

## Texas Crop Weather Report

### Agricultural Summary

Much of East Texas and the Upper Coast received at least 0.5 inches of rain, and a few locations in those areas got one to two inches.

The region from the Coastal

Bend, through South Central Texas to the southern Edwards Plateau, saw scattered precipitation that usually did not exceed 0.5 inches.

Most of the rest of the state was dry with temperatures ex-

ceeding 100 most of the week.

Pasture conditions declined across the state, except in southeast coastal areas that recently received moisture.

Ranchers continued supplemental feeding and herd reduc-

tion statewide.

### Field Crops Report

**Cotton:** Irrigated cotton looked good and was setting bolls in the High Plains.

However, input costs for water were much higher than usual due to the hot, dry conditions.

Harvest was well underway in the Blacklands. Growers began harvest in the Coastal Bend and Lower Valley. Statewide, cotton condition was mostly rated fair to very poor.

**Corn:** Farmers began to harvest in the Blacklands, where there were growing concerns about high aflatoxin.

Some of these growers baled their corn for hay. South Central producers were harvesting or cutting their crop for hay.

Harvest began in the Upper Coast. The corn condition statewide was mostly rated fair to poor.

**Sorghum:** The dryland crop was starting to head out in the Northern High Plains but was also turning color due to heat and moisture stress.

The irrigated crop looked good there. Dryland acres in the Southern High Plains that were planted after failed cotton were generally in poor condition, except in areas that received rain recently.

Yields were a little better

than expected in areas of the Blacklands.

Producers were finishing harvest in South Central Texas. Rains delayed harvest in some areas of the Coastal Bend and Upper Coast.

Statewide, sorghum condition was mostly rated fair to very poor.

**Peanuts:** The crop pegged at an "intense" rate in the Southern High Plains, where irrigation was heavy. Peanut condition statewide was rated mostly fair to good.

**Rice:** Growers began to harvest in the Upper Coast, where there were fewer fungal problems because of recent dry weather. The condition of rice was mostly rated fair to good statewide.

**Soybeans:** Harvest was nearly complete in the Blacklands, with very low yields reported. Some farmers there baled the crop for hay. Statewide, the condition was mostly rated poor to very poor.

**Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report**  
Growers began to harvest watermelons in the Southern High Plains.

Peach harvest was light in the Cross Timbers due to drought conditions.

East and South Central producers were winding down the watermelon harvest.

Trans-Pecos growers shipped cantaloups and onions. In the Edwards Plateau, farmers harvested very good quality melons.

Pumpkins progressed well under heavy irrigation in the Northern High Plains.

**Pecans:** Trees dropped nuts in the Cross Timbers and Edwards Plateau due to drought conditions.

Nuts were at the expansion stage in the Trans-Pecos. Aphid infestations were reported in South Central Texas.

### Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Pastures were reported to be "January brown" in areas of the Plains due to the very hot and dry conditions.

Grazing conditions declined rapidly across most of the state, except southeast coastal areas that benefited from recent rains.

The poor conditions, combined with scarce, expensive hay supplies and depleted water tanks, caused ranchers to continue culling herds.

Producers provided supplemental feed and weaned calves early to relieve nutritional pressure on cows.

Cattle condition was mostly fair to good where supplemental feed was available.

## Wheat Production Down 64 Percent

The 2006 Texas winter wheat crop is forecast at 35.0 million bushels, down 64 percent from last year, and 68 percent from 2004, but up eight percent from the June forecast.

According to a July 1 survey conducted by the Texas Field Office, statewide yield is expected to average 25 bushels per acre, down seven bushels from last year and the same as the June forecast.

Harvested acreage, at 1.4 million acres, is down 53 percent from 2005, but up eight percent from June 1.

Production on the Northern High Plains is forecast at 13 million bushels, down 77 percent from last year.

Winter wheat production on the Low Plains is forecast at 7.0 million bushels, down 65 percent from last year.

Blacklands production is estimated at 9.6 million bushels, up 55 percent from last year.

Production on the Edwards Plateau is forecast at 850 thousand bushels, down 81 percent from the 2005 crop.

United States winter wheat production for 2006 is forecast at

1.28 billion bushels, up one percent from last month but down 15 percent from 2005.

Yield is expected to average 41.1 bushels per acre, up 0.6 bushel from last month but down

3.3 bushels from last year.

Acreage to be harvested for grain is expected to total 31.1 million acres, down eight percent from a year ago, and unchanged from last month.

## Input Sought For Public Transportation

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) and Texas Department of Transportation are seeking public input to draft a Regional Public Transportation Coordination plan.

The purpose of the plan is to improve transportation services by filling the gaps in the region's transportation network and reducing duplication of services for seniors, people with disabilities and low-income groups.

