

Nueces Agriculture

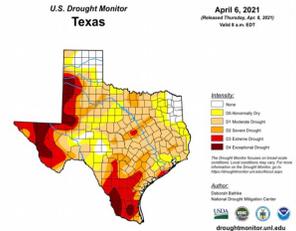
“IMPROVING FOOD & FIBER PRODUCTION”

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 3

APRIL 2021



Back in October, Meteorologist Brian Bledsoe provided a fairly bleak long range weather outlook during our Fall CEU Conference. It seems his predictions have been valid so far with close to a 3rd of the county in extreme drought. The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook continues to forecast drought conditions persisting/intensifying through June. The bright spot from Bledsoe’s report was that he believed the La Niña conditions were relatively weak, meaning this likely would not be a multi year situation. The recent El Niño Southern Oscillation Discussion by the Climate Prediction Center NWS reported an 80% chance the water temperatures in the Pacific would shift from La Niña to ENSO-neutral in May and July. Hopefully, this translates to a wetter Fall.



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All that said, crops in the area look good currently; though some cotton has been very slow to emerge. Growers recognize how little soil moisture is available to carry these crops and that as their water demand increases with maturity it will be difficult for these crops to move forward in the absence of much needed rainfall. Our range and pastures have greened up with annual grasses and warm-season perennials that are breaking dormancy, however the quantity of this forage is in short supply and livestock owners are continuing to supplement livestock. Livestock producers should really assess their forage inventory to determine how they will get past the next 60-90 days if weather holds as predicted; taking into account opportunities to find additional lease land, buy more hay, move the herd to areas receiving more rainfall, or reducing stocking rates. The quicker livestock producers make adjustments the more flexibility they will have down the stretch if dry weather continues. If reducing numbers due to drought, remember the middle age cows are most productive and should be last to go.

We have multiple workshops being offered this spring that we hope you will take advantage of including our Plastics in Cotton Seminar II and our Carbon Farming in Texas Workshop. We believe both these programs will be highly valuable to all who attend as we have selected some outstanding speakers for both.

PRIVATE APPLICATOR TRAINING

When:..... Tuesdays, 6/1, 9/7, 12/7 **Pre-Registration Required:**.....(361)767-5223
Time8:00 am—11:30 am **Where:**.....A&M AgriLife Ext. Office,
 710 E. Main, Robstown, TX

Fee: \$50.00 (Includes study manuals)

A Private Applicator is defined by law as a person who uses or supervises the use of a restricted-use or state-limited use pesticide for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity.

FARM WORKER PROTECTION SAFETY TRAINING

When:.....Fridays, 5/7, 9/3 **Time**9:00 –11:00 am
WhereTexas A&M AgriLife Extension Office

Pesticide handlers and workers must be trained every year unless they are certified applicators. All participants in this training will be issued cards verifying they have successfully completed the required training and given a copy of the sign-in roster for their employer’s files.

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Beef Cattle Producers Encouraged to Conduct BSEs on Bulls Prior to the Spring Breeding Season – This Year is Probably More Important Than Ever in the Recent Past

by Jason Smith, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Following the February winter storm that produced record low temperatures across a large portion of the state, there is concern from producers about the presence of frostbite on some breeding bulls. Others have expressed concern about reduced sperm production and quality even if no frostbite was observed on the scrotum. As testing of bulls for the spring breeding season recently began, there have been reports from Veterinarians and Extension agents of a higher-than-normal prevalence of breeding soundness exam (BSE) failures in bulls. While it is difficult to estimate the extent to which a specific operation's bull battery may (or may not) have been affected by abnormally low temperatures and extended snow and ice cover, one thing remains certain...a pre-breeding BSE is the only way to objectively evaluate a bull's readiness to breed prior to turnout.



Early observations indicate a higher-than-normal rate of BSE failure or deferment to re-test in bulls that have visual signs of frostbite. However, it appears that a large portion of those are due to morphological sperm abnormalities (physical/structural defects) that can be attributed to damage that occurred during storage. From a conceptual standpoint, the damage most likely occurred due to excessive heating in response to the frostbite. Similar consequences would be expected during times of extreme heat stress, such as is often the case throughout the summer months in Texas. We also (preliminarily) expect younger bulls to have been more resilient to the extreme cold, as they have a greater ability to raise their testes and prevent frostbite. However, we do not yet have the objective data to support that notion.

