

## —What is Soil Health?—Five Common Concepts—

*TAM-AAMM: Texas A&M—AgriLife Agronomic Monday Memo*

*Views may differ, based on objectives, for what a healthy, productive soil is.*

### The First Time I Heard the Words “Soil Health”



Fig. 1. Simulated run-off from a soil with nearly solid plant residue cover (left) vs. bare soil run-off (right) with a high level of soil erosion. (Photo from NRCS archives.)

I was in school in Minnesota. After Dr. Allan’s plant nutrition class, she commented about Soil Health in the hallway. This was the early 1990s. I had not heard that term before. My initial reaction was something like “What, is this some environmental wacko, tree-hugger term for soils?” I learned quickly it was not.

Soil Health has been an emerging and growing concept for two or three decades. We recognize that soils are dynamic systems that contain many types of organisms, nutrients, microbial activity, and physical/chemical properties that range in their ability to return economic value in agriculture. Soils that are heavily eroded from wind and water, infested with weeds, low in soil organic matter, and likely heavily tilled will have reduced Soil Health.

### Five Common Concepts for Soil Health

How a farmer or landowner may view what healthy soil is will vary based on goals, understanding, and expectations. Some researchers measure Soil Health quantitatively using different methods. These include chemical tests for mineral and nutrient composition, gauging the ability of soil to “breathe”, that is, respire gases from microbial activity (the more the better), or physical measures that could indicate soil compaction. An organic farmer may view a soil as healthy because it has received no chemical inputs like synthetic fertilizer and pesticides.

#### The Five Common Concepts

These are derived primarily from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Not all five principles must be implemented to contribute to Soil Health, but the more the better.

1. Keep the soil covered. This is done in many ways. Of course, range and pasture systems are always covered due to perennial native or introduced plants like grasses or improved forages. The key is protection of the soil surface. In much of Texas a soil cover—a “blanket”—protects the soil from wind erosion. In other areas, it is the loss of topsoil from heavy rains and run-off that is the primary concern. Exposure of bare soil leads to some losses of organic matter and reduced soil biological activity near the surface (worst case scenario, Fig. 2). *Continued on page 2*



Fig. 2. Extreme soil erosion in Dawson Co., Texas. Organic matter is low due to continuous tillage. (Calvin Trostle)

### Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Events

- February 2nd: Gulf Coast Grape Growers Field Day — Cat Spring Ag Hall, Cat Spring, 8:00a.m.
- February 5th: Water Sample drop off — Austin County Extension Office, Bellville, 8:30a.m. to 10:00a.m.
- February 7th: Water Well Owners Educational Event — Kenney Ag Hall, Kenney 8:30a.m.
- February 8th: 38th Annual Ft. Bend Vegetable Conference — Ft. Bend Fairgrounds, Rosenberg, 8a.m. (5 CEUs)
- **February 19th: Austin County Extension Office — CLOSED for Presidents’ Day**
- February 20th: Lunch n Learn Series – Herbs — Austin County Courthouse, Bellville, 11:50a.m.
- February 23rd: Small Farms & Vegetable Conf. — American Legion, Sealy, 8:30a.m. (5 CEUs)
- February 26th: Colorado County 5HR CEU— Colorado County Fairgrounds, Columbus, 8:00a.m. (5 CEUs)
- March 19th: Lunch n Learn Series – Mason Bees — Austin County Courthouse, Bellville, 11:50a.m.
- April 13th: Annual Plant Sale — Levine Park Pavilion, Sealy, 9:00a.m.
- April 16th: Lunch n Learn Series – Hugelkultur (Composting) — Austin County Courthouse, Bellville, 11:50a.m.
- May 10th: Private Applicator Training — Austin County Extension Office, Bellville, 1:00p.m.
- May 21st: Lunch n Learn Series – Snakes in the Garden — Austin County Courthouse, Bellville, 11:50a.m.

