

# >>> AGRICULTURE NEWS <<<

October 2025



## TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

### **NEW WORLD SCREWWORM**

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How to prepare for the New World Screwworm, and resources to keep on hand.

Tips for estimating age of whitetail deer

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### **AGING DEER ON THE HOOF**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### >>> PAGE 8-11

Every Tuesday- Live webinar for new landowners

November 21- Wildlife Valuation, Grazing & Fire, Gillespie County AgriLife



# New World Screwworm

By now, you may have heard about the New World screwworm. If not, it's a parasitic fly that lays eggs in the wounds of warm-blooded animals. The larvae feed on living tissue, which can lead to severe injury or even death if untreated. No need to panic! Being prepared is key.

- **Monitor Your Herds**

Keep a close eye on your livestock and know what "normal" looks like for each animal. Daily checks for wounds are important, especially for newborns. Routine procedures like castration, ear tagging, dehorning, tail docking, shearing, branding, and implant placement can create openings for screwworm infestations. Training your animals to allow safe handling is a great way to be prepared.

- **Monitor Wildlife**

Game cameras are a helpful tool for keeping an eye on wildlife. Breeders and trappers should inspect animals carefully to reduce the risk of transporting infected wildlife or exotic animals. Watch for signs like head shaking, irritated behavior, lethargy, isolation, rotting flesh, or visible maggots.

- **Wound Care**

If you find a wound, keep it clean, use fly spray, and cover it if needed. Always consult a veterinarian before applying treatments, it's helpful to have an established relationship with one ahead of time.

- **If You Suspect Screwworm**

Isolate the animal immediately and contact your county Extension agent, a veterinarian (for domestic animals), or a wildlife biologist (for wildlife). Prompt reporting is critical to prevent further spread.

# New World Screwworm

## Resources and Contacts

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### Fact Sheets:

Screwworm

Livestock

Wildlife

What to do if you have screwworms

Other resources and recorded training

Latest USDA Update

### Questions:

**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension** - Carley Howell, Agriculture and  
Natural Resources Extension Agent  
830-868-7167  
carley.howell@ag.tamu.edu

### Reporting Cases:

**Livestock & Pets**- Texas Animal Health Commission  
800-550-8242

**Wildlife**- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
512-389-4505

# Aging Deer On the Hoof

The ability to estimate the age of live deer is a valuable skill for hunters and landowners practicing quality deer management. By recognizing younger bucks and allowing them to mature, hunters increase opportunities to harvest larger, healthier deer in the future.

## Buck Age Classes

- 1½ years (Yearling): Yearling bucks have a slim build with long legs, a thin neck, and only about 25% of their full antler growth. They are also less cautious than mature bucks and often enter open areas first.
- 2½ years: Slightly thicker body, but legs still appear long. Neck slim except slightly larger during rut. About 60% of antler potential.
- 3½ years: Muscular, “thoroughbred” look. Chest deeper than rump, taut stomach. Neck moderately swollen in rut. About 75% of antler growth.
- 4½ years: Fully muscular, sagging stomach, proportional legs. Neck very swollen in rut. About 90% of antler potential.
- 5½+ years (Mature): Large, thick body with sagging belly, back, and skin. Neck blends into chest during rut. Antlers reach 95–100% of potential but may decline with age.

## Does vs. Fawns

- Does: Larger, rectangular bodies, longer slender snouts, often cautious in behavior.
- Fawns: Short, stocky snouts, square bodies, often playful and less cautious.

## Accuracy & Takeaway

Aging deer on the hoof is not exact, but hunters can usually distinguish between immature and mature bucks with reasonable certainty. Learning these body and behavior cues can improve herd management and help ensure healthier, more sustainable deer populations.



Information courtesy of University of Missouri Extension. [Click here](#) to see more details and photos of age class examples.

# Thank You for a Successful 2024-2025!

As the AgriLife fiscal year comes to an end, I am truly grateful for the support that made this year successful. Your involvement and support continue to make a real difference!

