desired by the feeding industry and bring more dollars per pound when marketed as their carcasses generally grade higher and have more value. The downside to castration is the steer calves will weigh less at weaning than bull calves but using a calf growth implant when castrating will offset the loss of gain. Dehorning or disbudding will improve the appearance and uniformity of the calves and reduce the potential for injury to you and other animals. If genetically homozygous polled bulls or cows are used, dehorning will not be necessary.

Finally, vaccinate your calves for the Blackleg or Clostridial diseases, especially if their dams have not been vaccinated and the calves are over a month old. This vaccination will protect calves from these "sudden death" diseases. All the commercial vaccines provide excellent immunity from these diseases and all calves should be vaccinated and provided a booster according to the label. For more information fill free to contact the Panola County AgriLife Extension Office at (903)693-0300 Ext 161

SCHOLARSHIPS

Panola County Junior Livestock Show Scholarship:

Must be postmarked by **April 1, 2023**

[Click here for application](#) or go to www.panola.agrilife.org



Stock Show Supporters of Panola County:

Must be postmarked by **March 31, 2023**

[Click here for application](#) or search "Stock Show Supporters of Panola" on Facebook!

Texas Farm Bureau Scholarship

Due **March 15, 2023**

[Click here for application](#) or go to: <https://texasfarmbureau.org/youth/scholarship-apps/>



Texas Farm Bureau - Panola County Scholarship

Due **April 1, 2023**

[Click here for application](#) or go to www.panola.agrilife.org

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE DANDELION

Dandelion is a flowering plant belonging to the Asteraceae family. There are several fun and interesting dandelion facts that shed light on different aspects of this plant.

Around 30 species and can be found throughout the world. They inhabit different habitats which offer them adequate sunlight, like meadows, forest edges, grasslands, lawns, and gardens.

- Dandelion makes the only flower representing three celestial bodies during different phases of its life cycle – sun, moon, stars. The yellow flower of the plant resembles the sun, the dispersing seeds of the plant resemble stars, and the puff ball of dandelion plant resembles the moon.
- Every part is useful – roots, leaves, flower. Its uses include dye for coloring, food, and medicine.
- Dandelion seeds can be carried away to up to 5 miles from their place of origin.
- Dandelion flower has a yellow-orange hue and comprises many individual, miniature flowers called ray florets. The dandelion flower opens at the time of sunrise and closes at night.
- Butterflies, insects, and birds consume the seeds or nectar of dandelion.
- Dandelion leaves are 2 to 10 inches long. A rosette is formed by these green leaves at the stem's base. Dandelion leaves appear tooth-like at the edges.
- Pollinated by various types of insects. Yellow flower of the plant becomes a puff ball which comprises many fruits known as achenes. Dandelion seeds have a disk-like extension which serves as a parachute and helps dispersal by wind.
- In folk medicine, dandelions are used for treating liver disorders and infections. Tea made from dandelion serves as a diuretic i.e., facilitates urine excretion.
- Dandelions are also called pioneer plants or ruderals – the first plants to colonize any disturbed lands (like land after a wildfire).



SELECTING LAYING BREEDS FOR BACKYARD POULTRY

By: Gregory S. Archer

When selecting laying hens for your backyard, you need to consider what it is that you expect from your chickens. Do you want to raise poultry as a business to make a profit? Do you want to produce eggs to reduce your grocery bill? Or do you want poultry in your back yard just for your own use and satisfaction?

If you want to raise poultry for profit or for eggs, egg-laying ability, space needs, and broodiness will be important factors to consider. You will want birds that lay many eggs to maximize your efficiency. Having birds that require less space or do well in cages may also be important if you plan to have a large flock. Finally, choosing birds that are not usually broody will minimize the time your birds are not laying eggs.



