

USDA Disaster Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing technical and financial assistance to help Texas farmers and livestock producers recover from damages brought on by winter storms Uri and Viola. Agricultural producers are encouraged to contact their [local USDA Service Center](#) to learn about the programs available to help them recover from crop, land, infrastructure, and livestock losses.

Click on one of the programs below for more information:

- [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#)
- [Disaster Assistance Available for Livestock Losses – Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#)
- [Sign-up for the Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#)
- [Applying for FSA Direct Loans](#)
- [USDA NRCS Offers Technical, Financial Assistance in Response to Texas Winter Storm Damage](#)
- [USDA RMA Reminds Producers to Report Crop Insurance Losses](#)

IN NEED OF CEU HOURS?

If you are in need of CEU hours because your license is about to expire soon you can visit [AgriLife Learn](#). There are several videos you can sign up to watch at home.

With restrictions across the state on safeguards related to the pandemic, the Texas Department of Agriculture has extended the exemption of agriculture Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements. Here is some important information for license holders:

- **COMMERCIAL, NON-COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL POLITICAL APPLICATORS:** For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY: TDA will exempt commercial, non-commercial and non-commercial political applicators who have taken online or correspondence courses within the last year. The TDA Rule 7.24 (t) (2) does not allow for online or correspondence courses to be taken 2 years consecutively. In light of the unusual circumstances due to Covid 19 (coronavirus), the TDA will allow online or correspondence courses to be taken in consecutive years. This exemption will be for the current 2021 licensing period. *Commercial, Non-Commercial and Non-Commercial Political Applicators are required to obtain 5 CEUs per licensing period.*
- **PRIVATE APPLICATORS:** For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY: The TDA will also exempt private applicators from the TDA Rule 7.24 (v) (5). This rule does not allow a private applicator to acquire more than 10 CEUs through correspondence courses. During this quarantine time frame, private applicators will be allowed to acquire ALL of their CEUs through correspondence courses (online). *Private Applicators are required to obtain 15 CEU hours per 5-year licensing period (2 – Laws & Regulations, 2 – Integrated Pest Management, 11 – General)*
- Once the restrictions have been lifted and courses are scheduled again, applicators will be required to obtain their required CEUs for their respective license classification for each licensing period. By allowing a CEU exemption, this will allow the applicators to maintain their ability to perform pesticide applications for pests, weeds, insects etc., without disrupting daily business functions. Applicators are encouraged to complete online courses even if online courses were completed the previous licensing period.

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

March 19th – New Landowners Series – Introduction and Program Overview (1Hr CEU), Washington County
March 25th – Smart Fertilization (1Hr CEU)– Brazoria & Galveston Counties
March 26th – Beef Cattle Management (3Hrs CEU) – Four County Auction Barn, Industry 12:30pm
April 10th – Bluebonnet Master Gardener Plant Sale, Levine Park Sealy
April 10th – Mill Creek Water Shed Clean-up Event
April 16th – New Landowners Series– Weed & Brush Control (3Hrs CEU), Colorado County
April 23rd – Small Farms & Vegetable Conference- (5Hrs CEU) - American Legion Hall, Sealy 8:30am
April 30th – Private Applicators Training, Austin County Extension Office 12:45pm

MULTI-COUNTY NEW LANDOWNERS SEMINAR SERIES

The Multi-County New Landowner Education program is a series of 8 informational meetings, seminars, and field days designed to make new landowners in Austin, Colorado, Fayette, & Washington Counties aware of what types of agricultural enterprises are best for their property. Participants in the program will hear from experts in a variety of fields in agriculture about best management practices that can be implemented on their own property. This innovative program assists new landowners in understanding the concepts of rural living. Participants in the program are given exposure to ideas on raising livestock and horses, plant identification, fence building, applying pesticides, soil testing, stock pond management, pond construction, fruit and nut production, rain water harvesting, turf management, and much more. The program also serves as a way for new residents of the four counties to network and meet new people in their communities, find out what can be done on their land, what operations can be successful, and possibly what opportunities they have to serve the community.

