

# PANOLA COUNTY AGRILIFE EXTENSION

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[www.Panola.AgrLife.org](http://www.Panola.AgrLife.org) | [Facebook.com/PCAgriLife](https://Facebook.com/PCAgriLife)



## THE PANOLA EXTENSION

### November 2025

**11/3:** ALPA and 4-H Council Meeting, 6:00pm, Southside Baptist Church

**11/7:** Major Livestock Show entries due into the Extension Office

**11/7:** Master Gardeners Meeting, 12:00pm, Sammy Brown Library

**11/8-9:** Show Star Showmanship Clinic, Henderson

**11/11:** Veterans Day, Extension Office Closed

**11/13:** 4-H Cookin' Night, 6:00pm, First Methodist Church

**11/13:** Registration closes for District 5 4-H Food Show

**11/14:** East Texas Beef and Forage Clinic, 8:00am, Henderson

**11/18:** Horticulture in the Evening, 5:30pm, Sammy Brown Library

**11/22:** Major Swine Validation, 9:00-11:00am, Expo Hall

**11/22:** PCJLS Validation for Swine, Lambs, and Goats, 8:00am-10:00am, Expo Hall

**11/24:** 4-H Friendsgiving, 6:00pm, Expo Hall

**11/26-28:** Extension Office closed for Thanksgiving

**11/30:** Major Swine Validation, 2:00-4:00pm, Gary ISD FFA Ag. Barn

**12/1:** Panola County Junior Livestock Entry Forms due into Extension Office

**12/5:** District 5 Food Show, Center, Tx

**12/5:** Homesteading Series, 9:30am, Sammy Brown Library

**12/10:** Diabetes Support Group meeting, 10:00am, Sammy Brown Library

**12/11:** Panola County 4-H Food Challenge, 6:00pm, Central Baptist Church

**12/12:** Master Gardeners Meeting, 12:00pm, Sammy Brown Library

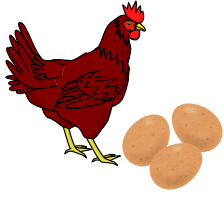
**12/14:** Cow Patty Plop, 10:00am, Expo Hall



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**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION

# HOMESTEADING MADE SIMPLE

## *Practical Skills for Small Acreage Success*



December 5 • 9:30am • Sammy Brown Library



Are you ready to take the next step toward self-sufficiency and sustainable living? The Panola County Homesteading Series is designed to help landowners and aspiring producers gain the knowledge and confidence to start or expand their small-scale operations. Join us at the Sammy Brown Library on December 5th from 9:30 a.m. to noon for an informative and hands-on session covering backyard poultry, meat rabbits, and small livestock. Participants will learn the essentials of raising egg layers and meat birds, rabbit breeds for meat and show, coop and hutch design, predator protection, biosecurity, feeding, breeding, and basic processing techniques to build a strong foundation for their homestead.

The program will also focus on small acreage land management and how to successfully integrate goats, sheep, and cattle on your property. Topics include identifying and controlling brush and invasive species, pond care, and fencing systems designed for managing multiple livestock species efficiently. Whether you're just starting out or looking to grow your operation, this program provides practical, research-based strategies to help your homestead flourish in East Texas.

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## *Dig Into Success: Soil Improvement at the* **Master Gardeners November Meeting**

November 7 • Noon • Sammy Brown Library

Healthy soil is the foundation of a thriving garden, and this November the Panola Master Gardeners Noon Meeting will help you learn how to give your plants the best start possible. Join us at the Sammy Brown Library on November 7th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. for an informative program focused on Soil Improvement. Participants will learn how soil conditions like compaction, poor drainage, low fertility, or excess nutrients can limit plant growth—and more importantly, how to fix them. The program will cover soil testing, when and how to collect samples, interpret reports, and applying the right amendments to make your garden or landscape healthier and more productive.

Attendees will also explore practical methods to build stronger soils, including composting, growing cover crops, improving drainage with raised beds, and selecting the right fertilizers for their needs. Whether you're growing vegetables, maintaining a lawn, or caring for ornamental beds, this program will provide simple, research-based steps to improve soil structure, increase organic matter, and balance PH levels for better plant health. Bring your questions and leave with the confidence to make your soil work for you!

# What Experts Are Finding About Kids, Screens, and Sleep

By Clarissa Moon



## What We Know About Screens, Sleep, and the Developing Brain

Experts agree that using phones, tablets, or video games close to bedtime often leads to poor sleep, especially in children and teenagers. This isn't just about the light from the screen — what they're doing on the device matters even more.