H-GAC and transportation stakeholders are holding a series of public meetings to offer citizens, social service organizations and other interested parties an opportunity to discuss public transportation needs in their

communities.

A public meeting will be held Thursday, July 27 at 6 p.m. at the Colorado County Service Facility, 305 Radio, Columbus.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, H-GAC will provide for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities attending H-GAC functions.

Requests should be received by H-GAC 24 hours prior to the function. Please call Lydia Abebe at (713) 993-4501 to make arrangements.

For transportation to the meeting please call Colorado Valley Transit at 1-800-548-1068 for a reservation.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Reader Knocks

#### Water Plan

Several months ago I was told that the Colorado County Judge, and County Commissioners supported selling our water to San Antonio. You know San Antonio, they are the same people who couldn't convince a federal judge nearly a decade ago that some "snail darter," or was it a salamander had first rights to the water in the Edwards Aquifer. So San Antonio decided to take the water from the farmers and people of Uvalde and Medina Counties living up dip, not because those people didn't need it, or want it, or own it, but because San Antonio needed a swimming pool for some "endangered species" few have ever seen.

Now San Antonio needs another drink, and instead of solving their problems in the Edwards Aquifer, they are knocking on our doors, and they have enlisted the help of a Colorado River "endangered species," the LCRA. You have got to give the LCRA credit, they know how to get more of those white pickups, but they don't know what they are doing, if the article that appeared in the Eagle Lake Headlight on July 20, 2006 is any example.

In that newspaper in their own words was an article by LCRA General Manager Joe Beal that offered their reasons for wanting to take your water from you. After all they have been planning to take your water for six years (his number). The one thing they didn't say was that they were going to make money, and gain influence on selling your property, your water, whether you live in town or in the country. So let me mention just a few reasons Mr. Beal says San Antonio should get your water:

\* LCRA says that taking your water from you is some kind of a "regional conservation and development project," but they fail to explain how you leaving your water tap turned on for 80 years (the length of the contract with San Antonio) conserves your water. As far as a "development project," don't forget more of those white pickups, or paying for that new LCRA facility near LaGrange. So LCRA has now given us a new definition of "conservation," its taking your water away from you and sending it to San Antonio, or any place they decide to sell it.

\* LCRA admits that "the project would take land from landowners and tax revenue from public treasuries," but never mind, for we are told that, "What you may not have heard it that this project would increase the supply of water in the basin and reduce demand for water, leaving the Colorado River basin better off in several ways." Mr. Beal fails to explain just how taking our water to San Antonio will increase the supply or reduce demand, unless he expects us to run out of water in Eagle Lake & Columbus, the largest users of water in Colorado County. Maybe LCRA also manages its money that way, but

the more I take out, the less, not more, I have.

\* Lastly, the best "whopper" in the article is when Mr. Beal tells us that, "LCRA is participating in the project because, without it, the lower Colorado River basin has no identified way to meet its water needs." I am not sure exactly what he is talking about, but he again forgot to mention, money. Is LCRA so devoid of ideas that they can only propose taking water from the citizens of Colorado County as the only way to meet our areas "needs," whatever that is? Here is an idea for Mr. Beal, why not start off by bringing one else's water, and taking it to Colorado County, or better yet, just leave us alone.

Allen G. Hatley  
Eagle Lake, Texas

### Positive Airport Impact Outlined

Support for public and private development projects like our airport are often based on their expected economic impacts at the local regional or national levels. All real estate related activities—construction of shopping center, hospital expansion, closing of manufacturing plants, creation of subdivision, residential remodeling and expansion of airports—have an effect on the amount of money circulating in an area.

Economic impact studies measure the expected economic consequences of specific economic activities (such as airport expansion, new commercial development, or legal activities, such as new zoning or building codes or changes in the property tax code).

Economic impacts typically include changes in levels of business or retail sales, employment and earnings, and tax revenues expected to derive from the activity.

Airport expansion illustrates the economic impact of one type of real estate activity. When construction starts materials are purchased and transported to the site.

Expenditures for labor and materials generate business sales, employment and others as well as tax revenues.

This project is being largely paid for by federal tax money that will go elsewhere if not used here by Eagle Lake.

Ed Holland  
Eagle Lake

### Opry A Success

Dear Editor,  
The Sixth Annual special fundraiser by the Columbus Opry for the Wharton County Junior College Colorado County Senior Citizen Program was again very successful. Monies will go to buy meals and services for seniors in Colorado County.

There were several hundred in attendance with many giving rave reviews of the performances. We did not hear a negative remark. It is great to have community sup-

port for this worthwhile project.

Thanks to all that sold tickets, entertained, donated cash, silent auction items and door prizes and especially to those who attended. A special thanks to LCRA for up-front monies that enabled the program to make a 100% profit for services and a big thanks goes to John and Brenda Buehler for donating their time, profits and facility to the Senior Program.

