Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Blanco County

>>> AGRICULTURE NEWS <<<

May 2025

TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

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DROUGHT & TREES

Drought conditions are impacting trees, especially Ashe juniper and Oaks.

ONLINE TOOLS FOR TREES AND PLANTS

>>> **PAGE 3-4**

TreeMD is a great resource to explore diseases in trees. The Native Plant Selector tool can recommend plants based on your criteria.

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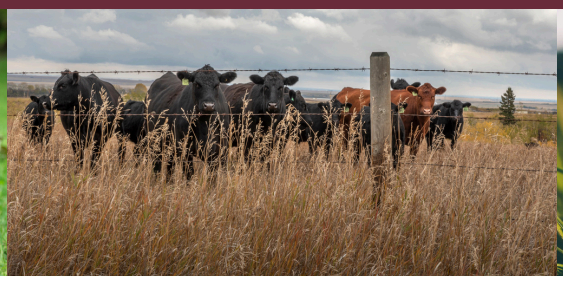
GRASSHOPPERS

Get ahead of grasshoppers before they infest your plants.

UPCOMING EVENTS

>>> **PAGE 6-9**

May 28 & 29- Well Water Screening
July 30- 5hr CEU
Nearby events in New Braunfels and Burnet


Drought conditions significantly impact native tree species,

particularly oaks and Ashe juniper (commonly known as cedar). Understanding how drought affects these trees and how to assess damage is crucial for their preservation.

How Drought Affects Oaks and Ashe Juniper

Oaks (e.g., live oak, post oak):

- Drought stress leads to reduced leaf size, premature leaf drop, and canopy thinning.
- Prolonged drought can weaken oaks, making them more susceptible to pests and diseases.
- Root systems may shrink, reducing the tree's ability to absorb water and nutrients.

Ashe Juniper (Cedar):

- Despite their drought tolerance, severe conditions can cause needle browning and dieback.
- Extended drought periods may result in complete tree mortality, especially in shallow soils.
- Stressed junipers are more vulnerable to infestations and secondary infections.

Assessing Tree Damage

Evaluating drought damage involves categorizing trees based on visible symptoms:

- Likely to Live: Trees with minor leaf discoloration or drop but with healthy buds and flexible branches.
- Questionable: Trees exhibiting significant canopy loss, brittle branches, or discolored bark.
- Definitely Dead: Trees with no green tissue under the bark, brittle limbs, and complete leaf loss.

For Ashe junipers, red or brown needles often indicate death. Oaks may require more time to determine viability, as some can recover after shedding leaves during drought.

Watering Recommendations During Drought

Proper watering is vital to help trees survive drought conditions

- Deep Watering: Apply water slowly to ensure it penetrates 12–18 inches into the soil, reaching the root zone.
- Watering Frequency: Water mature trees every 2–4 weeks during dry periods; newly planted trees may require weekly watering.
- Time of Day: Water early in the morning or late in the evening to reduce evaporation.
- Mulching: Apply a 2–4 inch layer of mulch around the base of the tree to conserve soil moisture and regulate temperature.

Avoid overwatering, as saturated soils can harm tree roots. Use a soil moisture meter or probe to check soil moisture levels before watering.

For more detailed information, refer to the Texas A&M Forest Service website. There, you can find guides that offer comprehensive insights into managing tree health during drought conditions.

PROBLEMS WITH TREES?

Use TreeMD to find out what might be wrong!

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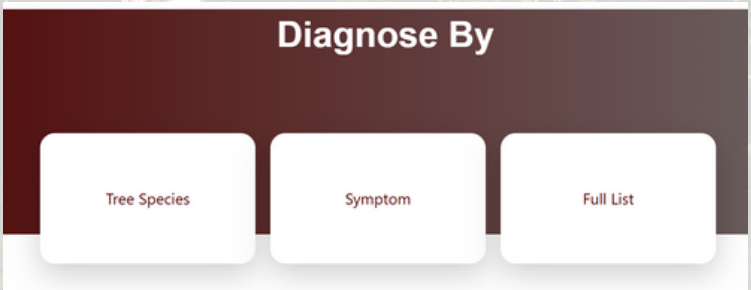

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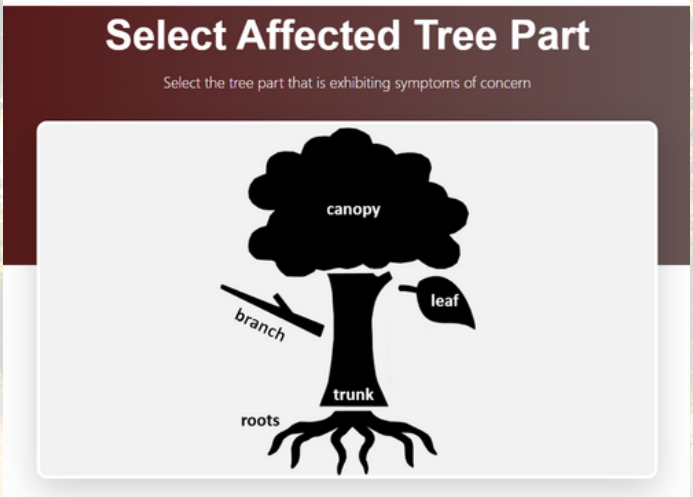

