

## Agriculture/Horticulture Newsletter

January 2024

### Tri County Producer Symposium January 23, 2024

Estate and Tax Planning, Prolonged effect of drought on trees and oak wilt, Plant ID with live samples, 1-D-1 Tax Valuation and Prescribed Burning are all on the agenda for the Tri-County Ag Program slated for January 23rd beginning at 8:00 am at Jacoby's Feed in Melvin. This program will offer 3 CEU's.

The agenda for the morning is as follows:

**8 a.m.: Prescribed Burning**—Mark Mosely, Chairman McCulloch SWCD & NRCS Retired

**9 a.m.: 1D1 Wildlife Valuation** - Kory Perlichek, Wildlife Biologist TPWD

**10 a.m.: Estate & Tax Planning** - Dr. Jason Johnson, Extension Economist

**11 a.m.: Native Plant ID**—Steve Nelle— NRCS Retired

**NOON**—Jacoby's Lunch Sponsored by Central Texas Farm Credit

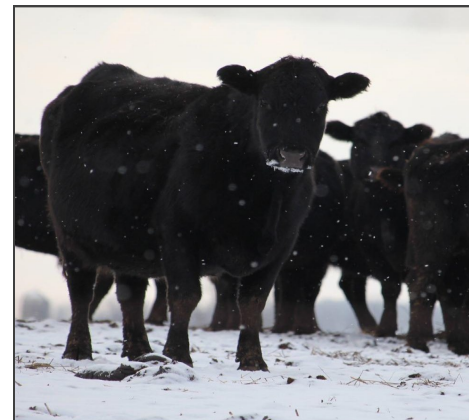
**1:00 P.M.—Oak Wilt and Drought Stress**—Robert Edmonson, Texas Forest Service

#### To register:

Contact McCulloch County Extension Office @ 325-597-1295 or email Sarita.short@ag.tamu.edu to register. \$25 before 19th, \$35 after 19th

#### In this issue:

- Tri County Ag Program
- Tending Cattle After Winter Storm
- Wildlife Seminar—Save the Date
- Got Thistles?
- Horticulture



Supplemental protein such as cubes may be necessary after harsh winter weather.

### Tending Cattle after a Winter Storm by Rick Machen, PhD

January 2024 has started mild but I feel sure storms are coming. Here are some things to think about after a storm—As water sources thaw and leak repairs get underway, cattle producers might give some thought to forage conditions.

Grass leaves contain most of the digestible protein, energy and minerals in the plant. Rain, sleet, snow and freezing temperatures leech these valuable nutrients from the plant. Snow and ice accumulation tends to break leaves from the stems. Likewise, the weight of snow and ice often reduces range forage to a mat that may be of lesser palatability than standing forage. With fewer leaves and perhaps a mat-like appearance, the forage has no doubt changed since winter set in. Grazing cattle need a minimum of 7% crude protein in the diet to support rumen microbes and maintain rumen function. The protein content of weathered dormant forages may be below this optimum threshold. If so, cattle may be slowly starving on a belly full of grass. In addition to correcting a potential rumen nitrogen [protein] deficiency, protein supplementation will often facilitate greater forage (and hence energy) intake. If cows are in thin body condition (condition score 4 or less), supplemental energy may be warranted to speed their recovery from the cold stress. Late winter and spring calving cows are in their final trimester of gestation where 80+ percent of fetal growth occurs. Improvement in body condition is difficult during this time. Remember—the goal is to calve them in at least a BCS=5 to optimize the coming year's calf crop.

## Multi County Wildlife Program



### Menard

Mark your calendars and make plans to come join us for the Multi County Wildlife Program April 23, 2024 in Menard.

#### Topics will include:

**Horned Lizards**—Mark Mitchell, Mason Mountain TPWD

**Feral Hogs**—John Tomecek—AgriLife

**Turkeys and Habitat**—Meagan Clayton—AgriLife

**Birding with Extension**—Liz Tidwell—AgriLife

**New Technology in Predator Calls**—Gary Roberson—Burnham Brothers and *CARNIVORE TV*



## Chemical Weed and Brush Control Reference Guide—Updated

ERM-1466 Chemical Weed and Brush Control Reference Guide was updated in May of 2020 to include the most recent chemicals.

