

Gregg County Extension Office
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<http://gregg.agrilife.org/>

Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club Newsletter...
Electronic Version

June - 2019

TO: Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club Members

BY: Randy Reeves, Gregg County Extension Agent – Agriculture

Lower Feed Bills by Stockpiling, Planting Small Grains Crops

Stockpiling forages and feeding small grains crops year-round can help cattle producers offset the higher costs of hay.

That is the message from Dr. Larry Redmon, Extension program leader and associate department head for soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M University in College Station. His recommendations and others by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service specialists were part of walking demonstrations recently at the O.D. Butler Forage Field Day at Camp Cooley Ranch near Franklin.

Redmon said small grains forage crops should be planted six to eight weeks prior to the first frost of winter. He covered several small grains forage options for beef cattle producers to consider.

"You can limit graze," Redmon said. "If you don't live on the place and only come up during the weekends, you can turn the cattle in on the pasture if you come up on a Friday, then turn them off on Sunday before you leave."

Redmon said small grains pastures can also help add weight to stocker calves.



“You usually wean your calves when they weigh five hundred pounds, so you have the opportunity to put an additional two hundred fifty pounds of gain prior to them entering the feedlot phase,” Redmon said.

When planting ryegrass in the South Central zone, Redmon recommends 55 pounds to the acre and letting stands grow until May before beef cattle grazing. Another option, clover, can help save dollars on nitrogen application by releasing it naturally into the soil. Redmon said clover can help save nitrogen expense at about 60 cents per pound of nitrogen.

For upland regions that have sandy soils, Redmon recommends Arrowleaf clover varieties. For the Blacklands region, Burr medic. White clover varieties do well in wet regions.

Dr. Tony Provin, AgriLife Extension soil chemist in College Station, provided an overview on soil health; heavy rainfall this spring has brought an onslaught of weeds.

“Weeds ruck up moisture and nutrients, preventing deeper root growth establishment for forages,” he said.

Provin said producers need to be mindful of Ph levels in soils and should consider distributing limestone to offset deficiencies. To stay on top of soil health, Provin advised taking annual soil tests to monitor Ph levels.

“The key is to plan and stay on top by monitoring soil health annually,” he said. “It can take three to four years to get the appropriate response needed for limestone.”

Final Words...

I wanted to take this opportunity to write to all of you and officially give you my notice that I will be retiring from The Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service after 35.5 years. My last day in the office will be Friday, June 28th.

This letter comes with mixed emotions as I will miss the interactions with the people that I have had on a day to day basis, but this will continue as I will be working on a part time basis for Jakes Feed here in Longview, as well as continuing to serve on the Legacy AG Credit Board of Directors and newly appointed consultant for the Sabine-Neches RC&D.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you, the people of Gregg County these past few years. You have all been an exceptional group of folks to work with and your support for the Extension program has been deeply appreciated. I have always considered myself to be extremely lucky and blessed to have such a great group to work with.

Gregg County has a fabulous group of folks in the county that help the Extension program work, including the office staff, Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club members, Beekeeper’s Association and the Master Gardener program. When I came here, most of these programs were on the downside and I hope that they have been uplifted to some degree. I am a firm believer is leaving something better than when you found it and I hope this is the case with the Gregg County Extension program. I am confident that this will continue over the years to come and become a shining example of what a great Cooperative

Extension program should be. I will always cherish the time that I have spent in Gregg County and the fine people that call this home.

Happening This month...

2019 Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club Scholarship Awards Dinner

June 25 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Make plans to join us for the annual Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club's presentation of the J. Marvin Watkins Scholarship to well deserving youth(s) from the five-county area in and around the Gregg County. Evening meal will be served by Catfish Express of Marshall, Texas and will be chicken fried steak and all of the trimmings. **Please call and RSVP by June 21st, 5:00 pm.** For details go to;
<http://counties.agrilife.org/gregg/files/2019/04/OBScholarship.pdf>

Sneak a peek at Next Month...

Long-Term Weather Forecast – Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club July Program

July 23 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Join the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club for their July program featuring Charles Woodrum, with the National Weather Service in Shreveport, Louisiana. Charles will be discussing weather patterns for our area, as well as the long-term forecast. For more information call 903-236-8429 or go to;
<http://counties.agrilife.org/gregg/files/2018/10/july.pdf>



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