

Polk County AgriLife Extension Beef/Forage & Natural Resources Newsletter

Local Programs

East Texas
Wildlife Expo:
October 6

Produce Growers
Breakfast:
Understanding Food
Labels:
November 16

Pesticide CEU
Conference & License
Training:
November 17

Cow Country
Congress:
December 1

Additional AgriLife Programs

Texas Fruit and
Conference:
October 18-20

Ranch Management
University:
October 23-27

Legumes Can Provide Nitrogen

Commercial fertilizers are the most costly input for warm season grass forage production for hay and pastures. With high fertilizer prices there is increased interest in utilizing legumes to offset the cost of nitrogen. Here are some facts that you need to keep in mind when deciding whether or not to introduce cool season legumes into your forage system.

Clovers are cool season legumes with the ability to fix atmospheric nitrogen as a result of their symbiotic relationship with *Rhizobium*. **Specific *Rhizobium* inoculant is required for each clover species.** Although most clover seed has been pre-inoculated and sold as pelleted seed, one should always confirm that inoculation has occurred. Otherwise, N-fixation will be very reduced to even non-existent.

There are several species and cultivars of clovers adapted to different locations in TX. Soil type and drainage are the primary factors that can influence the adaptability of species to a location in a vegetational region. The WebSoil Survey is a valuable resource that can be used to learn more about the soil characteristics of your property. Examples are as follows. Dixie crimson and Apache arrowleaf clover are good choices for sandy or sandy loam upland soils in east Texas but neither of these species are adapted to high pH soils of central Texas. White clover will provide late spring and early summer grazing in either east or central Texas but must be planted on bottomland sites with good moisture availability in winter and spring. Hairy vetch and medics are good choices for upland sites in central Texas.

Legumes are generally more sensitive than forage grasses to nutrient deficiencies and low soil pH. Successful legume production in pastures depends on maintaining adequate levels of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) with a soil pH of at least 6.0. Even though N fertilization is not required, fertilizers containing P and K may be needed to maintain productive and persistent stands. Without adequate P and K or when grown in acid soils, legume stands will be unproductive and unreliable.

The full potential N-fixation and contribution of clovers to the subsequent production of warm season grasses is only accomplished if the grazed plant material is returned to the soil and by grazing livestock via excreta. This returns over 80% of the consumed nutrients by feces and urine. If the clover crop is removed from the pasture as hay, haylage or silage, the clover N contribution is decreased.

Management strategies for clovers and legumes may fit well into a natural re-seeding with hay harvest for example. Re-seeded clovers provides the opportunity for earlier grazing in the winter-spring and also reduces costs related to new seeding each year.

Above article written by Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olson, Forage Extension Specialist, AgriLife Extension

Legume Selection Based on Soil Type	
<i>Soil type or characteristics</i>	<i>Legume species best suited</i>
Blackland (heavy clay upland)	Sweetclover, vetch, winterpea
Deep, well-drained sand or sand loam	Crimson clover
Other moderately well-drained soils	Ball clover, Arrowleaf clover
Poorly drained, wet-natured soils (bottomlands)	White Clover, Berseem clover

Above table written by Dr. Robert Lane, Retired Professor, Sam Houston State University



Arrowleaf Clover

Polk County Produce Growers Breakfast Meeting, Last Friday of Odd Numbered Months

Join us for a fellowship of local growers and garden enthusiasts. Meetings allow participants a chance to gain knowledge and skills from vegetable and fruit specialists while also getting to know other growers in the county. Free donuts and coffee courtesy of Polk County Farm Bureau. Meetings occur the last Friday of odd numbered months at 8:00 am. Location is Farm Bureau Office in Livingston. If you will be a first-time attendee, please RSVP by calling the Polk County Extension office.

November 16: Understanding Food Labels

Pesticide CEU Conference & License Training

The annual CEU program will take place the Friday before Thanksgiving. For current TDA pesticide applicator license holders 5 CEU will be offered. Cost will be \$50 for 5 CEU. For individuals wanting to obtain a TDA private applicator license training will also be held. The cost for the training will be \$85. A \$10 late registration fee will be added after November 3rd. To register [Click Here](#), scan QR code below or call the extension office. Online registration is preferred.



Cow Country Congress

Cow Country Congress is scheduled to take place on December 1st at the Gibbs Ranch in Huntsville. Gibbs Ranch is part of Sam Houston State University and used for educational purposes and has a rich history of supporting the agricultural science sector. Topics and speakers are still being determined and details of the program are being finalized. Look for more information later this month. For more contact the Walker County Extension Office. 936-435-2426

Texas Fruit Conference

12th Annual Texas Fruit Conference will take place October 18th-20th at the Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Office in Fredericksburg. The event is aimed at educating new and experienced fruit growers through classroom instruction, experiential learning, and peer-to-peer networking. Cost is \$200. To register [Click Here](#) or call 830-990-4046

Ranch Management University

The award-winning program is scheduled for October 23rd-27th in College Station. Registration is limited to 50. Over the five days, participants will learn about a variety of ranch management topics ranging from soil fertility to forage and weed management to livestock and wildlife management. Cost is \$625 and meals and break refreshments are provided. Register by October 13th. To register [Click Here](#) or contact linda.francis@ag.tamu.edu

Lights Out Texas

Lights Out initiative is a nationwide program to reduce bird mortalities associated with light pollution, specifically during the spring and fall migration periods. The Lights Out Texas program is aimed to protect the 333 bird species that migrate through Texas from summer nesting grounds in temperate North America to their winter range in tropical central and South America. It is estimated that 1 of every 3 birds migrating through the U.S. passes through Texas resulting in nearly two billion birds migrating through Texas every spring and fall. Light pollution can be a major issue for migrating birds from becoming disoriented to bird collisions and mortalities with buildings. In 2017, over 400 birds collided with a skyscraper in Houston. In fact, Houston and Dallas are only second to Chicago for most deadliest city for migrating birds. Peak fall migration is September 5th – October 29th and can last till the end of November. So, what can you do as a Texan to support our migrating birds during this period?

- Turn off all nonessential lights from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. each night during the program.
- Don't use landscape lighting to illuminate trees or gardens where birds may be resting.
- For essential lights (security and safety lighting), use the following dark skies-friendly lighting practices:
 - Aim lights downward.
 - Use lighting shields to direct light downward and avoid light shining into the sky or trees.
 - Use motion detectors and sensors so lights only come on when you need them.
 - Close blinds at night to reduce the amount of light from windows.
- If you own or manage a building:
 - Consider adjusting custodial schedules to end by 11 p.m.
 - Ask custodial staff to ensure that lights are off after they finish their work.

Management Tips

- Many trees, especially oaks, suffered from environmental stresses this summer. Systemic insecticides can be used to help protect valuable trees that may have been weakened.
- When planting winter annuals, seeding rates for broadcasting seed is at least double seeding rates when drilled.
- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) provides producers and landowners cost share assistance for conservation programs such as erosion mitigation and longleaf pine plantings. EQIP is administered through Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Begin planning lime applications for this fall and winter. It takes lime at least several months to raise soil pH.

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YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/AgrilifeExtensionPolkCounty>

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