

September 2023

THE PANOLA EXTENSION

A Monthly Newsletter by the Panola County AgriLife Extension office



Panola County AgriLife Extension Service

Address:

316 W. Sabine St.
Carthage, Texas 75633

Phone:

(903) 693-0380

Email:

panola-tx@tamu.edu

Website:

www.Panola.AgriLife.org



Facebook:
[/PCAgriLife](https://www.facebook.com/PCAgriLife)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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

9/5: Labor Day, Office Closed

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

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

9/8: Master Gardeners Meeting, 12pm, Sammy Brown Library

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

9/14: 4-H Cookin' Night, 5:30pm, Extension Office

9/17: Walk Across Texas! Begins

9/19: Horticulture in the Evening, 5:30pm, Sammy Brown Library

9/26: Steer Validation, 5pm, Carthage Veterinary Hospital

9/29: East Texas Forage Conference, Hallsville

10/1-7: National 4-H Week

10/13-14: Junior Leadership Lab, Gilmer

10/15: General Photography, Entomology, and Fall Foliage Photography contest

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

In This Issue:

- Forget Low-Fat and Low-Sugar, Concentrate on a Healthy Eating Pattern
- 10 Reasons to Get Moving Today!
- Tex Mex Beef Lasagna
- East Texas Forage Conference
- Walk Across Texas! Begins
- Toxicant Effective Tool to Reduce Feral Hog Populations
- Wildlife Informational Meeting
- Understanding Need to Supplement Whitetail Deer
- Low Volume Irrigation
- Improving Profits in Cattle Through a Defined Calving Season

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





Forget Low-Fat and Low-Sugar, Concentrate on a Healthy Eating Pattern

www.eatright.org

You want to eat healthfully, but what's the best way to do it? Some of today's popular diets say to cut sugar while others restrict fat. With so many diet books and bloggers, it can be easy to become confused. But no matter the fad diet of the moment, choosing a balanced eating style that includes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein foods and dairy will provide you the nutrients and energy your body needs to help promote health.

A Healthy Eating Pattern

Rather than eating an exclusively fat-free or sugar-free diet, focus on your overall eating pattern. One meal does not make or break one's health; rather, it's what people do most of the time that has a significant impact. Choose options like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, seafood, lean meats and nuts more often. Meanwhile, eat fewer processed meats, sugar-sweetened drinks, desserts and refined grains.

Vegetables and fruits should take up the most space when filling your plate (roughly half). Fill the remainder with whole grains and lean protein foods. While not every plate requires each food group, pairing at least two or three different foods will increase your satisfaction and deliver more nutrients. And don't forget to pay attention to your body's hunger and fullness signals.

The Facts on Fat

The *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* emphasize oils rich in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids as part of a healthy eating pattern, and recommends limiting saturated and trans fats. Choosing the right kinds of fats, including those from fatty fish such as salmon, vegetable oils, nuts and seeds is especially important.

5 Tips for Making Good Decisions about Fat

- Include fatty fish, like salmon, trout or mackerel once or twice per week. Baked, grilled and steamed version will be better for overall health than those that are fried.
- Vary your protein choices by eating more plant-based choices, like soy foods, beans and lentils.
- Select lean cuts of meat and remove skin from poultry.
- Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products or calcium-fortified soy versions rather than the full-fat version.
- Choose healthful sources of fat when cooking or assembling meals, such as nuts, seeds, avocado and olive or vegetable oils.

The Facts on Sugar

The *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends limiting added sugars to less than 10% of daily calories. Added sugars can be found in foods such as sugar-sweetened beverages and refined grain snacks and desserts. Naturally occurring sugars in foods such as fruit and milk are not added sugars.

3 Tips for Reducing Added Sugar

- Re-think sweets: Enjoy desserts in moderation.
- Instead of a post-dinner dessert, close out a family mealtime with a cup of decaf coffee or herbal tea — but enjoy it without added sweeteners. Or, satisfy a post-meal sweet tooth with a piece of fruit.
- Switch from sweetened yogurt with added fruit to plain low-fat yogurt. Then, add fresh fruit for a nutritious, naturally sweet mid-morning snack. Fruit and low-fat dairy contain natural sugars that provide nutrients that promote health.

