

August 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:

8/9: Diabetes Support Group Meeting, 10am, Sammy Brown Library

8/10: 4-H Cookin' Night, 5:30, Central Baptist Church

8/11: Master Gardeners Meeting

8/17: 4-H Club Manager Training Part 1, 5:30pm, Zoom

8/15: TX State Fair Dallas, East TX Fair Tyler, and Heart of TX Waco Entries Due

8/15: 4-H Registration Begins

8/15: Horticulture in the Evening, 5:30pm, Sammy Brown Library

8/26: 4-H Banquet, 6pm, Carthage Civic Center

9/1: Youth that is 8 years old and going into the 3rd grade can register for 4-H

9/6: Hay Samples due for the Panola County Hay Show

9/7: 4-H Club Manager Training Part 2, 5:30pm, Zoom

9/13: Diabetes Support Group Meeting, 10am, Sammy Brown Library

9/14: 4-H Cookin' Night, 5:30pm, Central Baptist Church

9/17: Walk Across Texas! Begins

10/19: Panola County Hay Show, 6:00pm, Expo

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- Producing Fall Green Beans
- Improving Profits in the Cattle Industry "Bulls Matter"

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
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION





Summer Gardening Questions

By Greg Grant

Q: There are many small dead branches in my Bradford pear. What is causing it and what can I do about it?

A: That's fireblight, a common bacterial disease that affects members of the rose family. It's spread by splashing water and wet springs exacerbate it. Unfortunately, there's no cure for it other than planting blight resistant cultivars. Most ornamental cultivars of *Pyrus calleryana* have moderate to good resistance along with most hard canning pears. Soft European pears like 'Bartlett' are highly susceptible and will generally die from severe fireblight infection. Pruning, fertilizing, and overhead watering all encourage fireblight and should be avoided.

Q: It's so hot. I water my lawn three times a week. Is that enough?

A: It's more than enough. In fact, it's too often. Lawns should be watered manually only once a week (when it doesn't rain), one to one and a half inches at a time. This can be measured using tuna cans, baby food jars, or any other containers to find out how long it takes to catch an inch or more. Watering frequently in limited amounts leads to shallow roots and increased disease susceptibility. Deep watering creates deep roots and leads to increased drought tolerance.

Q: The needles on my pines are turning brown and falling off. What gives?

A: It's perfectly normal for pine trees to drop their inner needles during late summer. It's a natural occurrence to be expected annually.

Q: Are there any flowers that can tolerate this searing heat? My petunias, geraniums, and zinnias are all dying.

A: *Duranta*, *esperanza*, firebush, lantana, Mexican heather, ornamental sweet potatoes, pentas, periwinkles, plumbago, purslane, thryallis, and tropical milkweed can all tolerate 100-degree temperatures.

Q: Why are all the oak trees dying? Is it a disease?

A: The far majority of the dead and dying oaks in East Texas are the result of the 2021 devastating freeze. Many that suffered partial freeze damage died in the 2022 drought. This injury was primarily on live oaks, post oaks, Southern red oaks, and water oaks. Live oak damage was the result of genetics and provenance since they are a coastal tree. The others were the result of not being hardened off (preconditioned) for such cold temperatures. Plants do not like drastic changes in temperatures. Unfortunately, there is nothing to do about it other than having them removed and replacing them with new trees in the fall.

Q: Is it true that watering during the heat of day will scorch and kill plants?

A: No. This is a common wives'/husbands' tale. If a plant is dry and wilted it should be watered, no matter what time of day or what temperature it is. Just make sure and run water through the hose first so it doesn't come out boiling! It doesn't hurt plants to be slightly wilted before being irrigated. Just make sure to water them thoroughly by saturating the entire root zone.

Greg Grant is the Smith County horticulturist for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. He is the author of *Texas Fruit and Vegetable Gardening*, *Heirloom Gardening in the South*, and *The Rose Rustlers*. You can read his "Greg's Ramblings" blog at arborgate.com and read his "In Greg's Garden" in each issue of Texas Gardener magazine (texasgardener.com).

