

Texas A&M AgriLife in the North Region



August 5, 2015

The grass is always greener on the other side!!!

Yesterday, I took the day off and spent some time at the pig farm with my granddaughter. Camryn is 8 years old and will be a 3rd grader at Reeves Hinger Elementary in Canyon this year. She is really excited about being a Randall County 4-H member and getting involved in all that is offered. Camryn and I were headed back to town yesterday morning after checking on a sow (farrowed the night before) when she noticed a small calf halfway through the fence eating grass from the ditch. Immediately I thought, "This is a teachable moment!" We visited about the saying and what it meant and that we should always be thankful for what we have and who we are. Good Stuff!!!

The youth livestock program and agriculture in general gives us so many opportunities to impact youth and parents. I am excited to be a role model to my grandkids. Those stupid sows that I cuss on a regular basis and don't have time to mess with, are about to pay dividends with many more teachable moments. Recently, there have been multiple reports of poor examples of behavior and decisions in the youth livestock programs with Missouri State Fair, Indiana State Fair, and problems in our own great state. These folks and too many others have lost the opportunity to teach the many positive lessons available through these projects. Take advantage of your responsibility to be that positive influence that our youth and their parents need. That's what the youth livestock program is, pure and simple. It's not about winning or prize money or who can outspend who; it's positive life lessons, family, friends, and growing up.

As an agent and parent and now grandparent (yes I am old), I have been very fortunate to see the winning side of numerous banners at Texas major shows including my sons Grand Champion Barrow at San Antonio in 2005. It was incredibly rewarding and exciting but the true value is the lessons we learned, time spent with family, friendships we made, and the experiences we shared and these are the things we gained from the "program". Put your hard work and emphasis into providing them with these experiences and lessons and they will be forever grateful. Build your programs with a sincere desire to provide positive experiences, they will remember you forever. There truly are enough folks out there already trying to teach them the shortcuts!

Cotton Trainings this Friday

I hope all of you plan to be in Lubbock Friday morning for the cotton bacterial blight training at 9:00 a.m. followed by the Growth and Development training at 9:30 a.m. This happens on Friday, August 7. If you can't make it in person, join us via lync. It will be recorded for those of you with conflicts. The moral of the story is to make sure you watch Drs. Wheeler and Woodward tell us about this emerging issue and protocol for moving forward.

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The moving forward part is what is important. Dr. Wheeler needs samples from your counties that show symptoms of Bacterial Blight so she can determine if there is a new strain producers are dealing with and how widespread it is in the area. More importantly, CEA's in the North Region have an opportunity to "show their value" to specialists, researchers, commodity partners, and others. I can't express to you enough how important it is to follow through with this opportunity. I literally want samples from every county that has symptoms and to showcase the value of our network of CEA's in each county. FILL HER OFFICE WITH SAMPLES!!!!

July/August Dates to Remember

August 5 – P-4 Training in Canyon for new agents

August 7 – Final Plans approved by 5:00 p.m. on line

PCG Bi-weekly Meeting 7:30 a.m.

Cotton Training 9:00 a.m. Lubbock

Plan assistance at the Lubbock Center for anyone that needs help

August 8 – District 1 Swine Training – WTAMU Nance Ranch

August 10-11 – District 1 Agents Retreat – Wheeler

August 15 – District 2 Swine Training – Levelland

August 17 – Required face to face planning (agents with plans not approved by August 7) in Amarillo

August 19-21 – District 2 TCAAA Retreat – Ruidoso, NM

August 24 – Corn/Sorghum/Small Grains/Dairy Retreat (Training, Planning, and Scheduling) Amarillo

August 27 – Cotton Retreat (Training, Planning, and Scheduling) Lubbock

August 28 – Symptomology Training -- Lubbock

August 29 – District 2 Sheep/Goat Clinic -- Lamesa