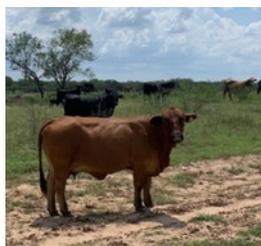


Nonetheless, many of the bulls that fail a BSE or are deferred to re-test may recover and pass a BSE, without requiring a full 60-day cycle of spermatogenesis to do so. While we do not yet have the objective data to back that up as it relates to this specific scenario, that is the conclusion that the available information points us toward.

It is also important to recognize that even in a normal year the rate of BSE failure is in the realm of 15 to 20% of bulls tested, and therefore approximately 1 out of every 5 bulls would be expected to fail a BSE. While it is likely that there will be a small portion of bulls that will be non-breeders due to physical damage and inability to physically breed cows, those bulls should be quickly identified by a BSE. This extreme weather event is one of many reasons why working with your Veterinarian to conduct a pre-breeding BSE on all bulls is always advised, and therefore should be recommended, regardless of past performance. This is also true for recently purchased bulls that underwent a BSE prior to the winter storm. For producers that do not routinely conduct pre-breeding BSE's, this would certainly be the year to start, and to start early. The knowledge gained in doing so will provide them with the ability to decide if they need to replace bulls while replacements are still available, or if they need to turn out more bulls than normal.



A key take away from this is to not panic and not immediately cull all bulls that fail a BSE or are deferred for re-test. Once results are known on the initial tests, plans can be made to locate additional sires if needed or a plan can be developed to rotate sires in and out during the breeding season. Following the re-test, we suspect many, or at least several of the deferred bulls will pass a BSE. Producers should be encouraged to request a complete BSE that includes evaluation for motility, morphology, physical defects and testing for Trichomoniasis. Most often a quick screening for sperm motility constitutes a “fertility test” on bulls. Morphology is as important to a sperm’s ability to fertilize an egg and is often not looked at during routine BSEs conducted in the field. The value of a complete BSE cannot be overemphasized. If you have not already done so, please help to get the word out and share this information with your beef cattle producers. We will provide updates based upon the data that we receive as it becomes available.



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overemphasized. If you have not already done so, please help to get the word out and share this information with your beef cattle producers. We will provide updates based upon the data that we receive as it becomes available.

Don’t hesitate to contact Dr. Hairgrove and I if you have any additional questions. If replying, please be sure not to reply all (unless that is your intent), as the email will go to a very large number of people.

Herbicide Tolerant Grain Sorghum Technologies

Dr. Josh McGinty, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

For the first time, herbicide tolerant traits are becoming a reality for grain sorghum producers. Three traits are in various stages of commercial release this year. In no particular order, these three traits are outlined below:



- The most widely available trait at the moment is **igrowth® sorghum**, available from Advanta Seeds® Alta Seeds™ brand. Sorghum hybrids with this trait are tolerant of the imidazolinone family of herbicides, specifically Imiflex™ (active ingredient imazamox, produced by UPL NA Inc.). This herbicide offers both preemergence and postemergence control of many broadleaf, to include Palmer amaranth, purslane, and sunflower, as well as certain grass weeds, to include barnyardgrass, crabgrass, and suppression of Texas panicum.
- Next is **Inzen™ sorghum**, available from Corteva through the Pioneer® brand. This trait provides broad tolerance to ALS-inhibiting herbicides, specifically Zest™ WDG (active ingredient nicosulfuron, a Corteva Agriscience product). Prior testing by AgriLife Extension has shown that Zest can be used postemergence for control of several grass species, to include Texas panicum. Seed possessing the Inzen trait is available in limited supply this year, with a full commercial launch anticipated for 2022.
- The third trait is **Double Team™ sorghum**, available from S&W Seed Company, through the Sorghum Partners® brand. Double Team sorghum is tolerant to certain ACC-ase inhibiting herbicides, specifically FirstAct™ (active ingredient quizalofop-P-ethyl, an ADAMA product). This herbicide provides postemergence control of many grasses, to include barnyardgrass, crabgrass, junglerice, Texas panicum, and broadleaf signalgrass. Double Team sorghum seed is available in a limited supply of three hybrids in 2021.