Home Gardening, Watering is **EVERYTHING!**

By Lee Dudley



Water, what a wonderful element it is, in its simplest form, we have the combination of two hydrogen and one oxygen atom found in nature as gas coming together to create a whole new compound that in its natural state is found as a liquid but oh what a liquid. Harvard University notes that “water makes up 60-75% of human body weight. A loss of just 4% of total body water leads to dehydration, and a loss of 15% can be fatal”. Its versatility and adaptability help perform important chemical reactions. Water is so important to us humans that we could live thirty days without food but only three days without water.

Likewise, water is just as important for our home gardens. For many, gardening is a form of relaxation, so it is not unusual for many gardens to be watered two, three or more times a week. However, many gardening problems, such as poor yield, poor quality, poor fertility, bitter fruit, sun scald, disease problems and a dozen other things, can be related to poor or improper watering techniques. Light, frequent watering causes a concentration of roots in the top inch or two of the soil. These undeveloped root systems do not pose any serious problem early in the season when the plants are relatively young and sufficient moisture is available. But, as the season progresses and moisture becomes scarce, and temperatures rise the limited root system needs more frequent watering. Consequently, you may need to water several times a week just to keep the plants from wilting severely.

We can determine when it's the right time to water our gardens by examining the soil, not the plants. If the soil surface appears dry, scratch the surface to a depth of about an inch, determining if moisture is present. If the soil appears relatively dry, watering is necessary. If sufficient moisture is available at an inch depth from the surface, wait a couple of days before watering. Another consideration is the type of soil in your garden. Obviously, light sandy soils drain quickly requiring more frequent watering as compared to heavy soils which hold water. Therefore, check sandy soils more often than heavy clay soils. How much water should you apply? Soak garden soil to a depth of at least 6 inches, always remember to check before turning on the faucet. After doing this several times, you learn by experience when adequate water has been applied. An inch or two of water applied once a week usually is sufficient for most vegetable gardens in Texas, when temperatures are not in the extremes but as we continue to flirt with the 100-degree mark, it is critical to increase our watering efforts due mainly to the amount of moisture we lose from evaporation. For more information about this or other topics, fill free to contact your Panola County AgriLife Extension Office at (903)693-0380





HAY TESTING...

Know What You're Feeding

By: Vanessa Corriher-Olson; Forage Extension Specialist Soil & Crop Sciences
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

One of the first considerations when purchasing hay is that it should be based on individual animal requirements. For optimal production, forage quality should be matched as closely as possible to the nutritional needs of the animal. Low quality forage can result in reduced animal performance and increased supplemental feeding costs. Whereas hay of sufficient quality, little or no supplementation will be necessary to meet the animals' nutritional needs.

Keep in mind that not all forage or hay is created equal. There is great variation between forages and nutrient content can vary dramatically even within a particular type of forage. Several factors influence hay quality, such as maturity (time of harvesting), forage species & variety, fertilization, temperature, leaf to stem ratio and weather at harvesting/baling.

Regardless, if you are buying hay or feeding the hay you raised it is a good idea to test the hay to determine what if any supplementation will be needed when the hay is fed. When collecting samples, a good practice is to sample approximately 10% of the bales from a particular cutting or load using a hay

probe. Often a hay probe can be borrowed from your county extension office. Samples should be taken from bales that would represent hay from the entire field. After taking samples from 10% of the bales combine the samples and remove a portion of the composite to send off for analysis.

Crude protein content is the most common thing people think about when testing hay. While crude protein content is important, a good estimate of TDN (total digestible nutrients) is as important and in many cases more important than crude protein. There are a multitude of both commercial and university forage labs around the country. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory does offer forage analysis as a service out of College Station, TX. For additional information on forage testing or available forage labs contact your local beef cattle or livestock specialist or a ruminant nutritionist.

If you haven't done so already, now is the time to get a nutrient analysis of all available hay and forage, sort your cattle based on their nutrient requirements, properly match available forage and hay to the different groups of cattle and make sure their nutrient requirements are being met. Feeding cattle is never cheap but producers with information about what they are feeding can be more efficient.