10 Reasons to Get Moving TODAY!

www.cdc.gov



Physical activity is one of the best things you can do to improve your health. Here are 10 benefits of physical activity to get you moving today!

Better Mood. Getting enough physical activity can immediately reduce feelings of anxiety and help you sleep better. Over the long-term, it can reduce the risk of depression. Regular walking, for example, can improve your mood, and participating in walking groups can help you remain socially connected to your neighbors and friends.

Better Brain Function. Regular physical activity can keep your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp and delay the decline of these skills as you age.

More Money in Your Wallet. 117 billion – That's how much our country spends each year in health care costs associated with low levels of physical activity. Not getting enough physical activity can increase your risk of developing a chronic disease, which comes with higher health care costs. Staying active is good for your health and your wallet, too.

Lower Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke. Heart disease and stroke are two of the leading causes of death in the United States. Being regularly active at a moderate intensity level can help lower risk for these diseases. Regular physical activity can also lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol levels.

Lower Risk of Type 2 Diabetes or Diabetes Complications. More than 34 million Americans have diabetes. Another 88 million US adults have a condition called prediabetes, which puts them at risk of type 2 diabetes. Regular physical activity helps prevent type 2 diabetes. If you already have diabetes (type 1 or type 2), you can help control your blood sugar levels by staying active.

Lower Risk of Some Cancers. Getting the recommended amount of physical activity can lower the risk of many

cancers. These include cancers of the bladder, breast, colon, endometrium, esophagus, kidney, lung, and stomach.

Longer Life. Being physically active can reduce your risk of dying early from leading causes of death such as heart disease and diabetes. About 110,000 deaths per year could be prevented if US adults age 40 and older increased moderate-to-vigorous physical activity by even 10 minutes a day.

Stronger Bones and Muscles. Doing aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening physical activities of at least moderate intensity can slow the loss of bone density. Being physically active can also help with arthritis pain and reduce the risk of hip fracture.

Fewer Sick Days. Physically active people tend to take fewer sick days. Some workplace wellness programs offer a gym, gym membership, or outdoor walking paths. If your workplace doesn't have a wellness program, management may be willing to start one. And you can always add physical activity on your own with walking meetings, physical activity breaks during long meetings, or taking a walk during your lunch break.

Better Grades in School. For kids, school physical activity programs can improve attention and some measures of academic performance. Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, school attendance, brain function, and classroom behaviors. You can also make physical activity part of your family's daily routine by taking family walks or playing active games together.

If you are wondering how to add physical activity to your life, see our sample schedule for ideas. Just be sure to pick activities that are enjoyable and match your abilities – and your kids', too. This will help everyone stay in the game!

Also, if you have a chronic health condition such as heart disease or arthritis, talk with your doctor first about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you.

Tex Mex Beef Lasagna

www.beeflovingtexans.com

Instructions:

- Preheat an oven to 375°F.
- In a large pan or skillet, heat the olive oil over MEDIUM-HIGH heat, then add the onion. Cook until softened, 4-5 minutes, stirring regularly.
- Add the Ground Beef and cook stirring regularly until the beef has browned.
- Add the Kosher salt, garlic, cumin, chipotle, and onion powder and stir well. Add the corn, black beans, and diced tomatoes. Turn heat down to MEDIUM and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat.
- In a bowl, combine the enchilada sauce and crema, and mix well.
- Spray a casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray. Pour about a ¼ cup of enchilada sauce mixture at the bottom to prevent the tortillas sticking.
- Layer 2-4 tortillas across the bottom, then top with a layer of the Ground Beef mixture. Use a ladle to spoon over some of the enchilada sauce mix, distributing evenly. Top with another layer of tortillas, then repeat the layers until the casserole is full. You should be able to make 3 to 4 layers. Top with shredded cheese.
- Loosely cover the dish with foil (in a tent shape to help prevent the cheese from sticking) then place into the oven for 30 minutes.
- Remove the foil and bake for an additional 10-15 minutes until the cheese is bubbly and golden brown.
- Allow to cool for 5 minutes before serving.



