



# Randall County Ag News

TEXAS A&M  
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EXTENSION

## MONTHLY SNAPSHOT OF AGRICULTURE IN RANDALL COUNTY

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May 2021 Edition

### News and Views Straight From the County Agent's Desk

**Howdy!** It's been a while since we visited last and lots to catch up on in a short time. What a roller-coaster ride it's been for us all since the COVID-19 outbreak last spring. We in Extension, like so many others have experienced the most challenging times in history of our agency. As Extension educators our grass roots programs were built on face-to-face/one-on-one in person informational delivery. However COVID-19 caused us to put that method on a sever hold, forcing us to experience numerous cancellations of which we never imaged. Many of our family members and close friends suffered from sickness, extended hospital stays and unfortunate loss of life. My dad who is 80 spent two weeks in the hospital and several times we thought we were going to lose him. But with thousands of prayers he was able to somehow pull through and is now doing remarkably well. I know everyone will agree when I say none of us want to experience any of those troublesome times ever again!



As of this writing **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension** requires the following COVID19 guidelines:

**Mask:** Are no longer a requirement, but is a personal preference

**Hybrid Offerings:** Not all guests may be comfortable with attending in person. Virtual option to events to ensure all parties can attend in their preferred format

**Visitors to AgriLife Facilities:** As of June 1, AgriLife facilities are open to visitors, and until further notice visitors should complete the *COVID-19 Screening for AgriLife Facility Visitors Form*

If you haven't personally made it by the Randall County Extension Office lately you may not be aware that we have a new hire at one of our greeting desk. Stephanie Palmer joined us back in early January and currently serves as our Randall County Extension Office Program Assistant. She is a native of Amarillo and she and her



husband Christian have two beautiful young kids. Peyton who is seven and Myla who is three. Stephanie has hit the ground running and is doing an awesome job. Stop by and say hello!

A proud moment for me! I was so very fortunate back on October 23 to be recognized and receive the "Graduate of Distinction Award" from West Texas A&M Department of Agriculture. This award is given annually to a fellow WT graduate who has excelled in providing outstanding Ag Leadership and dedicated service to their community. I received my Masters of Agriculture Degree from WTAMU in August of 1990. I'm truly honored and so very thankful to have received this prestigious award.



### Current Crop Conditions

**Overview:** Crop conditions have remained extremely dry up until just last week when significant rainfall was received throughout Randall County. According to the National Weather Service as of this writing, we have received 6.96 inches of rain thus far for 2021. Most of which (4.83) inches fell during the week of May 17-21. As we compare that to the very same time period of 2020, we had only received 3.01 inches. Therefore we are about 4.0 inches ahead of where we were this time last year. Although we did receive some hail damage the rain could not have come at a better time. This rain will be extremely beneficial in supplying our soil with much needed moisture to get our current planted crops off to a good start.



**Corn/Silage:** Planting has just been completed. Some hail damage was received in recently emerged fields. Some replanting did occur but was limited. The recent rain and warmer temperatures will serve as a super kick start for rapid growth. Planted acres throughout Randall County for this years 2021 growing season is expected to be around 2,000.

**Cotton:** Planting has been underway and has been tough. Prior to the rain producers were only able to plant pre-irrigated fields. The adverse weather and cooler temperatures have made it challenging. Cotton acres will be down this year in Randall County holding around 8,000 acres. This is due to the fact that future sorghum prices look to be very promising.

**Sorghum:** Planting will begin in late May to early June. With the recent moisture just received this should enable the crop to excel rapidly at planting. The newly released "iGrowth Sorghum Technology" system will be a key feature to watch throughout this year's growing season. Randall County sorghum acres are expected to be up considerably this year and could reach as much as 25,000 acres or better.

**Wheat:** Last week I would have told you our dryland wheat was toast and irrigated was just decent at best. However with the recent rains it may have saved the crop allowing harvest to occur. Some area fields did receive slight to moderate hail damage and will impact yield. Approximately 50-60,000 acres is expected to be harvested in June and July.



**Range/Pasture:** Was near death row due to extreme drought conditions. However, last week's rain and warmer temperatures have contributed to 90 degree turn around in terms of native grass growth. No doubt additional moisture will be needed through the summer months, but as for now the rains saved our pastures.

### **North Region AgriLife Beef Cattle Podcast "Ranch to Retail"- NOW AVAILABLE!**

Once again we want to welcome all to join our all new North Region AgriLife Extension "Ranch to Retail" Beef Cattle Podcast. To-date there's been (5) released episodes produced with more to come.



#### **Episode 1:** released 11/24/20

Dr. Jason Smith, AgriLife Beef Cattle Specialist– *Cows Nutritional Needs during Pregnancy*; Dr. Jourdan Bell, AgriLife Agronomist– *Concerns with Prussic Acid*

#### **Episode 2:** released 12/9/20

Dr. Jason Smith, *Nutritional Impacts on Calving*; Drs. Anderson and Benavidez, AgriLife Economist– *Investing into Reproduction*

#### **Episode 3:** released 1/26/21

Josh Brooks, Hall County CEA-Ag, interviews Brent Baucom and Courtney Ruiz with NRCS in Hall County discuss *CRP Program Signup, Contracts Values and Point System*.