Demonstration plots of all three systems and a trial comparing the weed control of these herbicides will be conducted at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Corpus Christi this spring, with a field day tentatively planned for late May. If you have any questions about these three traits, or are interested in the field day, please contact Dr. Josh McGinty at joshua.mcginty@ag.tamu.edu or call 361-265-9203.

For more information:

Igrowth: <http://altaseeds.advantaus.com/igrowth/>

Inzen: <https://www.pioneer.com/us/products/sorghum/inzen.html>

Double Team: <https://sorghumpartners.com/double-team/>

Plastics in Cotton Seminar II

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May 5, 2021
8:30am - 12:15pm



**Join us from the comfort of your home!
All you need is a computer/tablet with internet capabilities.**

This online panel discussion will focus on best practices and resources for cotton producers and ginners, cost and long-term marketing implications, and more regarding plastics in cotton.

Speakers will include:

- Jeff Nunley, South Texas Cotton & Grain
- Lauren Krogman, National Cotton Council
- Dr. John Robinson, AgriLife Cotton Economist
- Ben Robles, USDA Cotton Classing Office
- Tony Williams, Texas Cotton Ginners' Association

Panelists:

- John Wanjura, USDA
- Dr. Bobby Hardin, AgriLife Research
- Ross Rutherford, Lummus Corporation

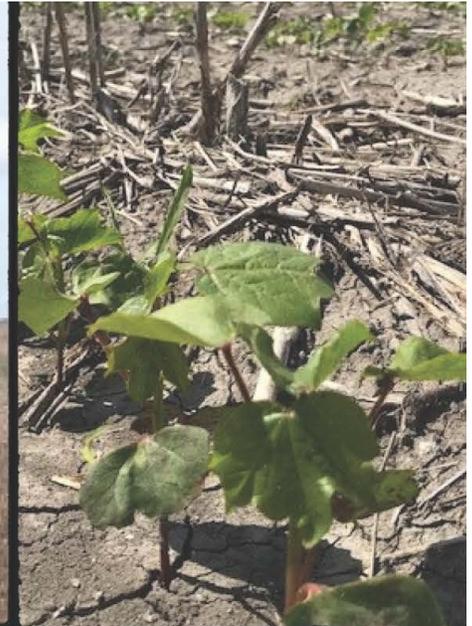
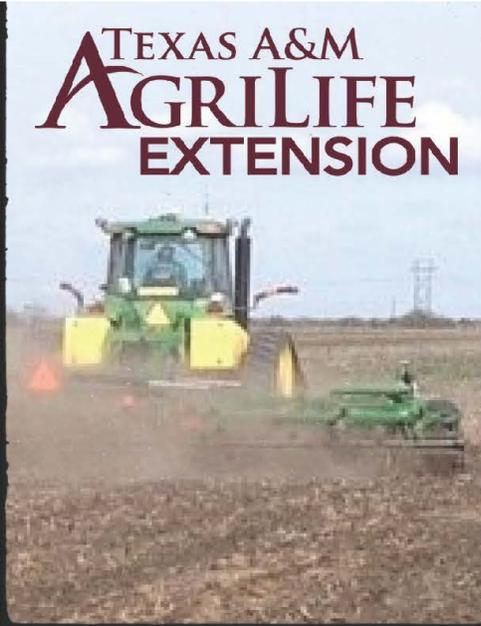
To Register, please visit <https://bit.ly/PlasticsInCottonII>
Registration closes on May 4th. A link to the Seminar will be emailed the day before the webinar.

For more information: Bobby.McCool@ag.tamu.edu or j-ott@tamu.edu

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in any of the mentioned activities, are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office at 361.767.5223 eight days before all programs 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.



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CARBON FARMING IN TEXAS May 11th

8:30am - 2:00pm (in-person or online)
Johnny Calderon Building
710 E. Main Ave., Ste. 1, Robstown

.....

This free seminar will focus on shifting farm policy and conservation practices to improve productivity while reducing the negative impacts to the environment. Topics of discussion will include:

- Key Indicators Directing Farm Policy Change
- Overview of Carbon Cycling and Budgeting - Dr. Katie Lewis
- Modifying Equipment for Success and Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Dr. Ronnie Schnell
- Dealing with Limited Water and Abundant Weeds - Dr. Josh McGinty
- Fuel Price Squeeze and Production Cost Opportunities - Dr. Steven Klose
- Positive Landowner Relationships and Farming with Conservation Practices - Jim Massey, IV and Jon Whatley

Please RSVP at <https://bit.ly/CarbonFarming> by May 10th. For more information contact Lisa at 361.767.5223

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Home Aerobic Treatment Systems Maintenance Course Now Available Online

AgriLife Today

The online course will be available to Texans in counties where it has been approved starting April 1.