## What is Soil Health?—Five Common Concepts, *Continued*

Full tillage incorporating most or even all residues into the soil is anathema to this first Soil Health concept. I assert that many of the desired principles of Soil Health can't be achieved until this principle is first fulfilled.

2. Minimize soil disturbance. This does not mean you must no-till if you farm. But a reduction of tillage lends itself to preservation of crop residues on the soil surface and reduction in erosion potential, establishing and preserving better soil structure (improved water infiltration of rain, for example). Strip tillage is a good alternative for many row crop farmers. In some cases—though fewer than in the past—farmers believe, and often with merit, that their crop may perform better with some tillage. Furthermore, occasional tillage might be needed to break up compaction of a plowpan layer of heavy, poorly structured soil that roots can't penetrate.
3. Crop diversity. We know growing different types of plants—often as crop rotation—is good for the soil. This provides different types of crop residues, and the different types of roots foster more varied populations of soil microbes. This can enhance nutrient cycling. But crop diversity is not always an option. We have lots of continuous cotton and continuous dryland wheat in Texas. Crop insurance, landowners, and economic needs often dictate less crop rotation hence less crop diversity on a field.
4. Living roots in the soil at all times. If you live in a semi-arid region of Texas (rainfall <20" per year), you well know this is not likely. The first implication is that a field farmer of crops is using a cover crop. And cover crops use water! Living roots is a wonderful concept. This means there is a continual steady level of biological activity in the soil. But that is often unrealistic. It also discounts the fact that dead roots in the soil are still the site of much microbial activity. And though this microbial activity will taper off with time, it resumes quickly once new roots become pervasive in the soil again. Do dormant perennial crops have living roots? Yes, but perhaps not actively growing for a time. But this still contributes to the concept of a living root in the soil.
5. Integration of livestock with the land. This concept was not among the initial principles of Soil Health. But I believe at first this was a concession that soils, including those with cover crops, couldn't be as economically productive without animal agriculture. Some lands are not conducive to farming. Livestock can convert land resources into something of value (meat, dairy, wool, etc.). Advantages with livestock do include the fostering of many additional types of biological activity due to feces and urine.

### Soil Health—Where do we go from here?

The concepts of soil health continue to be evaluated in research. These concepts do offer potential ecological and environmental benefits and opportunities for farmers, especially in tillable agriculture. Texas A&M AgriLife workers continue to investigate means to improve soil productivity at lower cost with potential for improved environmental benefits. I view this as increasingly important as continued use of high input levels for chemical fertilizer and some of our pesticides will not be possible. Likewise, tens of thousands of Texas farmers already have had to reduce tillage due to cost and lack of labor. These factors will continue to drive changes in farming methods.

### Soil Health and the Home Gardener

Many home gardeners are often already practicing the principles of soil health. There is a greater use of organic materials. Organic matter is likely higher (though the same concept of reducing "tillage" applies to a garden as a nearby field). A garden likely sees great variety in plant diversity. And it is easy to grow some garden plants year-round. You may be able to mix in loamy topsoil or other amendments to improve soil tilth. And, of course, you can water when it gets dry! The typical garden in Texas—my guess—is more likely to have earthworms than a nearby commercial farm field. That's great! A wonderful indication of a dynamic, active, and "live" soil!

*This weekly agronomic Memo for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension county agents is compiled by Dr. Calvin Trostle, Professor & Extension Agronomist, Lubbock, (806) 777-0247 (mobile), ctrostle@ag.tamu.edu*

## AUSTIN COUNTY HOG BOUNTY

The Austin County Feral Hog Bounty is still going on! The Bounty program is offered with the support of the Austin County Commissioners Court. Participants will be awarded \$5 per feral hog harvested in Austin County, with biological evidence provided of harvest in the form of a pair of feral hog ears. Each pair must be placed in an individually sealed bag and dropped off at 1 of the 3 drop-off locations. Three local feed stores in the county - Steinhäuser's in Sealy, Linseisen's Feed & Supply in Bellville, and Lindemann Store in Industry - will serve as the drop-off locations.