### Why Screens Can Disrupt Sleep

- **The content is often stimulating.** Fast-paced games, dramatic videos, or texting friends keeps the brain active instead of winding down, making it harder to fall asleep.
- **Bedtime gets pushed back.** Kids may plan to use the screen for “just a minute,” but get drawn in, causing them to stay up later than planned.
- **Sleep quality can suffer.** Even when kids fall asleep, screen use right before bed is linked to lighter, less restful sleep and more tiredness the next day.
- **Blue light might play a role.** There is still debate among experts, but screen light — especially bright light late at night — may interfere slightly with the body's sleep signal (melatonin). Still, **the content itself is usually the bigger issue.**

### What This Means for the Brain

- **Poor sleep can affect memory, learning, and mood** — especially in children and teens whose brains are still developing.
- **Too much digital time means less time being creative.** Screen use can crowd out time for activities like drawing, daydreaming, free play, or outdoor time — all of which help the brain grow.
- **Not all screen time is equal.** Watching endless videos or scrolling is less helpful than interactive or creative use — such as learning, drawing, or making music digitally.


## Simple changes that make a big difference

- **Power down screens at least 1 hour before bed** — this gives the brain time to relax.
- **Focus more on calming content, not just screen limits.** Watching a slow nature video is very different from playing a fast, competitive game.
- **Keep phones and tablets out of the bed at night.** Charge them across the room or outside the bedroom if possible.
- **Balance screen time with real-world activities.** Things like reading, puzzles, art, and outdoor play support healthy brain development.

Want more information? Check these websites out:

- **Common Sense Media** (limited free resources)  
<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>
- **PBS** <https://www.pbs.org/parents>
- **Healthy Children**  
[https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/healthy-digital-media-use-habits-for-babies-toddlers-preschoolers.aspx?\\_gl=1\\*1gg8s7i\\*\\_ga\\*MTIzMjI2NzYzNy4xNzYxNzQ5NTIx\\*\\_ga\\_FD9D3XZVQQ\\*\\_czE3NjE3NDk1MjEkbzEkZzEkdDE3NjE3NDk2OTckajU2JGwwJGgw](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/healthy-digital-media-use-habits-for-babies-toddlers-preschoolers.aspx?_gl=1*1gg8s7i*_ga*MTIzMjI2NzYzNy4xNzYxNzQ5NTIx*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*_czE3NjE3NDk1MjEkbzEkZzEkdDE3NjE3NDk2OTckajU2JGwwJGgw)
- **American Academy of Pediatrics** <https://www.aap.org/>
- **Media Smarts** (nonprofit in Canada that supports research and education related to media use)  
<https://mediasmarts.ca/resources-for-parents>





# East Texas Beef & Forage Clinic

Presented by: Cherokee, Panola, Rusk, & Smith Counties

**Registration Fee  
\$25**

**5 CEU Credits  
(2 General, 2 IPM, 1 Laws & Regs)  
TDA APPROVED**

**Friday November 14th  
Rusk County Expo | 3303 FM 13 W | Henderson, Tx**

**8:00 AM Registration Begins**

**8:45 AM Welcome  
Grant Davis, Rusk CEA- AG/ NR**

**RSVP by  
November 10th  
903.657.0376**

**9:00 AM Herbicide Update (1 GEN)  
Darren Rozell, Rozell Sprayer**

**10:00 AM Forage Insect Pest Control using  
IPM Strategies (1 IPM)  
Vanessa Corriher-Olson, Forage Extension Specialist**

**11:00 AM BREAK**

**11:15 AM New World Screwworm Update (1 IPM)  
Sonja Swiger, Livestock/Veterinary/Medical Entomologist**

**12:15 PM LUNCH**

**1:00 PM Laws and Regulations Update (1 L&R)  
Lee Dudley, Panola County Extension Agent AG/NR**

**2:00PM Preparedness & Mitigation for Pesticides &  
Hazardous Materials (1 GEN)  
Zach Schaefer, Disaster Assessment & Recovery Agent**

**3:00 PM ADJOURN**

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Extension programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other classification protected by federal, state or local law The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

# Understanding Prediabetes

## *What the Data Shows and What You Can Do*

By Clarissa Moon

Prediabetes is a silent but very common condition: your blood sugar (glucose) levels are higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be considered type 2 diabetes. Prediabetes places you at elevated risk for developing diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other complications — but the good news is that with timely action progression can often be delayed or even prevented.

### **Key Statistics**

In the U.S., about 97.6 million adults (that's more than one in three) were estimated to have prediabetes in 2021. Even more striking, over 80 % of people with prediabetes don't know they have it. Data from County Health Rankings show that diabetes remains a major burden across U.S. counties — serving as a reminder of how widespread the metabolic risk is.