PANOLA COUNTY HAY SHOW
SAMPLES DUE BY SEPTEMBER 6

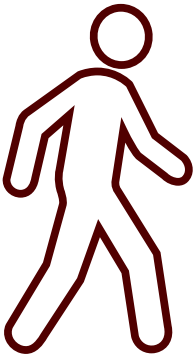
Drop off to either the Extension Office, Panola Ground Water,
or Panola County NRCS Office

Walk Across Texas!

Grab some friends and mark your calendars! Walk Across Texas is coming

September 17 - November 11

Join us and see if your team can complete the 832 mile goal (walking across Texas!) in 8 weeks. Both adult and youth versions are available with the option to log on paper or online.



Adult teams can have 2-8 members, but youth teams are not limited in size. ANYONE can join!

For more information, visit

www.panola.agrilife.org/family-and-consumer-health/walk-across-texas/

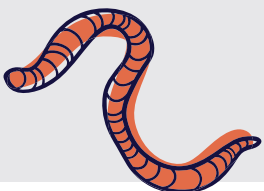
on our website or howdyhealth.org.

HORTICULTURE *in the Evening!*

August 15 | 5:30pm
Sammy Brown Library

Topic:

Worms in the Garden



Diabetes Support **Group Meeting**

August 9, 2023

10:00am

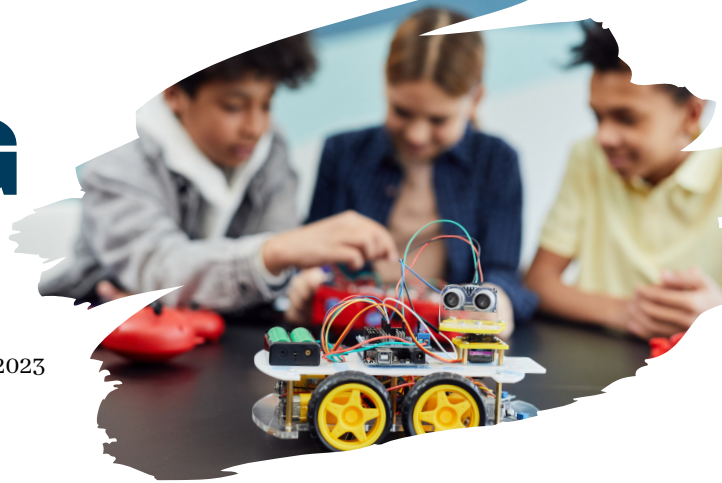
Sammy Brown Library

second Wednesday every Month!

BROADENING

Your Child's Interests

Originally written by Amanda Henderson for keepingkidsinmotion.com, 2023
Modified for this newsletter by Clarissa Moon



Broadening Your Child's Interests – Alternative After-School Activities

Children's interests are constantly changing, and as parents, we want to allow them to explore various activities. You may have heard of traditional options like sports or dance classes, but what about the alternatives? These options can be just as rewarding and may even broaden your child's interests.

Encourage Them To Learn A Musical Instrument

Music is an excellent way to broaden your child's interest and provide them with lifelong skills. They could take up anything from the guitar to the piano, and there are plenty of resources available both online and offline. Many music stores offer classes or private lessons, and there are also countless video tutorials available on platforms like YouTube. Panola College also offers some music lessons! Encouraging your child to learn a musical instrument not only develops their creativity but also teaches them discipline as they must practice consistently to improve.

Enlist them in Martial Arts

Martial arts provide a way for young children to learn discipline while being active physically. The benefits of martial arts go beyond physical fitness. It also teaches children self-defense, enhances their coordination and balance, and supports their mental health by teaching meditation and self-awareness techniques.

Organize An After-school Book Club

If your child loves reading or writing, then consider organizing an [after-school book club](#). Book clubs can create an excellent opportunity to enhance your child's critical thinking skills and improve their reading comprehension. It also allows them to explore different genres and themes while also helping them develop social and communication skills. Choose age-appropriate books and invite their friends to join in the fun.