A limit of 20 pairs per household per month is allowed. All feral hogs must be harvested in Austin County & signed paperwork must be completed when dropping off the ears to collect the bounty.

*See Flier on Page 12*

## 2024 LUNCH N LEARNS

The Bluebonnet Master Gardeners of Austin County are pleased to present the 2024 “Lunch-N-Learn” series which will be hosted on the third Tuesday of each month from January through May. Overall, the series will feature topics related to horticulture with homeowners and backyard gardeners in mind! The speakers are experts in their fields and practical gardeners with great tips and information for everyone.

Programs will be held at the Austin County Courthouse, in the Basement Meeting Room located at 1 E. Main Street in Bellville. Doors will open for registration at 11:50a.m. with the program beginning promptly at 12:00p.m. and concluding by 12:55p.m. At the end of each session the speaker and our Austin County Master Gardeners will be available to help answer gardening questions.

Master Gardener Lunch-N-Learn programs are FREE & OPEN to the public, and you are welcome to bring your own lunch and drink. We will have a few refreshments available as well. Registration is not required but is encouraged.

Remaining series dates and topics will be as follows:

- Tuesday, February 20th: Learn More About Herbs by our own Bluebonnet Master Gardeners, Bob Haeuser, Lisa Nicklow, and Linda Miller
- Tuesday, March 19th: Mason Bees by a local beekeeper, Tom Shaughnessy
- Tuesday, April 16th: Learn About Hugelkultur “Hill Culture” Composting by Mary Karish, Waller County Master Gardener
- Tuesday, May 21st: Snakes in the Garden: Good vs Bad by Jon McLeod, Wildlife Biologist for Austin & Fort Bend Counties - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

For more information regarding Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association please visit <https://txmg.org/bluebonnet/>.

*See Flier on page 8*

## SMALL FARM & VEGETABLE CONFERENCE

The Horticulture Committee of Austin County, in partnership with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin County, will be hosting a Small Farms & Vegetable Conference with 5 CEUs on Friday, February 23rd, at the American Legion Post #442 located at 1630 Meyer St, Sealy. Program registration will begin at 8:30a.m. with the first presentation beginning at 9:00a.m.

Information to be covered includes: Update on Laws & Regulations by Dr. Don Renchie, Agrilife Extension, Agricultural & Environmental Safety; Learn to Calibrate your Equipment by Dr. Mark Matocha, Agrilife Extension, Agricultural & Environmental Safety; Best Management Strategies in Lawns and Landscapes by Micheal Potter, County Extension Agent for Montgomery County; and Spring Companion Planting to Help with Pest Control by Gerald DuPont and Gopher, Mole and Armadillo Control by B.R. Koehler, both of whom are with the Bluebonnet Master Gardeners and the Austin County Horticulture Committee.

Program will cost \$35.00 per person or \$60.00 per couple and will include breakfast & lunch. Please RSVP to the Austin County Extension office or online at [austin.agrilife.org](http://austin.agrilife.org) to reserve your seat and ensure resource availability.

*See Flier on Page 9*

## 39th Annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference

Join us at the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference! Registration is \$40.00. Costs cover attendance to all sessions, refreshments, a BBQ lunch and time with new and various exhibitors. Five CEUs will also be offered for TDA license holders. The conference will be held Thursday, February 8th at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds (Buildings C & D) in Rosenberg, Texas.

To register and pay online visit: <https://39thAnnualVegConf.eventbrite.com> To register and pay in person by check or cash, visit Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, 1402 Band Road (Annex Building), Rosenberg, Texas 77471. Due to preparations, registration at the door will be limited. On the day of the event, check-in will be held from 7:30a.m. to 8:15a.m. with the conference beginning at 8:15a.m. and ending at 3:30p.m.