The programs will be held on the ***third Friday of the months of March through June and August through November***. Each month's meeting will be held at different locations in one of the four counties. The meetings begin at 1:30pm and will last between 4 and 5 hours depending on the topic and possible tour stops. The cost for the program series is \$125.00 per person, \$200.00 per couple for all eight meetings, \$20.00 per person per meeting. Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for pesticide applicators will be offered as they are applicable. A great selection of refreshments will be provided at each session. Participants who sign up for the **entire series** will receive a notebook at the beginning of the series to fill as we progress through the program with handouts and reference material that will be useful as they move forward with improvements on their property.

- **March 19th** – Introduction and Program Overview – Ag & Wildlife Valuations
- **April 16th** – Weed & Brush Control – Plant Identification and Control Recommendations for Common Weeds and Brush
- **May 21st** – Forage &/or Livestock Production – Options for Small Acreage Operations
- **June 18th** – Pond Management – Construction, Aquatic Weed Control, and Stocking
- **August 20th** – Bees and Trees for Homeowners
- **September 17th** – Horticulture Production – Fruit Trees, Pecans, and Grapes for Landowners
- **October 15th** – Wildlife Management and Native Prairie Restoration
- **November 19th** – Emerging Issues for Rural Landowners

March Program – Introduction (Ag/Wildlife Tax Valuation) – Washington County Expo VIP Building

The first meeting for the 2021 series will take place on ***Friday, March 19, 2021*** at the Washington County Expo VIP Building located at 1305 East Blue Bell Road in Brenham. Our initial session will provide an overview of the program, share information for local resources, and provide participants with an opportunity to learn more about the fundamentals of getting started with managing their property. Representatives from the County Appraisal District Offices in each county will also be on hand for individual county breakout sessions to help answer questions related to Ag/Wildlife Tax Valuation for participants. This is a great opportunity to network with other new landowners and learn about resources that can be of great assistance to you in establishing an agricultural or wildlife exemption for your property. One CEU (1 Gen) will be available for licensed pesticide applicators. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity!

Plans are in place to offer the program as a face-to-face program but please know we will be evaluating the ongoing pandemic and if necessary, we will transition the program to an online delivery to keep everyone's health and safety at the forefront of our plans.

For more information, please contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office in Austin County (979-865-2072), Colorado County (979-732-2082), Fayette County (979-968-5831), or Washington County (979-277-6212). Registration materials and more information can also be found on our website, <https://washington.agrilife.org/nlo>

Private Applicator Trainings

If you plan on using a state limited use or state restricted use pesticide, such as Grazon P+D, 2 4- D, Weedmaster, etc., and need a license, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service will be sponsoring a Private Applicator Training and Testing throughout 2021 at the Austin County Extension office. Books and study materials for the course can be purchased from the Extension office ahead of time or the day of for \$40. A registration fee of \$10 will be charged for the training. The registration fee will include the training and additional study materials. The training will begin at 1 pm and conclude by 5pm. The Texas Department of Agriculture who oversees the testing and administration of Applicator Licensing has contracted with PSI Services to administer the exam for agriculture pesticide applicator licensing. Applicants will coordinate testing with PSI at one of their 22 locations around Texas. Details on the process, locations, cost, and other pertinent information will be provided at the training to help applicants complete the licensing process. *See Flyer for details*

FREEZE AFTER EFFECTS ON CATTLE

By: Joe Paschal, PhD. Extension Livestock Specialist, Corpus Christi

A friend and colleague of mine, Dr. Ted McCollum, who was an Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in Amarillo for many years but is now retired to ranching in New Mexico, came up with many of these after a blizzard hit the Texas Panhandle in late 2015. He reminds us that even after the weather warmed up that we should continue to watch our livestock for the aftereffects, especially of this weeklong freeze.

The weeklong freezing temperatures and windchill can have especially long-lasting impact on livestock. Tails and ears and even cows' teats and udders and bulls' sheaths and scrotums could be frost bitten causing some partial loss (tails, ears, and teats) or loss of function (testes) in the next few days or weeks. However, Dr. McCollum said that these were not long-term threats to the animal's well-being.