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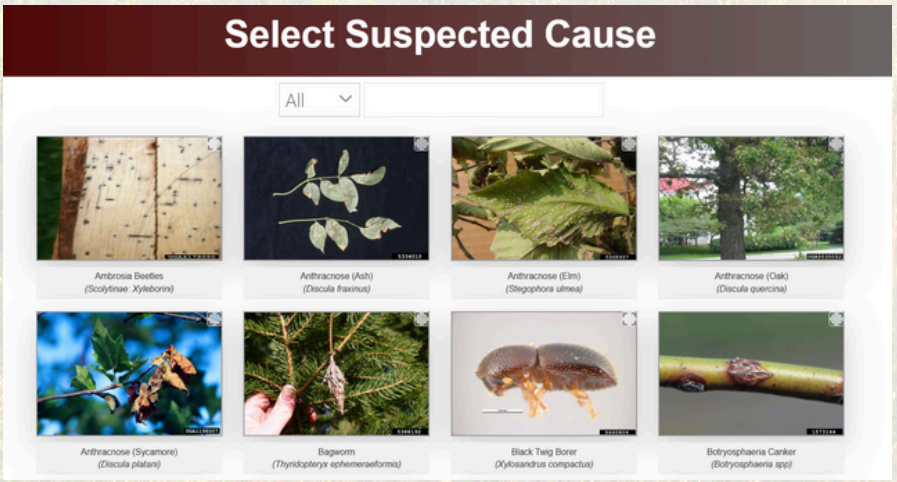
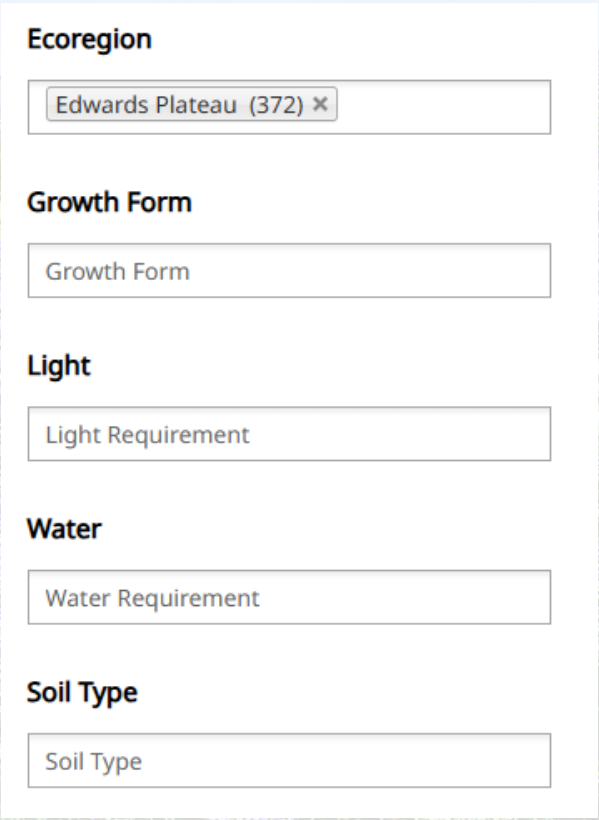
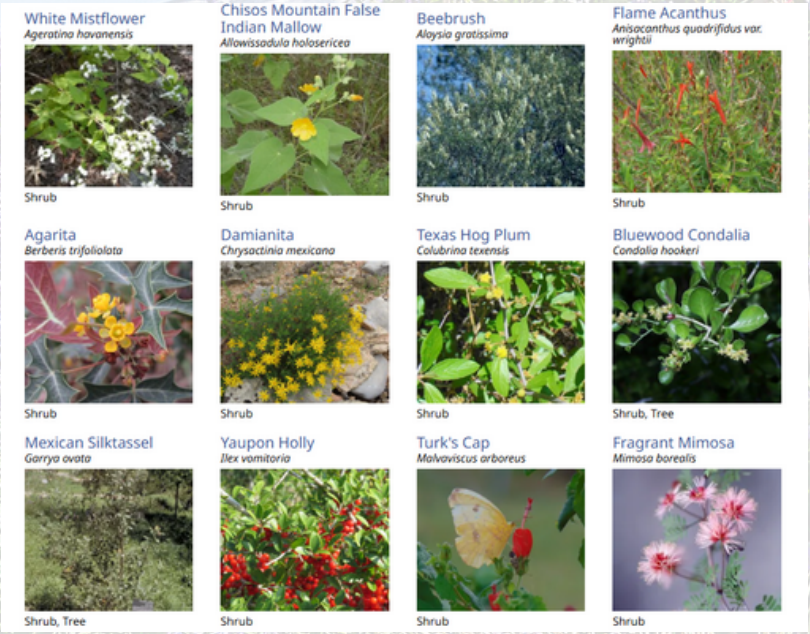


NATIVE PLANT SELECTOR TOOL

Native plants are important for the health of local ecosystems. Plus, they create a sense of beauty in our landscapes and are an important food source for our favorite wildlife such as butterflies and birds. The purpose of this database is to help you fill your landscape with native plants that are best adapted to your region and readily available in your area.