### **Detection: How do you know you have it?**

Because prediabetes usually has no obvious symptoms, it often goes unnoticed until a routine lab test is done. According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and other guidelines, prediabetes is identified using blood-glucose tests:

- An A1C test (which shows average blood glucose over past 2-3 months) of 5.7 % to 6.4 %.
- A fasting plasma glucose of 100–125 mg/dL.
- Sometimes an oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT), though less commonly in routine practice.

The ADA recommends screening adults who are 35 or older, or younger if they have other risk factors (such as overweight/obesity, family history, or certain ethnic backgrounds).



### **Prevention & Management: What works**

Because prediabetes is a reversible or at least modifiable state, lifestyle changes are the first and best line of defense.

### **Key actionable strategies:**

- Aim for moderate physical activity (e.g., brisk walking ~30 minutes most days).
- Pursue modest weight loss — even 5 %–7 % of body weight can make a big difference.
- Improve diet: more vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins; reduce sugary drinks, refined carbs.
- Regular monitoring and follow-up: if you have prediabetes you should be re-tested periodically (at least annually) to catch any progression.

In some cases, medication (e.g., metformin) may be considered — especially in those with higher risk (e.g., BMI  $\geq$  35, younger age, history of gestational diabetes).

### **What this means for adults of all ages — and families**

Regular check-ups and knowing your risk are key. If you or a loved one has risk factors — such as being overweight, having a family history of diabetes, or being physically inactive — ask your healthcare provider about a glucose or A1C screening. Even small changes in daily habits (more movement, better food choices, maintaining a healthy weight) can make a major difference — not just for you but for your entire household.

For more information, visit the [American Diabetes Association](https://www.diabetes.org).

# Slow Cooker Baked Apples

Makes 9 servings: Nutrition per 1/9 of recipe: 110 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 21 g sugar, 1 g protein.



6 large baking apples (Granny Smith, Jonathan, or Jonagold work well)

3 tablespoons brown sugar

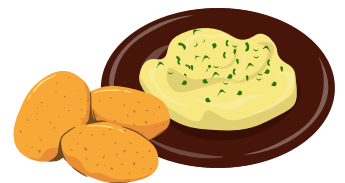
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon cinnamon

- Quarter apples and remove core. Place in slow cooker.
- Mix sugar and spices and sprinkle over apples. Cover and cook 4 hours on low or 2 hours on high, stirring once after juice begins to form to more evenly distribute seasonings.

# Yogurt Mashed Potatoes

Makes 10 Servings: Nutrition per 1/2 cup serving (without added salt): 70 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 25 mg sodium, 16 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 3 g protein. Source: Adapted from Epicurious.com.



4 cups potatoes, peeled, cut into eighths (about 2 pounds as purchased)

1/4 cup fat-free milk

1 1/4 cups plain fat-free yogurt

4 green onions, sliced

1/2 to 1 teaspoon garlic powder, or desired seasoning

Salt and pepper to taste

Chopped fresh parsley

- Place potatoes in microwave-safe dish. Add milk. Cover tightly and cook on high until potatoes are tender but not mushy, about 12 minutes.
- Meanwhile, combine yogurt, green onions, and garlic powder in a bowl.
- Remove potatoes from microwave, add yogurt mixture, and mash roughly.
- Season with salt and pepper and garnish with parsley.



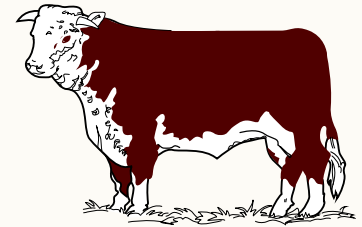
# Tough Challenges, Smart Solutions:

## 2026 Mid-Sabine Cattleman Conference

February 27 • Carthage Civic Center • Registration 8:30am

\$20 Fee • RSVP by February 23 903-693-0380

4 CEUs: 2 IPM, 1 General, 1 Drift



East Texas cattle producers won't want to miss the Mid-Sabine Cattleman Conference on February 27th at the Carthage Civic Center. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with the program starting at 9:00 a.m. and wrapping up at 3:00 p.m. This full-day educational event will bring together leading experts to address some of the most pressing challenges facing today's beef and forage producers. Participants will have the opportunity to earn 4 CEUs for Private Applicator Licenses in areas of 2 IPM, 1 General, and 1 Drift. Registration is \$20.00, and RSVPs are required by February 23rd to ensure an accurate meal count. To reserve your spot, call the Panola County AgriLife Extension Office at (903) 693-0380.