Cows with frostbitten udders or frozen teats may be sensitive, reducing milk production and consumption by their calves for a few days. Also, there might be some mastitis and partial loss of udder function. Cows calving this Spring could also be affected but it would not be noticeable until they calve and begin lactating so they should be evaluated then too.

Prepuces and scrotums of bulls exposed to freezing temperatures and wind chills may have been damaged, especially bulls with slightly larger sheaths and prepuces. Bulls being used now or considered for use should have a breeding soundness examination (BSE) performed on them. Semen production is a long-term process and fertility could be impacted for one or two months.

Bulls breeding fall calving herds should have a BSE performed as soon as possible to check for injury and semen quality to ensure a high percent calf crop. Cows in fall calving herds that are not bred could have delayed estrus and pregnancy resulting in late calves. Estrus activity should return to normal in a few weeks if there are no other injuries.

Cattle and other livestock that survived the extremely frigid temperatures for days are physically very stressed, even those that were adequately supplemented and sheltered. Producers should monitor their herd's body condition scores and possibly increase supplemental feeding for the remainder of breeding season (for fall calving cows) or calving (for spring calving cows). Finally, observe your livestock closely for other signs that even though they survived the weather, something just is not quite right.

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IDENTIFYING THE STRENGTHS AND NEEDS OF TEXAS COMMUNITIES

TexasSpeaks is being conducted in Austin County and across the State of Texas to allow the citizens of Texas to provide their input on the assets and issues in their communities. The local branch of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has a rich history of providing educational programs that address the most critical issues in the county and invites your participation in the TexasSpeaks process.

The Extension Service highly values the opinions shared through the TexasSpeaks community assessment. The expectation is that the assessment will take about 10 minutes.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a statewide network of professional educators, trained volunteers, and county offices. It reaches into every Texas county to address local priority needs and to extend the latest research to the people of Texas. Some of the major efforts are in mitigating drought impacts; conserving water use in homes, landscapes, and production agriculture; improving emergency management; enhancing food security; and protecting human health through education about diet, exercise, and disease prevention and management.

You can provide your input by going to the following: tx.ag/texasspeaks or by scanning the QR code. For the code, open your camera on your smart phone and hold over the QR code, the website should pop up. We ask that you complete the survey to help us.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Austin County Extension office at (979-865-2072) or email us at austin-tx@tamu.edu. Thank you very much for your involvement in this process!



Winter Storm: What impact did it have on insects?

By: Sonja Swiger, PhD., Associate Professor & Veterinary/Medical Extension Entomologist, Stephenville

It is only natural after having a very unprecedented storm like Uri that just shut down Texas, to start thinking of what other impacts will we see. As an entomologist, the questions I am receiving are along the lines of "how did or will the storm impact the insects this year?"

Since I grew up in Florida and did my schooling there prior to moving to Texas, I really have no first hand data on what winter does to insects. Definitely two states that don't have real winter and my home town is always above 70 to 100 degrees year-round, most years.

So I decided to ask my colleagues for their insight and basically we all say about the same thing.

The northern counties of Texas, which do have some winter, will have little to no impact on their insect populations despite the snow and freezing temps. Reason? The insects are still hibernating. They are in their egg or pupal stage and are winterized. If the storm had hit later into spring, there could have been some impact.

In the southern counties of Texas that could have active insect stages already, there could be impact but probably only minor. It takes extended periods of freezing temperatures to affect whole populations and while a few individual insects may have been impacted, not all would have been.

Since my main areas are mosquitoes and flies, I will address them in particular.

For mosquitoes, I would say little impact based on the species of concern but *Culex* may be worth watching this year as they overwinter as adults. The others overwinter as eggs and are designed for extremes.

For flies, emergence is usually not until March to May, depending on species, and they would not be impacted by the storm. We typically do not see fly populations return until spring and while the storm has stopped any early stable fly emergence, there will be others that did not emerge yet that will in the next couple weeks and get the population back on track.