Encourage Them To Take Robotics Classes

Technology is evolving rapidly, and robotics is becoming more prevalent than ever before. Encouraging your child to learn the basics of robotics can be a stimulating alternative after-school activity. Robotics teaches not only engineering but also computer programming and design principles. Additionally, it can be a perfect choice for children who enjoy tinkering and problem-solving. If you're interested in learning more about robotics, contact us or visit the Texas 4-H website for information!

Explore a Hobby or Potential Business Venture

Young people are becoming entrepreneurs at early ages these days! Whether it's mowing lawns, baking, babysitting, or crafting, there are many opportunities for young people to start their own business.

Start A Volunteer Project with your Child

Lastly, volunteering is an excellent way to give back to the community, and it can be a rewarding experience for your child. Volunteering can help your child enhance their teamwork and leadership abilities, and build their self-esteem while learning the importance of social responsibility. There are several volunteer opportunities year-round that you can get involved in. You could work with local charities or non-profit organizations, and it could even become a regular monthly activity.

Encouraging your child to take part in alternative after-school activities broadens their interests and helps them discover their passions. Learning music, martial arts, reading, robotics, and volunteering can form an essential part of their life and help them grow into well-rounded individuals. As a parent, your support can create excellent opportunities to expose your child to new and exciting experiences and ultimately help them become the best version of themselves.



4-H REGISTRATION BEGINS

August 15

Youth that is 8 years old and going into the 3rd grade must wait until **September 1st**

| Club Name | Club Manager | Meeting Date & Time |
|--|--|--|
| ALPA Adult Leaders & Parents Association | Corie Young 903-692-7737 | 1st Monday, 6:00pm Expo Hall |
| BECKVILLE 4-H | Brandy Dudley 903-690-1108 | 4th Monday, 6:00pm, Beckville Sunset Elementary |
| CARTHAGE 4-H | Panola Co. Extension Office Lee Dudley & Clarissa Moon 903-693-0380 | 4th Tuesday, 6:00pm Expo Hall |
| DEBERRY 4-H | Shawntel Wells 903-690-6552 | 3rd Thursday, Time 332 CR 310 DeBerry |
| FAIRPLAY 4-H | Eric Pellum 903-754-2582 | 2nd Monday, 6:00pm Allison Chapel UMC in Fairplay |
| GARY 4-H | Jennifer Whitby 903-692-1729 | 3rd Monday, 6:00pm Gary ISD Cafeteria |
| SHOOTING SPORTS 4-H | Panola Co. Extension Office Lee Dudley & Clarissa Moon 903-693-0380 | 4th Monday, 6:00pm Expo Hall |
| STILL WATERS 4-H | Corie Young 903-692-7737 | 3rd Monday, 6:30pm Still Waters Cowboy Church |

4-H CLUB MANAGER TRAINING

5:30-7:00pm via Zoom

August 17: Managing a 4-H Club

September 7: Best Financial Practices

New Managers must attend the full training
Financial Training is required for ALL leaders

State Fair of Texas - Dallas
East Texas State Fair - Tyler

Heart of Texas - Waco

Entry Forms
Due August 15

FORMS AND INFO ON OUR WEBSITE
[OR CLICK HERE!](#)

4-H END OF YEAR *Celebration!*



AUGUST 26, 2023
Carthage Civic Center

*Bring your
favorite dessert!*

4-H Members: Free
Non-Members: \$10/person



**Pick up tickets in the
Extension Office by August 21**

County Lamb/Goat Project Selection

By Lee Dudley



Attention, 4-H Families, and members, it's that time again, to start looking for the upcoming show season goat or lamb projects. The type of lamb or goat you select will have a major influence on the success of the project, in fact it is the most important decision of the season. However, remember that a winning project is a combination of good selection, good nutritional management, good exercise program, proper grooming, and outstanding showmanship.

Everybody differs in their ability to select animals, some have what we call a natural eye for the selection process being able to determine high caliber, while others might not be able to develop this ability. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance from your local extension agent or club leaders during this or any other phase of the project's life. Also, many breeders are more than willing to assist in the initial selection of a desirable show project.