If you want birds only for your own use, the factors mentioned above may be less important. If your goal is to raise birds (in a way you find acceptable) to produce food for yourself, and maximum production numbers are not important, the number of breeds that can meet your needs increases dramatically. In this case, you may also be selecting birds based on their appearance. Chickens vary in the color and pattern of their feathers, combs, eggs, and even size. Regardless of why you want to have chickens, it is important to select birds that will fit your needs and do well in your environment.

The following terms are important to understand as you select the breed that will best fit your situation. Broodiness: readiness to brood eggs that is characterized by cessation of laying and by marked changes in behavior and physiology. Bantam: any of numerous small domestic fowls that are often miniature versions of the standard breeds. Popular breeds for backyard egg production can be found on the Panola County AgriLife Extension Webpage at <https://panola.agrilife.org/agriculture>



Horticulture in the Evening!

March 21, 2023 | Sammy Brown Library | 5:30-7:00pm

Topic:

Bringing Color to Your Yard



Mid-Sabine Cattleman's Conference

April 28, 2023 | 8:00am | Civic Center

1702 South Adams St. Carthage, TX 75633

Register at 903-693-0300 ext 160 by 4/21/2023 to guarantee lunch!

8:00am: Registration

\$15/person

8:25am: Introduction

4 C.E.U.'s

8:30-9:35am: Management of Soil Nutrient Levels to Impact Weed Population - *Dr. Vanessa Olson, Associate Professor and Extension Forage Specialist*

9:40-10:45am: Integrated Pest Management Options for Weed and Brush Control - *Dr. Vanessa Olson, Associate Professor and Extension Forage Specialist*

10:45-11:00am: Break

11:00-12:00pm: Forest Herbicides "The Label, Prescriptions and Discission Support Tool" - *Leah Moore, TFS Staff Forester III*

12:00-1:00pm: Lunch Sponsored by Heritage Land Bank

1:00-2:00pm: Utilizing Technology in Herbicide Management Plans - *Darren Rozell, Owner Operator Rozell Sprayer Manufacture*

2:00-3:00pm: Managing Cattle Nutritional Needs - *Dr. Russell Carrell, Nutritionist for Cargill Animal Nutrition*





Could a Fitness Tracker Boost Your Heart Health?

www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/could-a-fitness-tracker-boost-your-heart-health

We often joke that the first step toward behavior change is admitting you have a problem. However, I would argue that awareness comes before that. You can't admit to a problem you don't realize you have! I started wearing a fitness tracker several years ago and am still often shocked at the low number of steps I have after a seemingly long day with lots of activity. It's commonly recommended that one should aim for 10,000 steps a day (that is what the CDC and Mayo Clinic say); but some studies have shown that your health can improve even if you don't hit the gold standard of 10k (NIH, 2020).

When it comes to physical activity (not just exercise but all forms of activity), it is my belief that every little bit helps. In that same study from the NIH, they found that people who got 8,000 steps a day had a 50% lower risk of death than those with 4,000 steps (2020). Those numbers are encouraging to me! This month, I challenge you to examine how many steps you're getting a day and then set small, manageable goals to increase that number. No pedometer or fitness tracker? No problem, just come by and see me- I have a lot of simple pedometers that I can give away. You can also purchase one online for less than \$10 from some retailers! (I can't vouch for the quality of many of these, but want to let you know that there are low-cost options available.) -Clarissa Moon

Read on for some tips about how to start and stick with a fitness tracker.

Reference: Number of steps per day more important than step intensity. (2020, April 7). National Institutes of Health (NIH). <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/nih-research-matters/number-steps-day-more-important-step-intensity>

You know exercise is heart smart and good for you. But do you really know how much physical activity you're getting? And how can you get more, day in and day out, for your heart health? A fitness tracker may help.

Studies show that consistently using a fitness tracker—a device that tracks your movement, such as a traditional pedometer or other wearable device, or a smartphone app—can increase your steps per day by more than a mile, especially if you establish a heart-smart daily goal.