Ingredients:

2 lbs. Ground Beef
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, diced
2 tsp. Kosher salt
1 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. cumin
2 tsp. chipotle powder
1/2 tsp. onion powder
15 oz. canned corn, drained
15 oz. canned seasoned black beans, drained
10 oz. canned diced tomatoes with green chiles, drained
15 oz. canned red enchilada sauce
1 cup Mexican crema or sour cream
12 corn tortillas
8 oz. shredded Mexican blend cheese

Optional Ingredients: Cilantro and Green Onions

WE

MOVED!

OUR NEW ADDRESS: **316 W SABINE ST.**

Next to Carthage Title

NEW PHONE NUMBER: **903-693-0380**

PANOLA COUNTY HAY SHOW

October 19 | Panola County Expo Hall

5:30pm Registration | 6:00pm Meal and Awards

RSVP by October 16 at 903-693-0380

Topic: Grazing Management and Soil Health by Dr. Olson

SAMPLES DUE BY SEPTEMBER 6

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

Horticulture in the Evening

September 19

5:30pm

Sammy Brown Library

Topic: To Be Determined



Diabetes Support Group Meeting

second Wednesday every Month!

September 13, 2023

10:00am

Sammy Brown Library



Panola County

4-H CLUBS

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	2nd Sunday, 2:30pm, 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, 7:00pm 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 Sunday, 3:00pm Expo Hall
STILL WATERS 4-H	Corie Young 903-692-7737	3rd Monday, 6:30pm Still Waters Cowboy Church



Show Star Series



Rusk County Youth Expo Center
Henderson, TX

Saturday **Nov. 11**: Beef, Goat, and Lamb **Clinic**

Sunday **Nov. 12**: Beef, Goat, and Lamb **Jackpot Show**



For More Info Go To:
<https://agrilife.org/etsss>

Panola County Jr Livestock Show **STEER VALIDATION**

September 26 | 5pm
Carthage Veterinary Hospital

All 4-H and FFA Members of Panola County if you are planning on showing a steer at the 2024 Panola County Jr Livestock Show, you must bring your Steer for Validation and Weigh on September 26th to Carthage Veterinary Hospital at 1024 Hwy 59 N, Carthage, TX from 5 - 6 pm. Remember the cost to enter the PCJLS is \$30 per animal/exhibitor, and we ask that you please make Checks payable to PCJLS.

4-H COOKIN' NIGHT

**September 14, 5:30,
Extension Office**

Topic: Knife Skills and Garnishing with
Mary Zapata from Panola College



4-H CLUB MANAGER TRAINING

September 7: Best Financial Practices
5:30-7:00pm via Zoom

ALL CLUB MANAGERS
are required to attend!

JUNIOR LEADERSHIP LAB

OCTOBER 13-14
Camp Gilmont - Gilmer

Information & Registration
Open September 11

District Photography Contests



October 15 - March 1: General Photography Contest

October 15 - March 1: Entomology ID Photography Contest

October 15 - December 15: Fall Foliage ID & Photography Contest



Lone Star Healthy Streams Joins

East Texas Forage Conference

on September 29th for an Informative Workshop

3 CEU's | RSVP 903-935-8413



Don't miss out on this year's East Texas Forage Conference featuring a special workshop by Lone Star Healthy Streams. The event, spanning multiple counties including Gregg, Harrison, Marion, Panola, Rusk, and Upshur, is set to take place on September 29th at Gold Hall in Hallsville. This year's conference promises a wealth of knowledge on managing grazing livestock, Feral Hog Control, and Best Management Practices for fertilizer and herbicide applications.