For market lambs and goats, muscle evaluation is one of the most important factors in ensuring the quality of your project. Muscle is evaluated in lambs and goats down their top, from the side, and from behind. These animals should handle firm and wide over their rack, across their loin and throughout their hip. From behind, lambs and goats should be wide from stifle to stifle, deep twisted, and offer an adequate amount of muscle shape and expression. When evaluating younger, thinner lambs and goats, the forearm is the most accurate depiction of how much muscle that lamb or goat may have at maturity. Another good indicator of true muscle shape is how wide the animal is underneath and how wide it tracks. Generally, wider-based animals tend to be more heavily muscled than narrow-based animals. Lambs and goats should be wide through their chest and carry that width and dimension throughout. Ideally, bolder-ribbed animals are generally wider throughout their skeleton and ultimately have the potential for more rack shape.

Along with muscle, structural correctness is also an important evaluation characteristic. Proper skeletal makeup or bone structure in these animals is desired and can vary in degree of correctness. Lambs and goats should be straight and square on both ends of their skeleton, the lambs/goats' neck should come out of the top side of their shoulder, and they should be long and level from hooks to pins. All four feet should be pointed forward, avoiding toeing in or out. When evaluating structural correctness, look for the animal to cover its tracks (back feet should plant in the tracks where the front feet take off), as well as proper hock flexibility avoiding sickle-hocked and post-legged animals. Along with hock structure, from behind, legs should hit the ground straight and forward, avoiding bowlegged and cow-hocked animals. These animals should also be heavy boned and strong in their pasterns, ideally at a forty-five-degree angle. Avoid lambs and goats that are weak topped, round hipped, and open shouldered. See structure depictions below to gain a better understanding of front and rear structural correctness.

Lastly, balance is how well the animal ties muscle and structural correctness into an "eye appealing" package. Lambs and goats should be long bodied, clean and smooth throughout their front end, level in their top and underline, and "look like a show animal." Female breeding sheep and goats are expected to be feminine about their head, neck, and shoulders, and offer a substantial amount rib and body capacity. Balance can also refer to the symmetry of the animal, meaning they should be proportional front to rear and top to bottom.

For additional assistance in locating a goat or lamb for the 2024 Panola County Jr. Livestock show, fill free to contact your AgriLife Extension agent to get a list of potential breeders or to even work out a date for us to take a trip in search of that next champion project. Additional information or help in these areas can be found in your local AgriLife Extension office by contacting them at (903)693-0380.

GRILLING AND FOOD SAFETY

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/grilling-and-food-safety>



Cooking outdoors was once considered strictly a summer activity, but now more than half of Americans say they are cooking outdoors year-round. Whether the snow is falling, or the sun is shining, it's important to follow food safety guidelines to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying and causing foodborne illness when cooking outdoors. Use these simple guidelines for grilling food safely.

FROM THE STORE: HOME FIRST

When shopping, buy cold food like meat and poultry last, right before checking out. Separate raw meat and poultry from other food in your shopping cart. To guard against cross-contamination — which can happen when raw meat or poultry juices drip onto other food — put packages of raw meat and poultry into plastic bags.

Plan to drive directly home from the grocery store. You may want to take a cooler with ice for perishables. Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F.

At home, place meat and poultry in the refrigerator immediately. Freeze poultry and ground meat that won't be used in 1 or 2 days; freeze other meat within 4 to 5 days.

THAW SAFELY

Completely thaw meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for slow, safe thawing or thaw sealed packages in cold water. You can microwave to defrost if the food will be placed immediately on the grill.

MARINATING

A marinade is a savory, acidic sauce in which a food is soaked to enrich its flavor or to tenderize it.

Most recipes for marinating meat and poultry recommend anywhere from six to 24 hours. It is safe to keep the food in the marinade longer, but after two days it is possible that the marinade can start to break down the fibers of the meat, causing it to become mushy. Always marinate meat and poultry in the refrigerator, not on the counter.

If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade before putting raw meat and poultry in it.