**Workshop Attendees:** 321

**Educational Outreach:** 14,874

**New Agriculture Committee was formed**

**Focus topics:** Rangeland & pasture management, predator control, wildlife, trees, native plants, water conservation.

Expand outreach through newsletter and county newspaper, offer more targeted programs for livestock producers, and strengthen community engagement with the Master Gardener program.



Thank you to our sponsors for their support and commitment to our mission.  
Johnson City Bank, Texas Farm Bureau, Capital Farm Credit, CRLT, LCRA



Grateful to receive the Early Career Award, along with recognition for my social media work and newspaper columns.



# Pesticide Applicator Portal

The Texas Department of Agriculture's "Texas Agriculture Portal" (TAP) has gone live on TDA's website, taking the place of the eApply and Bridge systems.

Going forward, TAP is what pesticide license holders will use to renew their licenses, submit applications to add categories, and change their licensing information. This change is for both structural and agricultural licenses.

What this means:

**New pesticide license applicants** will need to visit this link:  
<https://tap.texasagriculture.gov/>

Once there, users will create accounts on TAP and select "Apply License."

**Current license holders** also need to register an account to link their current information.

## Need an applicator license?

A Private Applicator Training is tentatively scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup> in Johnson City!

The course is also available online at [AgriLife Learn.](#)



# Custom Rate Survey

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We invite Texas producers to participate in the 2025 Custom Rates Survey, an important project that has provided trusted information for over 40 years. The survey helps establish average rates for custom agricultural services across the state, making it a valuable tool for farmers, ranchers, and landowners when planning budgets and setting fair prices. All responses are kept confidential, and your input ensures the report reflects real-world conditions and remains a reliable resource for the Texas agricultural community.

**Take the**  
**survey**

**Past survey**  
**data**





LIVING IN THE

Texas Hill Country

# Live Webinar

Every Tuesday 12:15 - 1:00 PM



Facebook: Living in the  
Texas Hill Country



YouTube: @AgriLifeLTHC



Spotify: Living in the Texas  
Hill Country



Click the icon to access the page!

# LANDOWNER STRATEGIES FOR WILDLIFE VALUATION, GRAZING, & FIRE PREPAREDNESS

**NOVEMBER 21**

10:00 AM – 2:30 PM

\$25 / person

Gillespie County Extension Office  
38 Business Court, Fredericksburg, TX

**TOPICS:**

- WILDLIFE TAX VALUATION
- WAYS TO KEEP AN AG TAX EXEMPTION
- WILDLIFE AND LIVESTOCK INTERACTION
- AG LAW RESOURCES
- HILL COUNTRY TREE CARE
- FIREWISE FOR YOUR RANCH

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: NOV 16**

SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT [GILLESPIE-EXTENSION-INC.SQUARE.SITE](http://GILLESPIE-EXTENSION-INC.SQUARE.SITE)  
TO REGISTER ONLINE. A SMALL ADDITIONAL FEE APPLIES TO  
CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS.

CALL THE OFFICE, (830) 997-3452 TO REGISTER IF PAYING BY CASH OR  
CHECK.



# Aquaponic Workshop

TEXAS A&M  
AGRILIFE

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## From Fish Waste to Fertilizer

Beginners, enthusiasts, and aquaponic growers are invited to attend a ½-day workshop to learn the latest research on how to utilize fish waste as a nutrient source for your plants.

**Register here:** <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/hort-ev-058>

With Presentations by:

Dr. Joe Masabni

Mike Malone with AST Filters

T.C. Beckett with Veteran's Produce

**October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

9:00am - 1:00pm

17360 Coit Road  
Dallas, Texas, 75252



**Registration:**

\$30 for In-person

**Lunch Included!**

\$10 to Join by Zoom

**OUR WORK MAKES  
A DIFFERENCE.**  
**IN THE LIVES OF TEXANS AND  
ON THE ECONOMY.**

# TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



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