The East Texas Forage Conference, an eagerly anticipated event among agricultural enthusiasts, has announced an exciting addition to its lineup this year. Lone Star Healthy Streams will be presenting a workshop as part of the conference, focusing on crucial aspects of sustainable land management and agricultural practices. Organized in collaboration with the aforementioned counties, the conference aims to provide valuable insights and networking opportunities for local farmers, ranchers, and agribusiness professionals.

"We are thrilled to have Lone Star Healthy Streams join our conference this year. Their expertise aligns perfectly with our mission to promote sustainable land management and educate attendees on best practices," expressed a spokesperson from the conference organizing committee.

The workshop will feature extension specialists who will delve into various topics vital to the success of East Texas agriculture. Attendees can look forward to in-depth discussions on managing grazing livestock, a critical aspect of maintaining healthy pastures and optimizing livestock production. Furthermore, the workshop will address the pressing concern of Feral Hog Control, offering effective strategies to mitigate the damages caused by these invasive pests.

One of the focal points of the workshop will be the exploration of Best Management Practices for fertilizer and herbicide applications. As sustainable farming gains prominence, understanding how to optimize nutrient management and minimize environmental impact has become paramount. The session promises to equip attendees with practical insights that can significantly enhance their land management techniques.

To make the event even more enticing, attendees will be treated to a complimentary meal sponsored by Legacy Ag Credit. In light of this, organizers kindly request attendees to RSVP, ensuring adequate arrangements are in place. Moreover, for those with a Texas Department of Agriculture Private Applicator License, the conference offers the opportunity to earn 3 Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

For individuals seeking to obtain their Private Applicator license, the option to attend the necessary class and subsequent test will also be available on the same day and at the same location.

The conference won't just be an educational affair; it will also feature multiple vendors and exciting door prizes, adding a touch of excitement to the informative sessions.

To learn more about the event and secure your spot, interested individuals can reach out to the organizers at 903-935-8413. The East Texas Forage Conference and the Lone Star Healthy Streams workshop promise to be a vital resource for anyone invested in the future of East Texas agriculture.

WALK ACROSS TEXAS!

Sept. 17 - Nov. 11

8 weeks | 832 Miles

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

Is there a cost? NO, it's FREE!

How do I sign up? Visit [HowdyHealth.org](https://www.howdyhealth.org) to create a profile and do a short pre-program survey.

Do I have to walk? You can do any sort of physical activity! You can count minutes you've spent gardening, biking, push-mowing, etc. Any activity that raises your heart rate counts.

Who is the WAT! program for? Anyone who wants a fun, motivational team approach to being more active. There are adult and youth versions of the program.

How do I join a team? Team captains will create a team in Howdy health. They can invite members to the team via email within the system OR they can give you a team code that you will put in when you register.



Pro Tip: If you want to create a team of adults, but don't want everyone to have to log their own activity, you can join the YOUTH league and the captain will log activity for everyone on their team!

Panola County Adults 2023 League Code (for any adults in the community): [watL-230616-61568](#)

Panola County 2023 YOUTH League Code: [watLY-230628-29477](#)

For more information, visit our website or [howdyhealth.org](https://www.howdyhealth.org).

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

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Study Shows

Toxicant Effective Tool to Reduce Feral Hog Populations

By Adam Russell

Communication Specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife



A warfarin-based toxicant has been shown to be an effective option for landowners in the control of feral hog numbers and damage on their property, according to a study by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

The two-year study was conducted by [Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management](#) associate professor and AgriLife Extension wildlife specialist John Tomeček, Ph.D., and Michael Bodenchuk, director of [Texas Wildlife Services](#). The evaluation took place on 23 sites in 10 counties across the various regions of the state. Tomeček said his and Bodenchuk's team were able to reduce feral hog numbers effectively and efficiently with diligent application of the product.

"Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service was tasked with evaluating the product's ability to reduce feral hog numbers and damage in regions across the state and seasons of the year," Tomeček said. "We found that it can be highly effective when utilized correctly and saw no access to the toxicant by non-target species when all feeder devices functioned properly."