“Fitness trackers are a great tool for heart health,” says Johns Hopkins cardiologist Seth Martin, M.D., M.H.S. “Being more active and changing your habits is important, but it can be difficult. Tracking likely helps a lot of people when combined with a clear goal to shoot for.”

The Heart-Smart Power of a Fitness Tracker

Having an objective daily record can open people's eyes to how little exercise they're getting, Martin says, which can recalibrate their mindset and become an incentive. People find ways to incorporate more activity into their day, whether it's dedicated walking or gym time, walking during meetings or personal calls, or simply taking the stairs instead of an elevator.

“It gives people information and empowers them to start making changes for heart health,” Martin says. “And often, their activity level was not something they were paying attention to before they started tracking.”

Fitness Trackers: Where to Start, How to Stick with It

Try a few pedometers, smartphone tracking apps or wearable devices, until you find one that's comfortable for you and your budget, Martin suggests. Next steps once you've made a match:

1. Use the tracker consistently, every day.
2. Set a goal. The most common figure is 10,000 steps per day but check with your doctor. If that is unrealistic or unhealthy, he or she can suggest an individualized plan, such as doubling your 2,000 steps to 4,000.
3. Find activities you enjoy that also fit into your daily life and can be sustained over the long-term.
4. Recruit friends and family to use trackers as well. It can create a social support network and even foster a sense of competition.
5. Be accountable. Check your numbers every day and share them with your doctor at your next appointment.

Follow those five tips, and you'll be on your way to a healthier lifestyle — and a healthier heart.

The Future of Fitness Trackers

Be ready, too, as doctors learn and introduce even better ways to use these devices. In the mActive study, a randomized clinical trial, Martin and his Johns Hopkins colleagues tested an automated, real-time, personalized program that sent coaching text messages to cardiology patients based on data from a wearable device paired with their phone. Over the short term, this coaching system helped increase step counts by more than a mile a day beyond tracking alone.

Martin notes that collaborating researchers have tested the mActive program in other patients in NIH-funded research of patients with pulmonary arterial hypertension, where an increase in physical activity was also observed. He hopes to see the system more widely validate and used as part of routine clinical care.

Currently, with support from the American Heart Association, Martin and colleagues are incorporating the mActive automated physical activity coaching into a virtual cardiac rehabilitation program for patients who have had cardiovascular events.

"I think technology can be a very powerful tool to get people moving more," says Martin.

Beef and Broccoli Stir Fry

<https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/?s=broccoli>

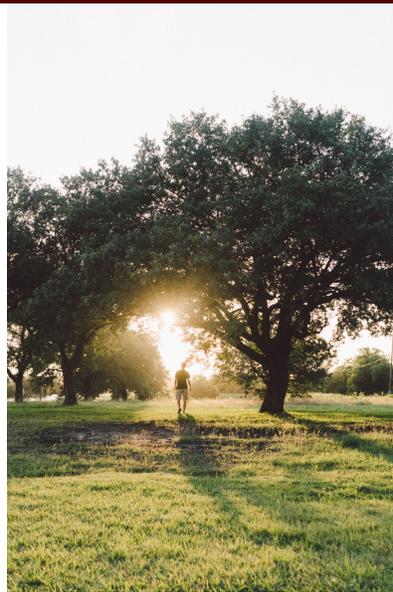


Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless beef top round steak cut into 3 inch strips
- 1 garlic clove minced
- 1 1/2 tablespoons ginger
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1 bunch broccoli
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 1/2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 1/2 tablespoon corn starch

Instructions

1. Combine beef, garlic, ginger, and soy sauce in a bowl and let stand
2. Wash broccoli thoroughly and cut into florets
3. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet or wok over medium-high heat; add broccoli florets and then stir-fry for 2 minutes
4. Add 1/2 cup water and stir until water evaporates
5. Add beef mixture and stir fry for 3 minutes
6. Stir together broth and corn starch, add to meat and stir-fry until sauce is thickened, about 2-4 minutes longer.



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