Comments from my colleagues in regards to other insects of concern.

"I suspect red banded stink bugs took a hit, and to a lesser degree fall armyworm. It may delay sugarcane aphid to some extent." From Dr. Kerns, College Station

"The thick layer of snow and 'subterranean' structures, I suspect, will lead to no drastic changes in pest complex in urban or greenhouse settings this growing season – but that's a hypothesis. Our house water line which is about 1-foot underground didn't freeze, and even after our first snow fall, I was able to find melted snow at the soil level. Snow is quite a good insulator – so temps at the soil level (or below) didn't reach quite as cool as ambient." From Dr. Vafaie, Overton

"The cold will have no effect on corn rootworm because the eggs are below ground. They can't even freeze them out in Minnesota or Canada." From Dr. Porter, Lubbock

"I did get my soil thermometer out during this mess a little bit, and at the coldest we got to about 15 degrees and our soil at 6" was still at 38 degrees. We had very little snow here, and there was ice on the ground. I am interested to see how this year shakes out after that mess, and I hope the red banded took a hit." Kate Crumley, Wharton, Jackson, & Matagorda Co.

"Looked at some wheat this afternoon and did not see much of a reduction in bird cherry oat aphid numbers. The beneficial population took a big hit out of this winter weather." Tyler Mays, Hill & McLennan Co

"Brown marmorated stink bug overwinters as an adult in anthropogenic structures and under tree bark. It tends to survive quite well despite "polar vortexes" that occur on the East Coast. However, as noted by others, the impact will be species-dependent and whether any warm periods preceding the cold weather broke diapause too early." Dr. Ludwick, Corpus Christi

So short answer, probably won't be a big impact since it was still winter for most insects. If this had come after spring hatch, then things would be different. Saw bees at my house yesterday! So it is what it is. Insects are very resilient.

Introduction Ag/Wildlife Valuations

2021 Multi-County New Landowner Educational Series



***March 19,
2021***

**Washington County Expo
VIP Building**

1305 East Blue Bell Road
Brenham, Texas 77833

Registration 12:30-1:00 pm

Program 1:00-5:00 pm

\$20/Person/Session

\$125/Person/Series - \$200/Couple/Series

To register online visit:

<https://washington.agrilife.org/nlo>

Topics to be covered:
**Overview of Program Series
Local Resources
County Appraisal Districts**

Plans are in place to offer the program as a face-to-face program but please know we will be evaluating the ongoing pandemic and if necessary, we will transition the program to an online delivery to keep everyone's health and safety at the forefront of our plans.

**For More
Information
Please Contact:**

Stacie Villarreal

Austin County

(979) 865-2072

Austin.Agrilife.org

Laramie Kettler

Colorado County

(979) 732-2082

Colorado.Agrilife.org

Scott Willey

Fayette County

(979) 968-5831

Fayette.Agrilife.org

Kara Matheney

Washington County

(979) 277-6212

Washington.Agrilife.org



1 CEU
(1 Gen)

Brazoria & Galveston Counties

Smart Fertilization

PART OF THE 2021 FORAGE SERIES

Join us and guest presenter, Dr. Jake Mowrer, State Extension Soil Specialist, to discuss what's in your soil. Review basics about soil and why it's important to everything on your land. Save money by learning how to read soil tests, compare fertilizers through online tools, and reduce use of unnecessary fertilizers.

March 25, 2021

Program 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Two Ways to Participate

1) Virtual (computer, tablet, phone)

\$15/person

2) In-Person at Galveston Office

4102-B Main Street, La Marque, 77568

\$20/person, pre-registered

NO on-site registration

Includes meal

CEU Credits

1 General

**Register 3 days
before program**

tinyurl.com/y3s8tahk

More info? Contact

Jean Godwin, admin assistant, or

Jessica Chase, CEA-AGNR

jean.godwin@ag.tamu.edu

979-864-1558

brazoria.agrilife.org/agriculture

Reese Daily, admin assistant, or

Phoenix Rogers, CEA-AGNR

charissa.daily@co.galveston.tx.us

281-309-5068

galveston.agrilife.org/agnr

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This program is one of a 6-part series. Whether you are new to being a land steward, or have been in the business for years, there is something for everyone in this 6-part series. Come to one or come to all.