Filter options for your landscape... receive recommendations





Click here for the website!

GRASSHOPPERS: A GROWING CONCERN FOR TEXAS LANDOWNERS

Last summer, many across Texas witnessed an alarming surge in grasshopper populations. The combination of prolonged drought conditions and favorable breeding environments led to significant infestations, impacting rangelands, hay fields, and gardens alike.

Understanding the Surge

Grasshoppers thrive in hot, dry climates. Drought-stressed vegetation and bare soils provide ideal conditions for egg-laying. In 2024, these factors converged, leading to widespread outbreaks across the state, including the Hill Country.

Reports indicated that in pastures, as few as 13 grasshoppers per square yard can consume as much forage as a cow, demonstrating the significant threat they pose.

Monitoring and Early Detection

Effective grasshopper management begins with vigilant monitoring. Early-season scouting, especially in areas like fencerows, roadsides, and field margins, can help detect nymph populations before they mature and disperse. Utilizing methods such as the "square-foot method" allows landowners to estimate infestation levels and make informed decisions about control measures.

Management Approaches

Grasshopper control works best when combining multiple strategies. Mechanical controls like tilling can destroy eggs laid in soil, while biological agents such as Nosema locustae (a protozoan pathogen) can help suppress populations over time. Cultural practices like maintaining healthy, vigorous vegetation and minimizing bare ground along field edges can discourage egg-laying.

When chemical control becomes necessary, products like pyrethroids, benzoylureas, and diamides are commonly recommended for effective suppression—especially when applied during early nymph stages.

Differential

Two-Striped

Packard

Migratory

Looking Ahead

With the potential for continued dry conditions, it's crucial for landowners to remain proactive. Implementing integrated pest management strategies can aid in mitigating the impact of future infestations. For detailed guidance on control options, including an easy-to-use chart for common insecticides refer to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension publication: Grasshoppers and Their Control.

Upcoming Events

Save the Date

Private pesticide applicator license holders can receive 5 hours of CEUs on July 30th 2025.

Past Events

On April 30th, Texas Wildlife Services partnered with us for a workshop dedicated to predator management, showcasing different control and trapping techniques.
The Gillespie County Agricultural Commodity Association was also present and discussed their predator control committee and bounty program, urging Blanco County to implement a similar initiative.

Water Well Screening

The "Well Informed" Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) program is an educational program that gives well owners the opportunity to have their well water samples screened for common contaminants including fecal coliform, E. coli bacteria, nitrates, arsenic and high salinity. The screening of the water samples is followed by a 1-hour explanation of the results, water well protection practices and focuses on wellhead protection and recommendations for remediating well contamination.

Well Informed Screening - May 28 & 29

Blanco AgriLife Extension Office: 200 N. Ave. G, Suite 7, Johnson City

Pick up sample containers prior to May 28 from above location

Sample drop-off 8:30—10:00 a.m. May 28 at above location

Results & Interpretation meeting:

Thursday May 29 @ 4:00 p.m.
Blanco County Fair & Rodeo
619 US 281, Johnson City

The cost of each sample is $15

For more information, call or email Joel Pigg: 979-321-5946 | j-pigg@tamu.edu

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension | Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board | Texas Water Resources Institute — make every drop count | RCAP www.rcap.org | TWON Texas Well Owner Network

Funding for the Texas Well Owner Network is through a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) nonpoint source grant provided by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The project is managed by the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Southwest Texas Prospective Grape Grower Workshop

Considering starting your own vineyard or winery, or maybe you already own one and want to expand your knowledge? Join our Viticulture and Enology experts at our workshop designed for prospective grape growers, current vineyard owners, and future winemakers!

Topics cover:

- Current Industry Trends
- Economics and Basic Equipment
- Site Selection and Variety Selection
- Pest and Disease Management
- Legal Aspects and Permitting
- Winery Design
- Sales, Marketing and Wine Clubs
- Common Mistakes & Lessons Learned

May 30, 2025
9am-4pm
Cost: $225 Single
$400 Double

Why Attend?

- Connect with industry experts
- Network with other prospective growers
- Gain practical knowledge and actionable insights

Dry Comal Creek Vineyards
1741 Herbelin Rd.
New Braunfels, Tx 78132

REGISTER HERE
OR SCAN QR

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

SHEEP & GOAT PRODUCERS CLINIC

This clinic is designed to educate producers on:

- Livestock Guardian Dogs
- Internal Parasites
- Marketing Strategies

Friday

May 16, 2025

Time

9:00 AM - 12:00 P.M.

607 N. Vandeveer
Burnet, Texas 78611

Cost will be $10.00 at the door.

RSVP BY MAY 14

512-756-5463
or
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OUR WORK MAKES A DIFFERENCE.
IN THE LIVES OF TEXANS AND ON THE ECONOMY.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

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