Columbus had a great thing going with so much talent displayed on Saturday nights. The entertainers helped you to relax and enjoy yourself as you could see the enjoyment that they had entertaining the audience. Music and laughter are great catharses. But, we guess "all good things come to an end" and July 22, 2006 was the last Columbus Opry Show. We will miss the show and the great fundraiser for the program.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Osborne, director;  
Jane Booker,  
Head site manager

### Columbus Livestock Co., Inc.

Todd Keaton, Owner 979-732-2622  
Sale Every Thursday  
10:30 a.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 20  
CATTLE ON HAND: 1248  
HORSES-0 GOATS-0 DONKEY-0  
# OF SELLERS-199

**PACKER COWS**  
Higher dressing utility & cutter cows 40-48  
Lower dressing utility & cutter cows 35-39  
Thin Cows 28-34

**PACKER BULLS**  
Heavyweight bulls 55-60  
Utility cutter bulls 48-54

STEERS	#1	#2
200-300 lbs	160-190	135-155
300-400 lbs	147-163	126-145
400-500 lbs	128-144	115-127
500-600 lbs	118-130	105-117
600-700 lbs	110-120	98-110
700-800 lbs	102-110	92-101

HEIFERS	#1	#2
200-300 lbs	145-165	130-144
300-400 lbs	128-146	117-126
400-500 lbs	120-138	110-119
500-600 lbs	111-120	99-110
600-700 lbs	100-112	89-99
700-800 lbs	90-101	82-89

STOCKER COWS	
Good Stocker Cow/calf Pairs	800-900
Medium Cow/calf Pairs	650-790
Common Cow/calf Pairs	575-645
Good Stocker Cows & Heifers	650-775
Medium Stocker Cows & Heifers	475-600

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY GUYS!**

DEBBIE 7-26 PEDRO 8-5

WITH LOVE,  
MAMI

CCA Live Oak Chapter

**Banquet**

Thursday, Aug. 3 Columbus KC Hall

**Prime Rib & Grilled Shrimp**

Door Prizes Doors Open 6 pm • Dinner 7 pm Live Auction

Advance \$25 • At the Door: \$30 • 12 & Under: \$10

**Silent Auction • Drawings & More**

Corporate Tables Available for \$400

(Includes reserved seating and special take home goodies)

Advanced tickets available at Weimar Manufacturing, Columbus State Bank, Floyd's Barber Shop in Columbus, First State Bank of Columbus, or Johnny's Sport Shop in Eagle Lake. For ticket information and availability contact Dwight Mazac at 732-5786 or 732-5635 or Todd Radke at 732-0486.

## Connect to Customer Choice

AS THE ELECTRIC DELIVERY COMPANY that has been serving south and west Texas for over 90 years, AEP Texas knows a thing or two about energy conservation. While we no longer sell electricity or send out monthly electric bills, we recognize this is going to be a long, hot summer.

Since AEP Texas and its 1,700 employees are directly connected to the many communities we live in and serve, we'd like to share some information on how you can help manage your electric bills through active retail choice and where you can go for additional help if need be.

One of the best ways to lower higher electric bills is to shop around for a less expensive retail electric provider (REP). Finding different offers can be done quickly and efficiently.

- 1) Visit the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) electric choice website at [www.powertochoose.org](http://www.powertochoose.org). If you don't have access to a computer, you can call the PUCT's Electric Choice hotline at 1-866-PWR-4-TEX (797-4839).
- 2) Use the information you receive to contact different REPs to collect more information on various services and offers. Also contact your current REP at the number listed on your electric bill for other offers that may be available. Ask about contract terms and prices and be sure to look at the REPs' Electricity Facts Labels to make a good comparison.

### Need some help?

Customers having trouble paying their electric bills and wishing to avoid disconnection should discuss their concerns with their current retail electric provider. All REPs are required to offer deferred payment plans to eligible customers who express an inability to pay. REPs also offer balanced billing plans, which allow eligible customers to pay an average amount each month year-round.

Additionally, many community action agencies may be able to help with electric bills or energy efficiency programs. For more information, contact the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) at 1-800-525-0657, e-mail at [info@tdhca.state.tx.us](mailto:info@tdhca.state.tx.us) or visiting one of the following websites.

TDHCA Utility Bill Help and Other Assistance  
[www.tdhca.state.tx.us/assist\\_energy.htm](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/assist_energy.htm)

TDHCA Home Repair Assistance and Weatherization  
[www.tdhca.state.tx.us/assist\\_repair.htm](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/assist_repair.htm)

[www.aeptexas.com](http://www.aeptexas.com)

Connected to you.

Connected to Texas.