If you need special accommodations, please contact the Extension Office no later than seven days before the program so we can consider your request. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Beef Cattle Management Seminar

3 CEU's

March 26, 2021

Registration: 12:30pm

Program: 1pm-4:30pm

\$20/person

Four County Auction Center

15900 TX HWY 159

Industry, TX 778944

Topics:

- Utilization of Drones for Pasture Management
- Importance of Soil Fertility in Growing Forages
- Improving Marketability of Cattle with Parasite Control and Herd Health Management

Speaker:

Dr. Megan Clayton, Dr. Joe Paschal, and Dr. Tony Provin

RSVP by: March 24th

Please call Austin County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Service at 979-865-2072 to register

or visit our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this activity are encouraged to contact the Extension Office in Austin County at least eight days prior to the program for assistance.

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.



2021 Mill Creek CLEANUP EVENT

**April 10, 2021
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Do you own land along the Mill Creek?

Come together as a community of landowners and make a difference by cleaning up the Mill Creek on your property!

Bring your collected materials to the centralized trash drop off at the Bleiberville Volunteer Fire Department.

Visit our website to learn more:

<https://agrillife.org/millcreek/2021cleanup/>

Registration is required.

Weed & Brush Control

2021 Multi-County New Landowner Educational Series



April 16, 2021

Weimar Civic Center

1754 IH-10
Weimar, Texas 78962

Registration 12:30-1:00 pm
Program 1:00-5:00 pm
\$20 / person

To register online visit:

<https://washington.agrilife.org/nlo>

Featuring:

Dr. Megan Clayton

Associate Professor & Extension Range Specialist

Topics to be covered:

**Weed and Brush Control Basics
How to Read the Pasture Bibles
IPT Sprayer Calibration
Plant Identification
Plant ID Contest**

*If you have a weed you would like identified
bring a FRESH sample with you; include
leaves, flowers, stem if possible.*

**For More
Information
Please Contact:**

Stacie Villarreal

Austin County
(979)865-2072
Austin.AgrLife.org

Laramie Kettler

Colorado County
(979) 732-2082
Colorado.AgrLife.org

Scott Willey

Fayette County
(979) 968-5831
Fayette.AgrLife.org

Kara Matheney

Washington County
(979) 277-6212
Washington.AgrLife.org



3 CEUs
(2 Gen; 1 IPM)

Small Farms & Vegetable Conference

April 23, 2021

American Legion Hall
1630 Meyer St.
Sealy, TX 77474

Registration: 8:30am
Program: 9am-3pm
\$30/person (*In-person*)
\$20/person (*Virtual*)

Topics:

- Backyard Gardens: What You Need to Know.
- Feral Hogs
- Laws & Regulations
- Backyard Invasive Species
- Ants: Fire Ants & Leaf Cutters

5 CEU's

*pending TDA
approval*

Speakers:

Michael Potter, Dr. John Tomecek, Dr. Don Renchie, Dr.
Megan Clayton, and Molly Keck

RSVP by: April 20, 2021

**Please call Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of
Austin County at 979-865-2072 to register
or visit our website at <http://austin.agrilife.org>**

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Training-\$10

Books-\$40
(2 manuals)

**Please RSVP to
reserve your
spot, space is
limited.**

**Please mail
checks or bring
money by before
the Training.**

Checks payable:

**Extension
Program Council**

Nonrefundable

Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Service

Austin County

800 Wendt St

Bellville, TX 77418

Phone: 979-865-2072

<http://austin.agrilife.org>

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Private Applicators Licenses Training

When: Friday, April 30, 2021

Friday, July 30, 2021

Friday, November 30, 2021

Training is from 1pm to 5pm

Check in/Registration starts 15 mins prior

Date & Time are subject to change

Where: Austin County Extension Office

800 Wendt St.

Bellville, TX 77418

The purpose of this training is to obtain a Private Applicator License from Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). This license will enable the applicator to purchase and apply state limited use and federally restricted chemicals on his land or land he has control of for the purpose of production of agricultural commodities. All farm and ranch operators who do not have a Private Applicator's License to purchase "restricted use" pesticides (such as 2, 4-D, Grazon P+D, Tordon 22K, etc.) will need to attend this training.