Topics at this year’s conference are: Bees & Honey Production, Marketing Produce, Climate/Drought & Irrigation. Breakout sessions available are: Backyard Gardening & Alternative Techniques with Intro to Permaculture Design, Mushroom Gardening, Laws & Regulations, Integrated Pest Management.

For more information, go to <https://fortbend.agrilife.org/event/39th-annual-fort-bend-regional-vegetable-conference/> and for general questions, please contact Lorraine Niemeyer at 281-633-7033.

*See Flier on Page 7*





**SAVE THE DATE**

# **BLUEBONNET MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL PLANT SALE**

PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS SUPPORT THE FOUR COUNTIES  
(AUSTIN, COLORADO, FAYETTE, AND WASHINGTON) WITH  
GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SCHOLARSHIPS EACH  
YEAR, COMMUNITY GARDENS, FREE-TO-THE-PUBLIC "LUNCH &  
LEARNS", AND OTHER LOCAL ACTIVITIES.



**SATURDAY, APRIL 13TH**

**LEVINE PARK PAVILION  
406 MAIN STREET, SEALY**

**SALE STARTS AT 9AM  
ENDS AT 5PM OR SOLD OUT**

**QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL:  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
SERVICE OF AUSTIN COUNTY AT  
979-865-2072**

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.

# 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gulf Coast Winegrowers Watson Field Day

Feb. 2, 2024 - *Cat Spring Agriculture Society Hall*  
 13035 Hall Rd. Cat Spring, TX



Presented by:

Together we're better.  
Partnership that really pays.



TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI**LIFE  
EXTENSION

7:30 - 9:00	<b>REGISTRATION</b>
8:00 - 9:00	<b>Prospective Winegrowers Workshop</b> - Fran Pontasch, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension <i>Sponsored by Producer Supply</i>
9:00 - 9:15	<b>Announcements</b> - Stacie Villarreal, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Austin County ANR Agent <b>Welcome</b> - Kimbrough Jeter, Gulf Coast Winegrowers Assn. President <b>Presenting Sponsor</b> - Denise McBride, Capital Farm Credit
9:15-9:45	<b>Missionaries to Visionaries – Growing Grapes in the Gulf Coast</b> Russ Kane, Vintage Texas/Texas Wineslinger
9:45 - 10:35	<b>Climate, Weather, and Agriculture</b> Dr. William (BJ) Baule, Texas A&M Professor & Extension Climate Specialist <i>Sponsored By Double A Vineyards</i>
10:35 - 10:45	<b>BREAK - Exhibitor Time</b>
10:45 - 11:35	<b>Getting Down to the Roots of the Matter (1 IPM)</b> Dr. Justin Scheiner, Texas A&M Professor & Extension Viticulture Specialist <i>Sponsored By Hard Oak Ranch Products and Services</i>
11:35 - 12:00	<b>Alternative Wine Varieties and 2023 Crush Report</b> Dr. Justin Scheiner, Texas A&M Professor & Extension Viticulture Specialist <i>Sponsored By Sommelier Logistics</i>
12:00 - 1:00	<b>LUNCH</b> - <i>Sponsored by WCTractor and Exhibitor Time</i>
1:00 - 2:00	<b>Pesticide Laws &amp; Regs - Updates (1 L&amp;R)</b> Dr. Don Renchie, Texas A&M Professor & Extension Ag & Environmental Pesticide Safety
2:00 - 2:50	<b>Should We Worry About Pierce's Disease &amp; Viruses on PD-tolerant varieties? (1 GEN)</b> Dr. Femi Alabi & Dr. David Appel, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Plant Pathologists
2:50 - 3:00	<b>BREAK - Exhibitor Time</b>
3:00 - 3:30	<b>Alternative Sources for Labor. Updates on Blanc Du Bois Freeze Recovery</b> Fran Pontasch, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, <i>Sponsored By Sommelier Logistics</i>
3:30 - 4:30	<b>Gulf Coast Winegrowers Association Members Meeting</b> (Updates, Elections) Kimbrough Jeter, GCWA President
4:30 - UTC	<b>Networking Social</b> - <i>Sponsored by Texas Tech University Plant &amp; Soil Science Department</i>