John Sharp, Chancellor of [The Texas A&M University System](#), said the study is an important step in the fight to curb the economic and environmental impact of feral hogs in Texas and across the nation.

There are more than 3 million feral hogs that cause more than \$500 million in damage to agriculture and private property throughout Texas each year, according to the most recent economic estimates. Feral hogs are a burden on native wildlife and responsible for widespread disturbances within native ecosystems.

"Texas A&M AgriLife experts are the leading authorities on feral hog control in the nation, and we are the first to test this in a real-world application and to show that this warfarin-based toxicant can be effective for reducing these pests," Sharp said. "Unabated feral hog populations threaten our natural resources, our livelihoods and our quality of life, and our goal, as a land-grant institution, is to provide safe, effective, science-backed solutions for all Texans."

Evaluating toxicant as a tool

The goals of the study were to conduct field evaluations of a low-dose warfarin-based toxicant to determine its efficacy in various regions of the state and to assess the product's ability to help landowners prevent property damage and economic harm from feral hogs.

The team of AgriLife Extension specialists worked with private landowners on recommended application methodologies to provide real-world testing conditions for the product and the suggested best practices.

Bait that included warfarin was placed in specially designed dispensers that prevent access by non-target species, Tomeček said. Feral hogs were conditioned to access the bait before the product was applied. Once the product was applied, feral hogs consumed lethal doses within five days of consistent access to the bait.

The product is not considered acutely toxic to non-target animals in the event some might gain limited access to the bait nor is it found at lethal levels within the tissue of deceased feral hogs, Tomeček said.

Correctly and consistently are the key words for effective use of warfarin, Tomeček said.

After a trial period of close supervision and instruction, landowners in the study applied and managed the bait themselves. During the project, the Texas A&M AgriLife team made several discoveries that will help increase efficacy of the product when applied.

Landowners who checked the feeder for mechanical issues and replaced bait consistently as part of their regular maintenance schedule reported sharp declines in feral hog numbers and damage levels over the seasons of the year. Landowners who did not adhere to instruction reported mixed to low success in curbing feral hog numbers on their property. These results were true, regardless of the season of the year or the region of the state where the trial was being conducted.

Rick Avery, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension director, said AgriLife Extension is dedicated to providing effective, science-backed tools and information to Texas landowners dealing with feral hogs. "This toxicant is a new tool to have in the toolbox as we deal with feral hog populations across the state," Avery said.

Harrison & Panola Soil and Water Conservation Districts present:

Harrison/Panola
WILDLIFE
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3

Vendors and Exhibits Open at 5pm | Catfish Dinner and Program at 6pm
Crossroads Baptist Church :: 11763 FM 31 | Marshall, TX 75672

Guest Speaker:

Jacob Dykes, PH.D.

*Assistant Professor and
Extension Wildlife Specialist
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Corpus Christi, TX*

Door Prizes

Catfish Dinner

Vendors

White Tail Deer Nutrition Information

and an

Ageing & Scoring Demonstration

by Dr. Jacob Dykes

FREE EVENT

RSVP by September 22 :: 903-935-8413 or 903-693-0380

Understanding Need to SUPPLEMENT WHITETAIL DEER

By: Lee Dudley



Across the United States, the debate continues, I am not talking about the one between our two presidential candidates this past Monday night, but rather the long-standing fight about supplemental feeding of our native whitetail deer. Currently, 22 states have partial or total bans on feeding or baiting deer. Thank the good lord we live in Texas where deer may be fed year-round. However, even within our own state borders, opinions range from those who believe feeding deer is an inappropriate management strategy, to those who say feed “24-7-365.”

In this article, we will look at a few of the reasons to feed as well as help you in getting a better understating of the nutritional requirements of whitetail deer. Our area hunters can utilize the information within this article when deciding whether and how to properly supplement our native whitetail deer herds here in Panola County.