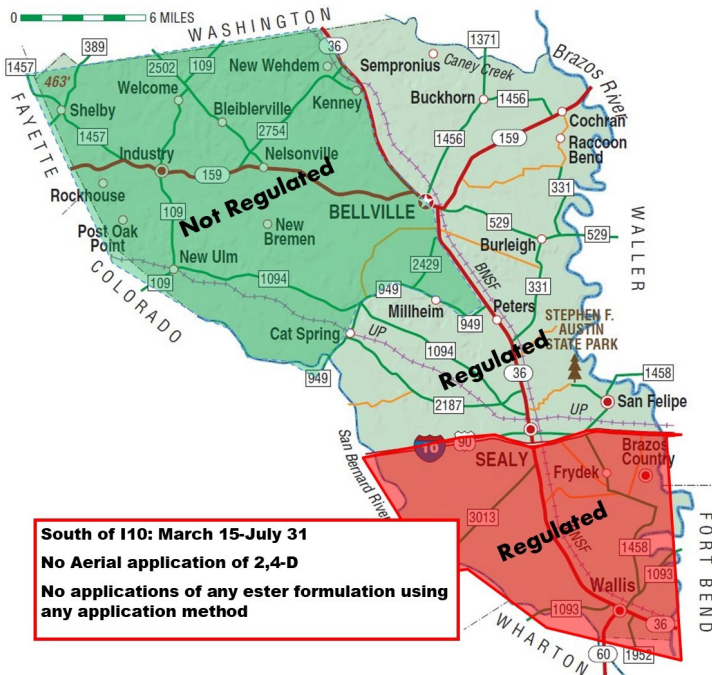
If you are interested in obtaining a Private Applicator License Training, please contact the Austin County Extension office at (979) 865-2072 to RSVP and to purchase the manuals. You can also RSVP on <https://austin.agrilife.org/event-registrations/>

SPRAY PERMITS REQUIRE D FOR A PORTION OF AUSTIN COUNTY

As a reminder to anyone that will be using state limited use or state restricted use herbicides in Austin County, a permit to apply these herbicides must be obtained through the Texas Department of Agriculture if you plan on spraying in certain portions of the county. The following areas of Austin County must acquire a permit as is specified in the Texas Agricultural code, chapter 75,

- 1) Only that portion of Austin County lying east and south of the line beginning at the point where State Highway 36 crosses the north county line, thence southerly along Highway 36 to FM 949; thence westwardly along FM 949 to the San Bernard River is regulated by the Act, Subchapter G and regulations adopted thereunder.
- 2) Between March 15 and July 31, in that portion of Austin County lying south of Interstate Highway 10, the following restrictions on the use of 2,4-D formulations shall apply:
 - (A) the application by aircraft is prohibited
 - (B) the use of all ester formulations by any method is prohibited.

Permits may be obtained from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County at (979) 865-2072. Forms can also be obtained by contacting the Texas Department of Agriculture Gulf Coast Regional Office in Houston at (713) 921-8200.



REGISTERING FOR A COUNTY PROGRAM?

[CLICK HERE](#)

Please note the following updates:

Grape Growers Field Day has been rescheduled for May, more information will becoming soon.

Upcoming programs may be offered virtually and/or in-person.

We encourage anyone attending our programs in person to wear a mask.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Steve M. Villan

Stacie M. Villarreal

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resource-Austin County

1 East Main, Bellville, TX 77418 (*Mailing Address*)

800 E Wendt St, Bellville, TX 77418 (*Physical Address*)

Phone: 979-865-2072

stacie.villarreal@ag.tamu.edu

Austin.agrilife.org

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office at (979) 865-2072 ten (10) days prior to the meeting to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.