**Registration at the Door: GCWA Members \$50, Non-Members \$60 Cash, Check  
Credit Card – Includes Lunch & Networking Social**

Print and Digital  
Program Sponsored by

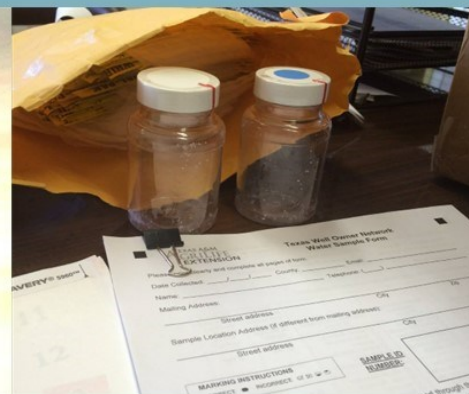




# Water Well Owners Educational Event

## TEXAS WELL OWNER NETWORK

RESOURCES HELP LANDOWNERS PROTECT GROUNDWATER



**Sample Drop Off**  
**Monday, February 5, 2024**  
**8:30–10:00 a.m.**  
AgriLife Extension Offices for  
Austin County or Washington County

**Educational Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 7, 2024**  
**8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.**  
**Kenney Agricultural Society Hall**  
**444 Hall Road, Bellville**

### TEXAS WELL OWNER NETWORK PROGRAM

The Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) program is a free, educational training for Texas residents who depend on household wells for their water needs. TWON is for private well owners who want to become familiar with groundwater resources, septic system maintenance, well maintenance, water quality and water treatment. Private well owners are independently responsible for monitoring the quality of their wells. Essentially, they are the operators of their own water system and are responsible for ensuring that their water is safe.

### BRING YOUR WELL WATER SAMPLES!

Well owners should bring water samples Monday, February 5 to be screened for nitrate-nitrogen, total dissolved solids (TDS) and *E. coli* bacteria. Pick up approved sample containers with instructions at your local County AgriLife Extension office, Austin Extension, 800 East Wendt Street in Bellville, Washington Extension, 1305 E. Blue Bell Road, Suite 104 in Brenham.

**Drop samples at the same location where testing materials were picked up.**

Samples are due on Monday, February 5 by 10:00 a.m.  
There is a \$15 per sample cost for this screening.



Pre-register by contacting Joel Pigg  
Phone: 979-321-5946  
Email: [j-pigg@tamu.edu](mailto:j-pigg@tamu.edu)



Funding for the Texas Well Owner Network is through a Clean Water Act section 319 (h) nonpoint source grant from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The project is managed by the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University.



# 39th Annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference

See you there!

February 8, 2024

<https://fortbend.agrilife.org>

**Join us on Thursday, February 8, 2024 for the  
39th Annual Fort Bend Regional  
Vegetable Conference!**

**Location:** Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Buildings C&D  
4310 Highway 36 South, Rosenberg, TX 77471

**Time:** 8:00 am - 3:30 pm (Lunch Included)

**Check-In:** 7:30 - 8:15 am

**Early Registration:** \$30.00 thru January 26, 2024

**Late Registration:** \$40.00 Jan. 27, 2024 up to 12 noon Feb. 6, 2024

**Register and pay online\* at:** <https://39thAnnualVegConf.eventbrite.com>

OR Scan the QR code to the right to be taken to the site

\*Note: additional fees will be applied if paying by credit card

**To register in person by check or exact cash:**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension-Fort Bend County  
1402 Band Road (Annex Bldg), Rosenberg, TX 77471

Mail in check with registration form to address above, attn: Lorraine Niemeyer

Register early for discounted pricing! (No refunds for any payment.)