This publication provides general suggestions for herbicides used to control brush and weeds on Texas rangelands. It also gives information on the levels of control expected. Visit the AgriLife Bookstore for the free download:

<https://agrilife.org/westtexasrangelands/files/2020/05/ERM-1466.pdf>

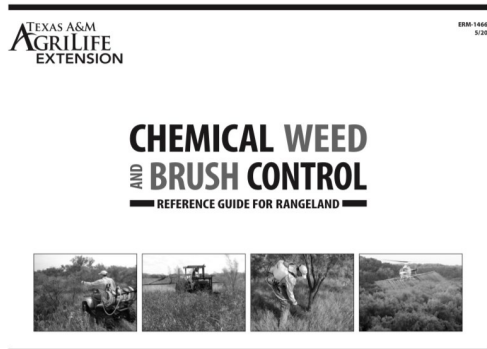


Figure 9. Mesquite tree showing lateral roots and branching taproot.

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### Got Thistles?

Now is the time to treat your property for thistles! Most thistles are unpalatable to livestock and wildlife as they have spines on their leaves. If left uncontrolled, thick thistle stands can reduce grazing and result in less forage production. A single thistle plant can produce at least 4,000 seeds, which increases the chance for higher thistle populations in the pasture the following year. Consequently, management practices need to be conducted prior to flower formation for effective thistle control. Even if thistles have not infested your pasture in the past, it is ideal that your pastures are scouted in late fall through mid-spring (November to March) to ensure that thistles do not get out of control. New infestations are easier to manage than large-scale populations.

Although there are at several different species of thistle in Texas, most are closely related and control recommendations will not differ. **Best time to control with a herbicide is when thistles are in the rosette stage. The rosette stage is when the thistle forms a low-growing ring of leaves.** As they mature they are harder to control and may require higher rates of herbicide to have effective control. You may also treat mechanically by digging up the thistle.

### Select Herbicide Options:

Weedmaster, 2-4-D, GrazonNext HL, Remedy, PastureGard, and Cimarron Max (for bermudagrass pastures, will control bahiagrass)

**REMEMBER: THE LABEL IS THE LAW!** Always read the pesticide label before using.



Texas Thistle in rosette stage.

For more information on thistles visit this link:

<https://rangeplants.tamu.edu/plant/thistles/>



# January Gardening To-Do List

Allison Watkins, AgriLife Horticulturist



## January To-Do List

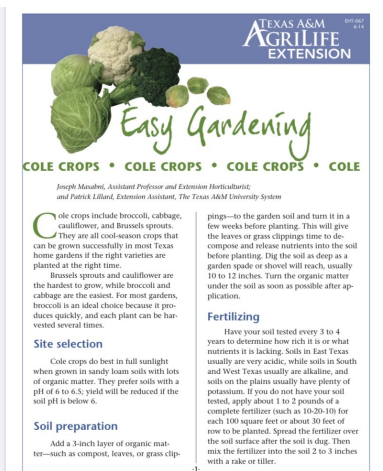
What is there to do in the landscape and garden in January? It may be surprising to some, but there is a lot that can be done now! Starting with the vegetable garden: now is your chance to get onion transplants, asparagus crowns, artichoke crowns and snap peas planted. Asparagus is a wonderful addition to a home landscape because it's one of the few perennial vegetables. It makes a nice fine textured plant and produces delicious fresh asparagus spears to harvest every spring. The only catch is that the plant needs a couple years to get established before harvesting, so get it in the ground now to have a plentiful harvest later. Onions are biennial crops, and if started from seed should be planted in the fall – it then takes until the second spring after planting to harvest full-sized onions. To get onions in one season, plant transplants (also called onion sets) now and harvest in the late spring/early summer. To learn more about home vegetable gardening, visit

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/>

For curb appeal, there is still time to plant snapdragons, pansies, stock, cabbage, kale and other cool season annuals to bring color and interest into an otherwise dormant landscape. Winter is a good time of year for pruning shade trees if needed, just remember not to top them. Topping is a poor pruning practice that causes an unappealing appearance and stresses the tree. Don't even top crape myrtles – they are the most commonly topped plant but there is no good reason to do so.



Onion Sets ready for planting



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