When we start looking at the reasons, to supplement often the number one reason revolves around utilizing bait to either enhance harvest potential or to increase the viewing opportunities for ecotourism. Another thought is to supplement deer only during times of nutritional short falls such as summer, winter, or during droughts. This practice is more in line with the philosophy we use with our cattle herds across the country, supplementing with Mother Nature cannot adequately provide everything needed in their diets. And our last reason we often decide to supplement our native whitetail deer herds is to increase the carrying capacity above that of what the native habitat can provide for. Again, this is a practice that is common with our cattle herds where we increase carrying capacity on our native forages by introducing improved forage varieties in combination with supplemental feeding. Increase the carrying capacity per acre within our cow herds.

To see the potential benefits of these practices, one must understand the nutrient requirements of white-tailed deer. Like cattle, whitetail deer are ruminants, however their diet selection is very different, with cattle being primary grass-

roughage eaters, whitetail deer selectively browse trees and shrub eaters. The cause for this difference in diet selection is a smaller rumen in relation to body size making deer less suited than sheep, cattle, and bison to degrading long fibrous forages. Therefore, whitetail deer are best suited to digesting the leaves and stems of trees and shrubs (woody browse) and broad leaf herbaceous plants (forbs) that form small particles in the rumen. Therefore, the diet of a deer consists primarily of forbs and browsing 80 percent or more, and to a limited extent, grasses 5 percent or less. The only grasses deer use to any extent are ones that are rapidly degraded in the rumen, such as the small grains, ryegrass. Other native plants used by white-tailed deer include fruits, acorns, and mushrooms at about 15 percent.

Typically, deer utilize forages that have a higher digestibility than 65 percent. For example, a deer consuming a diet containing 6 percent crude protein will maintain muscle when animals consume about 2 percent of body mass as dry forage per day. However, for proper growth and reproductive success, a deer needs to consume 3 to 5 percent of its body mass per day in food with a protein concentration of 12 to 16 percent. Deer can be considered under nutritional stress and unable to achieve optimal growth and reproduction if available native forages cannot provide these requirements. During these periods, the goal of the wildlife manager is to provide steady, ample, nutritional forage. This is typically accomplished with planted forages, or food plots and feed rations.

In Summary, whitetail deer generally need supplemental nutrition during the late summer and winter months when native forages place them in nutritional stress. The proper selection of improved forage species maximizing available nutrition during these seasons in combination with selected supplement feeds will provide the time critical nutrition for proper growth and reproductive success of our local deer populations.

Low Volume Irrigation

By Greg Grant
Smith County Horticulturist
for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



Efficient irrigation is one of the key Earth-Kind practices for conserving water in the landscape. Low volume irrigation systems (sometimes referred to as drip or trickle irrigation) are among the most effective means of achieving significant water savings. Despite the tremendous potential for water conservation and foliar disease prevention, these systems are not widely used in residential landscapes. Like conventional overhead irrigation systems, low volume systems require proper design, installation, maintenance, and operation for optimum water savings and plant performance.

Like all types of irrigation systems, if not operated properly, low volume systems can be wasteful and ineffective. A thorough understanding of the landscape's soil/plant/water relationship is critically important in determining how much water should be applied at each irrigation. Remember, a deep soaking of the entire root zone is recommended to prevent shallow roots and to increase drought tolerance.

One of the most important benefits of low-volume irrigation is the potential to reduce or eliminate water waste. Low-volume systems do an excellent job of applying water to meet specific plant needs. The rate of application also more closely matches the soil's infiltration rate, and water is directly applied to the plant root system to maximize water use efficiency and reduce loss through evaporation. Since water is directed exactly where it is needed most, very little is wasted on the areas between widely spaced plants, or on sidewalks, streets, and driveways.

Some Common Low Volume Irrigation Systems:

Soaker Hose: A soaker hose is one of the most basic means of applying supplemental irrigation to the landscape. Small holes in the hose provide a low volume of water which

“soaks” into the soil. A soaker hose can be moved to various locations within the landscape, or it can be left in a more permanent location and pressurized by a regular garden hose as needed.