The 39th Annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference is a celebration of vegetable production along the upper Gulf Coast region. Counties of Waller, Wharton, Harris, Galveston, Brazoria, Colorado, and Austin join with Fort Bend on this event focusing on teaching sustainable practices to help producers maximize efficiencies and profitability.

We have something for every producer, and as always, we will offer 5 continuing education credits for TDA license holders.

Sponsors and exhibitors will be available with valuable information on-site for attendees.

**Earn 5 CEUs**  
for Licensed Pesticide  
Applicators!

- Bees & Honey Production
- Marketing Produce
- Climate/Drought & Irrigation
- Backyard Gardening & Alternative Techniques and intro to Permaculture Design
- Mushroom Gardening
- Laws & Regulations with Dr. Rennie!
- Integrated Pest Management

Afternoon break-out sessions ...  
choose what's right for you!

<https://fortbend.agrilife.org/>

Find us on  
**Facebook**

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

For general questions contact  
Lorraine Niemeyer at 281-633-7033 or  
[lorraine.niemeyer@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:lorraine.niemeyer@ag.tamu.edu)



Co-Sponsors ->  
(Pending additional  
Sponsors)



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. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aid or services are required to contact Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 281.342.3034 five working days prior to the meeting so appropriate arrangements can be made. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.







# 2024 AUSTIN COUNTY **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE** LUNCH N LEARN **EXTENSION** SERIES-SPRING

HOSTED BY: BLUEBONNET MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

AUSTIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
(BASEMENT MEETING ROOM)  
1 E MAIN ST.  
BELLVILLE, TX 77418

FREE/OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH  
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

REGISTRATION: 11:50AM - 12PM  
PROGRAM: 12PM -12:55PM



**January 16th**

**Firewise Landscaping**

Carol Daniels,  
Bluebonnet Master Gardener



**February 20th**

**Herbs**

Bob Haeuser , Bluebonnet Master  
Gardener



**March 19th**

**Mason Bees**

Tom Shaughnessy,  
Local Beekeeper



**April 16th**

**Hugelkultur "Hill Culture"  
Composting**

Mary Karish , Waller County Master  
Gardener



**May 21st**

**Snakes in the Garden**

Jon McLeod, TPWD Wildlife  
Biologist

REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED BUT  
IS ENCOURAGED. TO REGISTER CALL  
THE OFFICE OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[HTTP://AUSTIN.AGRILIFE.ORG](http://austin.agrilife.org)

SCAN TO REGISTER



QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL:  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
SERVICE OF AUSTIN COUNTY AT  
979-865-2072

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.



# Small Farms & Vegetable Conference

February 23, 2024

**American Legion Post #442**

1630 Meyer St.  
Sealy, TX 77474

**Registration: 8:30am**

**Program: 9am-3:30pm**

*\$35/person or \$60/couple  
includes lunch*

## **Topics:**

- Learn to Calibrate your Equipment
- Best Management Strategies in Lawns and Landscapes
- Spring Companion Planting to Help with Pest Control
- Gopher, Mole and Armadillo Control
- Laws & Regulations

**5 CEU's**

1-L&R, 2 GEN, 2 IPM  
*TDA Approved*

## **Speakers:**

Dr. Mark Matocha, Dr. Don Renchie, Michael Potter, BR Koehler, and Gerald Dupont

**RSVP by: February 20, 2024**

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>



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.



