

Soil Conservation News

The hay crop is a very important part of most livestock operations. It is used to provide food when other forage isn't available, usually in winter. Hay must be of adequate quality in order to meet livestock protein needs. Fertility controls both the quality and quantity of the hay crop. Fertility needs to be determined from a soil analysis. Crude protein content of hay can be checked by means of a protein analysis.

A rule of thumb method of figuring fertilizer needs of hay is as follows: grass uses nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash in about a 4-1-2 ratio respectively. A ton of 12 percent crude protein air dry hay uses 40 pounds of nitrogen, 10 pounds of phosphorus and 20 pounds of potash. Hay quality usually refers to the protein content of the hay and its digestibility. Hay with a high crude protein content will be higher in digestibility, have less fiber, less stem, and more leaf than a low crude protein hay.

Speed of digestion is also related to hay quality. Low protein, low digestible hay passes through the digestive tract of an animal slowly. The digestive system requires more time to break the forage down. Hay that is very low in protein (4-5 percent) passes through so slowly that the animal cannot eat enough to maintain itself.

Quality of hay is also affected by the cutting schedule. For example, coastal bermudagrass hay should be cut in the early boot stage, or when 14" to 16" in height and cut each 28-32 days for quality hay. Hay cutting

height should be about 3 inches.

Young, immature grass produces high protein, high digestible hay, while old mature plants produce low protein, low digestible hay. Overall hay quality is also higher in early summer, decreases in July and August and rises again in the fall months. Fertilizer rates and timing, liming if needed, time of harvest, weed control, and management of hayland for wildlife enhancement are some of the management and production considerations used to achieve optimum production of hayland.

For further information concerning hayland planning and management, contact the Soil Conservation Service at 316 Spring Street, Columbus, Texas 732-2773.

Conservation assistance District cooperators Henry Beken, of the Weimar area, has established coastal bermudagrass on eroded areas which were recently shaped.

Gladys Horn, of the Ramsey area, has completed construction of a pond. Conservation assistance was provided to Abel Gonzalez of Eagle Lake. District cooperators Adolf Hudec, of the Weimar area, has established coastal bermudagrass on an eroded area which was shaped.

Ray Stallman, a district executive director, all the grain certificates have been issued to producers earning program payments in 1986.

The county committee will accept Conservation Cost-Share requests starting June 23 through July 8, 1986. Only a small amount of funds have been received by Colorado County for this purpose. Approved conservation practices for Colorado County are: fall grass planting, gully shaping, liming, and rose hedge control. For further information regarding this program contact the ASCS office located in Columbus.

All loans disbursed from this office in June will carry a 6.5 percent interest rate.

The Colorado County ASCS will be closed Friday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.

A farm pond management field day is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday, June 27 at the Wilburn (Boots) Wesells pond.

The annual Colorado County rice field day will be held at 5:30 p.m. on

Farm pond management field day set

By Leroy J. Hajdik
County Extension Agent

A farm pond management field day will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, June 27 at the Wilburn (Boots) Wesells pond. The pond is located at 213 White Loop Road (Struss addition). The site is approximately two miles south of Gladden and just off of FM 2834.

Program will include rough fish control, pond weed control, fertilization and restocking.

Field day is a joint venture between the Colorado County Soil Conservation Service and the County Agricultural Extension Service.

Row crop tour The tenth annual Colorado County row crops tour will be held Monday, June 30 beginning at 5 p.m. from the Nade Community Center.

Tour will include stops on corn and grain sorghum, marketing and disease test plots, Group IV (early maturing) soybean varieties, disease and herbicide test plots and corn soil

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Weather favorable for Texas wildlife this year

Biologists believe favorable weather could make 1986 an excellent production year for wildlife in Texas.

This spring and summer could be a pivotal year for bobwhite quail which rebounded only partially in 1985 from the drought and freezing conditions which depressed populations during the winter of 1983-84.

"Last year was a decent one for quail production in most of the state," said quail program leader Don Wilson, "but the numbers of nesting birds were so low their production failed to bring populations back to normal."

This spring, however, rainfall has created better than average nesting conditions across most of the quail range. "Some of the areas in the Rolling Plains of North and West Texas that were hit hardest by the drought and freeze are in much better shape this spring," Wilson said, adding that additional rains will be needed through the summer to assure good survival of poults.