Boil the used marinade if you want to brush it on the meat or poultry while it's grilling. Whenever marinade used on raw meat or poultry is to be reused, make sure to let it come to a boil for a few minutes to destroy any harmful bacteria. Then store the marinade in shallow containers in the refrigerator for later use.

TRANSPORTING

When carrying food to another location, keep it cold to minimize bacterial growth. Use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food at 40 °F or below. Pack food right from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving home.

KEEP COLD FOOD COLD

Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use. Only take out the meat and poultry that will immediately be placed on the grill.

When using a cooler, keep it out of the direct sun by placing it in the shade or shelter. Avoid opening the lid too often, which lets cold air out and warm air in. Pack beverages in one cooler and perishables in a separate cooler.

Store raw meat and poultry in well-sealed packages in the bottom of the cooler underneath other food items. This will help to avoid cross-contamination. If poultry juice leaks onto other meats, then that meat needs to be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 F.

KEEP EVERYTHING CLEAN

Be sure there are plenty of clean utensils and platters. To prevent foodborne illness, don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry. Harmful bacteria present in raw meat and poultry and their juices can contaminate safely cooked food.

If you're eating away from home, find out if there's a source of clean water. If not, bring water for food preparation, washing hands, surfaces and utensils. Otherwise, pack clean cloths, alcohol-based moist towelettes and hand sanitizer. Make sure sanitizers have at least 60% alcohol content.

PRECOOKING

Precooking food partially in the microwave, oven, or stove is a good way of reducing grilling time. Just make sure that the food goes immediately on the preheated grill to complete cooking.

COOK THOROUGHLY

Cook food to a safe minimum internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature. Cook beef, pork, veal, and lamb (steaks, roasts and chops) to 145°F and allow to rest for 3 minutes. Hamburgers made of ground beef, pork, veal, and lamb should reach 160°F. All poultry (including ground) should reach a minimum of 165°F.

NEVER partially grill meat or poultry and finish cooking later.

REHEATING

When reheating fully cooked meats like hot dogs, grill to 165°F or until steaming hot.

KEEP HOT FOOD HOT

After cooking meat and poultry on the grill, keep it hot until served -- at 140°F or warmer.

Keep cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook. At home, the cooked meat can be kept hot in an oven set at approximately 200°F, in a chafing dish or slow cooker, or on a warming tray.

SERVING THE FOOD

When taking food off the grill, use a clean platter. Don't put cooked food on the same platter that held raw meat or poultry. Any harmful bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate safely cooked food. In hot weather (above 90°F), food should never sit out for more than 1 hour.

LEFTOVERS

Refrigerate any leftovers promptly in shallow containers. Discard any food left out more than 2 hours (1 hour if temperatures are above 90°F).

REMEMBER! Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

SAFE SMOKING

Smoking is cooking food indirectly in the presence of a fire. It can be done in a covered grill if a pan of water is placed beneath the meat on the grill. Meats also can be smoked in a "smoker," which is an outdoor cooker especially designed for smoking foods. Smoking is done much more slowly than grilling, so less tender meats benefit from this method, and a natural smoke flavoring permeates the meat. A thermometer is needed to monitor the air temperature in the smoker or grill to be sure the heat stays between 225 and 300°F throughout the cooking process."

Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature.

PIT ROASTING

Pit roasting is cooking meat in a large, level hole dug in the earth. A hardwood fire is built in the pit, requiring wood equal to about 2 1/2 times the volume of the pit. The hardwood is allowed to burn until the wood reduces and the pit is half filled with burning coals. This can require 4 to 6 hours burning time.

Cooking may require 10 to 12 hours or more and is difficult to estimate. A food thermometer must be used to determine the meat's safety and doneness. There are many variables such as outdoor temperature, the size and thickness of the meat, and how fast the coals are cooking.

Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures

| | |
|--|---|
| Whole Poultry | 165°F |
| Poultry Breasts | 165°F |
| Ground Poultry | 165°F |
| Hamburgers, Beef | 160°F |
| Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb (steaks, roasts, and chops) | Med Rare: 145°F and allow to rest for at least 3 mins. Med: 160°F |
| All cuts of Pork | 160°F |

Grilled Jalapeño Cheddar Meatballs

<https://beeflovingtexans.com/recipe/grilled-jalapeno-cheddar-meatballs/>

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. Ground Beef
- 1/2 cup tortilla chips, crushed
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3 fresh jalapeños, seeded and finely diced
- 8 oz. block of cheddar cheese, finely diced
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. Kosher salt



- Place the crushed tortilla chips in a large bowl, then add the milk and allow to soften the chips for about 10 minutes.
- After the mixture is soft and has absorbed all the milk, add the Ground Beef, jalapeño, cheese, paprika, garlic, and salt. Mix well to combine all ingredients, then scoop approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the mixture and form a meatball, repeat until all the mixture has been formed into balls.
- Place the meatballs on a plate or tray and refrigerate them for 30 minutes to firm.
- Light a grill for two zone cooking. For charcoal: light coals and pile them all on one side, creating a hot and cool zone. For propane: light the very end burner on the left or right side, but no other burners. It's recommended you place a piece of foil under the side without heat to catch any melting cheese for easy cleanup. The grill should be at MEDIUM temperature, about 350-375°F.
- Place the meatballs on the cool side of the grill (away from the coals or the lit burner) and close the grill lid. Grill for about 25-35 minutes, or until they reach 165°F internal temperature on a meat thermometer.
- Remove the meatballs from the grill and allow to cool slightly before serving.

Cooking Tip: Serve with Mexican rice, beans, or a side salad.

WE MOVED!

OUR NEW ADDRESS:

316 W Sabine St.

Next to Carthage Title

NEW PHONE NUMBER:

903-693-0380

RWFM Stewardship Webinar Series
Ecosystem Goods & Services:
What Lies Behind the Curtain?

August 3, 2023 | 12:00pm

- What are ecosystem services?
- Emergence of ecosystem service markets to capture financial benefits
- Exploration in new opportunities and applications of ecosystem services
- Managing ranch operations while capturing ecosystem services

\$35

Contact Casey.Matzke@ag.tamu.edu

Improving Profits in the Cattle Industry

“BULLS MATTER”

By Lee Dudley

Whether facing extreme weather conditions, or other external factors affecting market prices or drastically increasing input costs such as fertilizers, fuels or feed, profit margins in the cattle industry are always vulnerable. For operations to survive such market downturns as well as capitalize on upticks, it helps to get back to the basics, fine-tuning operations while planning for long-term success.

Let us examine different management practices that can help keep producers from having to pay to be in the cattle business. Remember, the difference between a hobby farmer and a professional rancher is if you pay to run cattle or if the cattle pay to run themselves.

Our first management practice, we will look at is one that represents 50% of your calf crops genetic makeup, the selection and management of our herd bulls. Economic data collected by the Noble Research Institute has shown that spending as little as \$750 to \$1,000 more on the purchase price of a bull with known superior genetics has the potential to net producers an additional \$1,500 more per bull, annually from increased weaning weights of the calf heard. Utilizing a sell all calves marketing strategy commonly referred to as a terminal breeding system, allows producers to increase total pounds of weaned calves while maintaining a cattle herd moderate in frame size. Likewise, producers looking to keep and raise replacement heifers, should consider bulls that have the potential to create a female that fits the environment and management that you expect her to work in. Consider traits such as milking ability, mature weight, frame size, carcass, and growth characteristics that are optimal for success in your herds environment.

So now the question to ask is, how can I justify spending more on a bull than I already do? To answer this let us, work through accouple scenarios.

Scenario 1) you purchase an average bull costing \$3000 whereas scenario 2) you purchase a higher quality bull that has a low birth weight combined with exceptional weaning



and yearling weights, which cost \$4500. For this example, let us say we keep both bulls for four years, covering twenty-five cows per year, totaling one hundred calves. The annual cost for each bull on a cow basis is \$30.00 and \$45.00 for Scenario 1 and Scenario 2, respectively excluding all other normal annual cost associations. Therefore, Scenario 2 bull only costs \$15.00 more per cow annually to purchase and own compared to the lower quality bull of Scenario 1. This means calves only need to bring \$15.00 more per head annually to breakeven and pay for the better-quality bull.