Laramie Kettler- Colorado County Extension  
Agent  
Agriculture/ Natural Resources  
316 Spring St.  
Columbus, Texas 78934  
(979) 732-2082

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

## 2024 Colorado County Beef and Forage Educational Program

Sponsored by the Beef and Forage Committee of Colorado County

**Monday, February 26th, 2024**  
**Colorado County Fairgrounds - Exhibit Hall**  
1146 Crossroads Boulevard, Columbus, TX 78934  
**(Pre-Register by February 23, 2024) CALL: 979-732-2082**



**Registration: 8:00 a.m. — 8:30 a.m.**

**Program: 8:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m. LUNCH WILL BE CATERED**

**Fee: \$30.00 pre-registration  
\$35.00 at the door**

### **Topics Include:**

- \*Livestock Diseases, Insects, Parasites and their Control
- \*Strategies for Soil Health
- \*TDA Laws & Regulations Update
- \*Weed Control in Pastures and Hayfields

**Private Pesticide Applicators  
will receive 5 continuing edu-  
cation units (CEUs): Pending  
approval from TDA.  
No Structural Credits Offered.**

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  
Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in any Extension activity, are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office (979-732-2082) for assistance 5 days prior to the activity.



# Private Applicator Licenses Trainings for 2024

Friday, January 26th

Friday, May 10th

Friday, August 2nd

Friday, November 1st

*Training is from 1pm to 5pm*

*Check in/Registration starts 15 mins prior,  
Please do not arrive more than 15 mins before the class.*

*\*Date & Time are subject to change\**

*You may bring your own refreshments*

## *Prices:*

*Training-\$10*

*Books-\$50*

*(2 manuals)*

**Cash or Check only!**

**Please bring exact change**

**Checks payable to:**

**Extension Program Council  
(EPC)**

**Nonrefundable**

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

<http://austin.agrilife.org/event-registrations/>



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Training will be conducted at  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of  
Austin County located at  
800 E 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 and need a different date, please contact the Austin County Extension office at (979) 865-2072 to purchase the manuals.

TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION





# Austin County Feral Hog Bounty Program

*Sponsored by: Austin County Commissioners Court*

## Austin County Bounty Program:

Subject to fund availability, participants will be awarded \$5 per feral hog harvested in Austin County. Biological evidence **MUST** be provided of harvest in form of a pair of feral hog ears. Each pair must be placed in an individually sealed bag and dropped off to 1 of the 3 drop off locations.



*Only 20 pairs  
per household  
per month*

**\$5/pair  
of ears**

## Drop Off Locations:

- ***Steinhauser's (Sealy location ONLY)***
- ***Linseisen's Feed & Supply (Bellville)***
- ***Lindemann Store (Industry)***

*Feral hogs can be harvested until funds are depleted. All feral hog **MUST** be harvested in Austin County.*

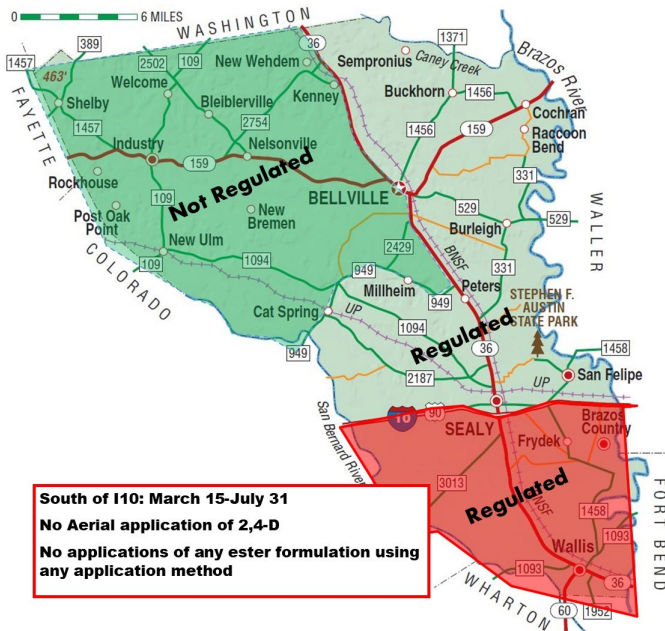




## SPRAY PERMITS REQUIRED FOR A PORTION OF AUSTIN COUNTY

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 feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Stacie M. Villarreal

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources - Austin County

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

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

Phone: 979-865-2072

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[Austin.agrilife.org](http://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.