Wild turkeys also should benefit from good range conditions this spring, Wilson said. "Turkey populations already were in pretty good shape, even though the 1985 hatch was considered only average," he noted. "Turkeys nested unusually early this year, which should help poult survival."

White-tailed deer also are dependent upon spring and summer rainfall to carry them through the

period when both food and cover are vital to fawn survival. "We currently have pretty high deer populations in Texas, as evidenced by the record harvest during the past hunting season," said Horace Gore, white-tailed deer program leader. "Reports indicate a better-than-average fawn crop this year."

However, Gore said high deer populations during periods of good range conditions can become a problem in the event of a drought. "Deer populations already are at or above the carrying capacity of the range in a lot of areas, so it's still important to keep the antlerless segment of the herd under control," Gore said.

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Manuel Vidal Garza baptized

Manuel Vidal Garza son of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Garza of Houston, was baptized on Sunday, June 8 at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church in Houston with Rev. Barry Beckman officiating.

Manuel wore the christening gown worn by both his father and brother, Stephen. His godparents are Mr. and Mrs. Vidal Garza of West Columbia, Texas.

NEW ARRIVALS

Chad Alan Mahalitic

Mr. and Mrs. Al Mahalitic are proud to announce the birth of their second child, a son, born June 4 at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital.

Chad Alan weighed eight pounds nine ounces and measured 20 1/2 inches long. Welcoming Chad home is a big sister, Amber, 2 years, 10 months.

Aaron James Yanez

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse P. Yanez, of Eagle Lake, are proud to announce the birth of their second child, a son, born on June 7 at 12:37 p.m. at Eagle Lake Community Hospital.

The baby was named Aaron James and weighed six pounds, 14 ounces and measured 20 inches long at birth.

Aaron is being welcomed home by a sister, Jessica, 1 1/2 years old.

Community Vacation Bible School is coming

A host of teachers and helpers are gearing up for the 1986 Community Vacation Bible School which is scheduled for June 23-27 at the United Methodist Church. Sponsored by the Assembly of God, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United Methodist Churches, the program is from 9-11:30 a.m. All children between three years old and completed sixth grade are invited to participate.

Parents and other interested parties are especially encouraged to attend the closing ceremony and open house to be held Friday, June 27 at 7 p.m. The students will be singing and sharing some of what they have learned during the week, with their craft work and lesson material on display in the classroom.

The offering brought by the children each day will go to the Community Hunger Fund, which is dispensed by the Ministerial Alliance. A \$1 per child registration fee helps pay for refreshments and VBS materials.

Registration is now underway. If your child was not in VBS last year, but would like to enroll this year, please call the director, Sharon Webb, 234-5017.

Canning jams and jellies

By Peggy Kalina
County Extension Agent

Jams, jellies, marmalades, preserves and butters add zest to breakfast and other meals. Fruit not at its best for canning, freezing or drying can often be used to make jellies and jams.

Jelly made from fruit juice is clear and firm enough to hold its shape when turned out of the container. Jam is made from crushed or ground fruit and holds its shape but is generally less firm than jelly. Preserves are whole fruits or large pieces of fruit in this syrup, often slightly jelled. Marmalades are jelly-like preserves made of the pulp and rind of citrus fruits, especially citrus fruits. Fruit butters are made from fruit pulp cooked with sugar until the mixture has a uniform, thick consistency that is soft enough to spread easily when cold. Butters contain less sugar than other jelly products and are a good choice for cutting calories while still enjoying a bit of sweetness with meals.

Proper amounts of fruit, pectin, acid and sugar necessary to make a jelled fruit product. Some fruits contain enough natural pectin to make high-quality products while others require the addition of commercial pectin. Since fully ripened fruits have less pectin than underripe fruits, it is a good idea to use some slightly underripe fruits. Recipes using commercial pectin yield about twice as much jelly or jam as products made without added pectin, but contain more sugar cup-for-cup than products made without added pectin. Even with the extra cost of commercial pectin, jellies made with added pectin will generally cost less per jar than jellies made without it.

Process jam, preserves, marmalades and fruit butters in a boiling waterbath instead of using paraffin which tends to loosen and break the seals on them. Paraffin can be used on jellies. A single, thin layer of paraffin seals better than one thick or two thin layers. Be careful melting paraffin, and never heat it to the smoking point. Remember, paraffin is flammable!

For more information pick up our publication titled, "Jellies, Jams, Preserves, Marmalades and Butters."

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