An aerobic septic system or aerobic treatment unit, ATU, uses oxygen to break down both dissolved and solid constituents contained in domestic wastewater into gases, cell mass and non-degradable material, explained Anish Jantrania, AgriLife Extension specialist with the agency's On-Site Sewage Facilities, [OSSF](#), unit.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, TCEQ, regulations for an onsite sewage facility specify that at the end of an initial two-year service policy period, homeowners will either commit to maintain their ATU system personally or obtain a service contract from a licensed service provider.

In counties that allow homeowners to maintain their ATU systems and have approved this course for education, successful course completion will allow users to maintain their own ATU or spray system.

“You need to contact your local regulatory authority or authorized agent to determine if you would be allowed to maintain your own system,” Jantrania said.

He said the [TCEQ website](#) can provide information on authorized agents throughout the state or it can be found through the [contacts section of the OSSF website](#).

Course cost, content and completion

“In this online course, we will be discussing information that is important to the homeowner for performing proper operation, maintenance and monitoring service of an onsite wastewater treatment system,” Jantrania said. “We will also discuss the routine reporting requirements for keeping your ATU and spray system in compliance with Texas regulations at the state and local level.”

The cost for the online course is \$150 and participants have 30 days from sign-up to complete it.

Jantrania said upon course completion, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Understand the basic operation and maintenance activities for an aerobic treatment unit.
- ◆ Have the knowledge needed to communicate with professional system maintenance providers.
- ◆ Make better decisions regarding upkeep and maintenance of an onsite wastewater treatment system.
- ◆ Be better informed about the onsite wastewater treatment industry.
- ◆ Have the knowledge needed to understand and communicate with maintenance providers.

The course will be presented in five chapters and approximate times for completion of each chapter will be provided. Chapter topics will address different aspect of the aerobic treatment system, including avoiding illnesses and accidents, understanding how the system works, the ATU as part of the family, and general system operation and maintenance and reporting tasks.

Finishing a homework assignment that could take one to four days will also be required for course completion, Jantrania said.

“If your locality allows you to perform your own operation, maintenance and reporting activities instead of having a service contract, and if they have approved this course for education, then upon successful completion of this program you will receive a signed certificate from your local AgriLife Extension county office,” he said.

To receive a certificate, participants must successfully complete all course chapters, pass a final quiz with a grade of 100 and submit their completed homework assignment online within 30 days from the day they start the course.

“Once you get your signed certificate, you will then be able to present it to your local regulator and sign up for maintaining your own ATU and spray system,” he said.

**COASTAL BEND
GRAIN STORAGE & HANDLERS SAFETY
CONFERENCE**

**Wednesday
April 14, 2021**

8:00 am — 3:30 pm

**Location: San Patricio County Fairgrounds — Event Center
219 W. 5th Street, Sinton, Texas**

Fee: \$20 (Includes Lunch) payable at the door

Pre-Registration by April 12, 2021 by calling (361) 587-3400

AGENDA

- 8:00 am: Registration
- 8:30 - 10:30 am: Grain Enouflment Demonstration - Planter's Coop Sinton Facility, 7193 CR 2965, Sinton
- 10:30 - 11:00 am: Break / Return to meeting location
- 11:00 - 12:00 pm: Defensive Driving - San Patricio County Fairgrounds Event Center "Show Barn"
- 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00 - 3:30 pm: Defensive Driving
- 3:30 pm: Certificates, Survey & Adjourn

Lunch will be at Butter Churn Restaurant, 207 West Sinton, Sinton, TX 78387

Sponsored by: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Nueces, San Patricio and Refugio County, Woodsboro Farmers Coop, South Texas Country Elevators Assoc., Planters Coop and Driscoll Grain

For further information you can also contact Jason Ott, Nueces County-CEA 361-767-5223

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219 N. Vineyard
Sinton, TX 78387
361-587-3400

Bob McCool

**Bob McCool
County Extension Agent
Ag/Natural Resources**

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In the event of a name, address or phone number change please contact the office at:

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