Porous Hose: A porous hose is very similar to a soaker hose. However, its unique construction material enables the entire hose to deliver irrigation water. These systems are frequently used in landscape beds and are also used in sub-irrigation systems for turfgrass. A porous hose can be an effective means of providing water to the landscape, however, the delivery rate can be somewhat variable in areas that are not level.

Drip: Drip systems typically use plastic pipe or tubing to deliver water to a small drip emitter. Emitters come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and specifications while some are embedded into the tubing. Most are rated in gallons per hour, making it relatively easy to determine how much water is being applied at each irrigation. Drip emitters can be spaced evenly along the delivery pipe or clustered at specific locations around plants. Drip emitters with pressure compensation and backflow prevention provide optimum control over the volume of irrigation water supplied.

The use of a high-quality low-volume irrigation system is one of the most valuable Earth-Kind practices available for conserving water in the landscape. These systems are typically low cost, easy to operate and relatively maintenance free so I take full advantage of them.

To read the “Low Volume Irrigation” publication in its entirety or for more information on Earth-Kind landscaping, visit the Aggie Horticulture website.



Improving Profits in Cattle Through a DEFINED CALVING SEASON

By Lee Dudley

For livestock operations to survive market downturns as well as capitalize on the upturns, it helps to get back to the basics, fine-tune operations and plan for long-term management strategies. As we continue to examine different management practices and concepts, we need to understand that the difference between a hobby farmer and a professional is one the producer pays to run cattle, the other, cattle pay to run themselves. Remember, as calf prices decline, and total ranch profit diminishes, producers must look to increase profits by utilizing inputs that provide a profitable return to the ranch.

For this segment on improving profits in the cattle herd, let's investigate the benefits of developing a defined breeding season. It is easy to understand that by increasing the number of early calving cows during a set calving season, will increase the average weaning weight over the whole calf crop at marketing time. For example, say you have a 90-day calving period, a calf born in the first 30 days of the season gaining on average 2 pounds per day while on the cow, will weigh 60 pounds more than those calves born in the last thirty days of the season on the day of weaning. That's roughly a 10% increase in weight by simply having calves born in the first third of the calving season. To ensure calves grow out to full potential while nursing the cow, make sure to time calving seasons so cows are in peak lactation when pastures have the highest forage quality and quantity available. Normally cattle reach peak lactation 2 – 3 months after calving.

After hearing this segment so far, you might be asking, how do I begin a controlled calving season, or shorten my existing one? To answer this, we need to make sure we are recording calving dates to determine the time frame our current season or if we have a season at all. If you currently leave bulls year-round with cows, you might find most have naturally bred to calve the time of year when forage quality is at its peak. If this is the case, getting the herd on a controlled schedule would simply be a matter of culling those cows that calve at the wrong time or not calving consistently. Another option, say your wife is just too attached with your current cows, so we simply need to slowly tighten the breeding season, keep in mind, this could take up to 4 years to achieve. During that time, you will still need to replace those that fail to calf on a consistent basis. Regardless of which option to tighten your breeding season you choose, when replacing culls, it is key to select heifers and or cows that are bred to calve slightly before your desired calving period.

Join us next time as we discuss more strategies you can implement to better take advantage of the market upturns in calf prices while minimizing the downturn in calf prices. And remember, the difference between a hobby farmer and a professional is one the producer pays to run cattle, the other, cattle pay to run themselves. 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 coffee on.



— THE PANOLA EXTENSION —

Panola County AgriLife Extension Service

Address:

316 W. Sabine St.
Carthage, Texas 75633

Phone:

(903) 693-0380

Email:

panola-tx@tamu.edu

Website:

www.Panola.AgriLife.org

Facebook:



[/PCAgriLife](https://www.facebook.com/PCAgriLife)

LEE DUDLEY

Agriculture & Natural Resource, County Coordinator

CLARISSA MOON

Family & Community Health, 4-H Coordinator

LANI WEST

Support Staff - Secretary

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