Now, let us look at the revenue side of the equation. Let us assume all calves weaned at the same time. Calves from Scenario one bull wean at 535 pounds, valued at let say \$2.15 per pound or \$1150.25 per head. Scenario two bull sire calves have weaning weights at 600 pounds valued at \$2.10 per pound or \$1260 per head. Making an increase in total value of \$109.75 per calf for the heavier calves from the Scenario 2 bull. This gives us a positive net difference of about \$94.75 more per calf (\$109.75 minus \$15.00) or a total of \$2,368.75 more for the 25 head of calves sired by the scenario two bull annually. From this demonstration we see that the additional purchase cost of \$1500 for the bull in scenario two is easily made up in the first calving season alone.

Remember, as calf prices decline, and total ranch profit diminishes so producers must look to increase profits by purchasing inputs that provide a profitable return to the ranch. The above example demonstrates how reducing input costs while sacrificing genetics does not always result in increased profits.

For more information pertaining to this topic or other questions you might have, fill free to call your Panola County AgriLife Extension Agent at (903)693-0380 or stop by and visit with us at our new office located at 316 W. Sabine St. Carthage TX. Just down from the County courthouse and remember we always have the coffee on.

PRODUCING FALL

GREEN BEANS

Greg Grant, Smith County horticulturist
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



Yes, I know it sounds insane to be planting vegetables now, but we produce crops based on the calendar, not on how we feel when doing it. Remember, time and tide wait for no man, so I'm planting pole beans today. Irrigation will be required, of course.

Green beans require warm soils to germinate and can't tolerate frosts, freezes, or hot temperatures so should be planted no later than August for a fall crop. Green beans pollinate and set pods best when the temperatures are in the 70's. Since our first frost normally arrives around mid-November, it's important to have fully established plants full of blooms when cooler temperatures arrive. After the seedlings establish themselves and have their first true leaves, thin the plants to 3-4 inches apart.

Green beans require at least 8 hours of direct sun each day. Beans aren't picky about soil types but should be planted in areas that drain well. It is ideal to till in several inches of compost or organic matter into the soil if possible and incorporate 2 pounds of a complete garden fertilizer (13-13-13, 10-20-10, etc.) per 100 square foot of bed or every 35 feet of row. The ideal soil pH for growing green beans is 6.0-7.5, so liming is probably in order here.

Green beans are direct-seeded into the garden. Create a raised row about 6 inches high and 8-12 inches wide. Multiple rows should be around 36 inches apart. Open a shallow trench 1-2 inches deep with the corner of a hoe or a

stick. Drop the seed several inches apart to insure a good stand. Cover lightly with loose soil using a hoe or garden rake. Make sure the seed isn't too deep or it won't germinate.

Check the progress of your green bean plants when they are 6-8 inches tall. If they are vigorous and healthy you don't need to do a thing. If they are pale green and not vigorous you will need to apply a high nitrogen fertilizer to stimulate their growth. Use 1 cup of ammonium sulfate (21-0-0) for every 35 feet of row. Sprinkle half of the fertilizer down each side of the row. Lightly work it into the soil and then water. This extra fertilizer application to boost the plants along is known as "side-dressing." Green beans are relatively pest free, however watch for aphids, stinkbugs, spider mites, and rust, and treat with an appropriately labeled pesticide following all label directions.

Green beans are generally ready to harvest about 56 days from seeding. Green beans should be harvested when the pods are young and tender, 3-5 inches long, and before the seeds inside begin to bulge. It's better to pick them too small than too large. Harvest them at least every other day so the pods don't become tough and stringy.

Recommended varieties for Texas include Blue Lake (round), Contender (round), Derby (round), Tendergreen (round), Topcrop (round), Blue Lake-Pole (round), Jade-Pole (round), Kentucky Wonder-Pole (round), Greencrop (flat), Roma II (flat), and Purple Podded Pole (flat). Green beans are native to Central America.



— THE PANOLA EXTENSION —

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