#### **Episode 4:** released 2/9/21

Dr. Morgan Treadwell, Extension Range Specialist, discuss *Tools to Control Brush and Weeds in Pastures*; Brandon Boughen, Extension DAR Agent for Amarillo District, discusses his *Position and Engagement with COVID19*.

#### **Episode 5:** released 3/31/21

Dr. Tom Hairgrove, Dr. Jason Smith, and Andy Holloway discuss *Winter Storm Uri and Impact on Reproduction in Bulls and Cows*.

Each episode is approximately 1 hr. in length, but is developed as a Stop-N-Go listen style format. It's quick and easy to access, just simply log-on to the web site address below and look for the promotion/picture logo.

<https://agrilifenorthregionag.libsyn.com/>

### **Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus Still Major Concern**

Randall County Wheat Producers continue to face concerning issues with Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus in area wheat fields earlier this spring. This photo highlights confirmed test results of WSMV.



At first look you might think this photo simply represents extreme drought conditions. Actually it's quite the opposite. In fact, this photo is an irrigated wheat field in Randall County. The WSMV symptoms appears to look much like drought stressed situation.

However when trying to determine what's actually going on, notice the fields inconsistent growth pattern along with it's heavy consistent discoloration.

#### **Recommended Treatment for WSMV:**

- Tough thing is, symptoms don't begin to be noticeable until spring when temps begin to warm up.
- Once discovered (in the spring), unfortunately there's nothing you can do to provide effective treatment
- Will it produce yield? Yes, but problem is the virus spreads rapidly throughout the fields and yields will significantly be reduced.

#### **Future Considerations for WSMV Prevention:**

- 1.) Back to back wheat planting in a given field is not recommended.
- 2.) If you do plant back to back wheat in a given field, when planting occurs, terminate all volunteer wheat.
- 3.) Select wheat varieties that has resistance to WSMV.

## Controlling Weeds In Pastures

As the good O'l saying goes, "When it Rains the Weeds will Pour!" As with any growing plant when adequate moisture is received and warm soil temperatures occur the stage is set for all weed species to thrive!

During this time of the year, pastures generally begin to get heavy weed pressure. Often times I get ask, "What can I spray on my pasture to control the weeds?"



### Key Tips and Recommendations:

- ⇒ **Consistent Mowing Schedules;** A good weed management plan includes consistent mowing schedules. This will help keep weeds in a much more manageable size for better application coverage and control.
- ⇒ **"DuraCor"** is an Corteva herbicide product that provides excellent control of a variety of broadleaf weeds without damaging native grasses.
  - It's NON-24D product
  - NON-restricted (can purchase over the counter)
  - Mix @ 16 oz. rate
- ⇒ Products containing 24D is RESTRICTED from use during spring and summer months while crops are actively growing .
- ⇒ **"Surmount"** is another Corteva herbicide product option that controls a variety of broadleaf weeds without damaging native grasses.
  - It's NON-24D product
  - RESTRICTED use (pesticide applicators license to purchase)
  - Mix @ 1.5 pts. rate



## Determining Cotton Damage Following Hail Storms

The following information is provided by Dr. Calvin Trostle, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agronomist and Seth Byrd, Former Cotton Extension Specialist-Lubbock, Texas

The recent rain episodes have included some hail damage to area cotton fields. This has left many cotton producers battling decisions of leaving existing crop, replant back to cotton, or plant other alternative crops.



### Key Considerations:

- 1.) **Don't Terminate Questionable Cotton Stands Too Quickly;** Sometimes replant decisions are made on insufficient information and emotion, and tearing up a stand that in fact still has respectable yield potential is a mistake to avoid. It is best to evaluate damaged cotton at least 2-3 days of good growing conditions following a storm. Producers may find it appropriate to retain surviving cotton stands with as little as 1.5 healthy plants per foot of row, particularly if the remaining stand is uniformly spaced.
- 2.) **Evaluate Stand Loss;** The optimum plant density, for both optimum production and harvesting efficiency ranges from about 25 to 50,000 plants per acre, or (2 to 4 plants per row-foot) in conventional 30 to 40 inch row spacing. However, studies have shown acceptable yields can be obtained from stands as low as 13 to 26,000 plants per acre (1 to 2 per row-foot) if the plants are uniformly spaced .
- 3.) **Stand Uniformity;** Poor spacing uniformity (skips in the row) may cause significant yield reductions even though the average number of plants per acre is adequate for optimum production. Skips which decreased stands by 26 and 45%, respectively, lowered yields by 13 and 26%, respectively, even though final plant densities were in excess of 2 plants per foot of row.
- 4.) **Crop Condition;** There are two types of crop damage classifications that need to be determined. ACUTE-damage obtained from hail, wind and sand injury. CHRONIC-prolonged periods of cool, wet, weather that can cause potential disease to occur.
- 5.) **Calendar Date;** Simply put, do you have enough time to replant based on the remaining of growing season as well as meeting the government planting insurance deadline date? Studies have shown that cotton planted on June 1, June 10 and June 20, yielded 7.6, 23.6 and 48.9%, respectively, less lint than cotton planted on May 15.



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