The 2026 conference will feature timely, research-based presentations focused on practical solutions for East Texas operations. Dr. Paul Rector will kick off the morning with an in-depth look at emerging weed resistance and integrated control strategies targeting pigweed, ryegrass, and broomsedge (CEU: IPM). Dr. Monte Olson will follow strategies to build resilient forage systems,

emphasizing pasture health, soil improvement, and rotational grazing to reduce dependence on supplemental feed (CEU: General). Later, Dr. Sonja Swiger will cover external parasites and vector-borne diseases, focusing on insecticide rotation, tick and fly control, and monitoring techniques to help producers protect their herds and bottom line (CEU: IPM).

The afternoon program will include Darren Rozell presenting pesticide safety, sprayer calibration, and drift reduction (CEU: Drift), and Dr. David Anderson delivering an economic outlook on the future of beef in East Texas, including key trends in market dynamics and risk management strategies. This year's topics directly address current producer concerns such as weed resistance, parasite control, land fragmentation, and economic pressures, continuing the strong tradition of practical, producer driven education. Whether you manage a large cattle operation or a small herd, this conference offers tools, insights, and networking opportunities to help you stay ahead in a changing industry.



## 4-H Friendsgiving Party

*Bring your favorite side dish!*

November 24

6:00pm • Expo Hall



DISTRICT 5 4-H 2025-2026

# General Photography Contest



**Registration:** October 2 - February 13

**Open to** clover kids, 4-H Members, and Adults

**Contest Fee** \$15, up to 15 photos can be entered.  
No fee for clover kids

**Upload photos** by February 20, 2026

2025-2026 Theme:  
**Volunteers in Action**

## 4-H COOKIN' NIGHT



November 13, 6:00pm, First Methodist Church

**WE WILL BE DOING A FOOD CHALLENGE**



Work in teams to create a dish using only a predetermined set of ingredients.

Be sure to come if you wanna do the Panola County Food Challenge!

*If you can't make it but would like to do the County Food Challenge, Reach out to us!*

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# PANOLA COUNTY

## 4-H CLUBS



Club Name	Club Manager	Meeting Date & Time
<b>ALPA</b> Adult Leaders & Parents Association	<b>Bridget Twomey</b> 903-692-0119	1st Monday, 6:00pm Southside Baptist Church
<b>BECKVILLE 4-H</b>	<b>Brandy Dudley</b> 903-690-1108	4th Monday, 6:00pm, Beckville Sunset Elementary
<b>CARTHAGE 4-H</b>	<b>Rachel Laney</b> 940-232-5412	4th Tuesday, 6:00pm Expo Hall
<b>DEBERRY 4-H</b>	<b>Shawntel Wells</b> 903-690-6552	3rd Thursday, 6:30pm 332 CR 310   DeBerry
<b>FAIRPLAY 4-H</b>	<b>Eric Pellham</b> 903-754-2582	2nd Monday, 6:00pm Allison Chapel UMC in Fairplay
<b>GARY 4-H</b>	<b>Jennifer Whitby</b> 903-692-1729	3rd Monday, 6:00pm Gary ISD Cafeteria
<b>MURVAUL CREEK 4-H</b> Livestock Project Group	<b>Bridget Twomey</b> 903-692-0119	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00pm Murvaul Methodist Church
<b>ROBOTICS 4-H</b>	<b>Nicola Ritter</b> 979-575-0617	Mondays, 6:00-8:00pm First Methodist Church
<b>SHOOTING SPORTS 4-H</b>	<b>Mauri Pierce</b> 903-263-7551	4th Sunday, 2:00pm Expo Hall
<b>STILL WATERS 4-H</b>	<b>Corie Young</b> 903-692-7737	3rd Tuesday, 6:30pm Still Waters Cowboy Church

# Livestock Show Dates and Reminders

## Major Livestock Shows:

**11/7:** Major Livestock Show Entries due into the Extension Office

**11/22:** Major Swine Validation, 9am-11am, Expo Hall

**11/30:** Major Swine Validation, 2:00-4:00pm, Gary ISD FFA Ag. Barn

## Panola County Junior Livestock Show:

**11/22:** Swine, Goats, and Lamb Validation, 8am-10am, Expo Hall

**12/1:** Entry forms (*except for rabbits*) due into the Extension Office

**2/5:** Rabbit Validation and Entry Forms Due

Chicken pick up will be early January

**3/3-3/6:** Panola County Junior Livestock Show



You can find the schedule and all rules for the  
Panola County Junior Livestock Show on their website >> [pcjls.net](http://pcjls.net)



***Make sure you are registered on 4-H Online!***

Click [HERE](#) to sign up

Not only is it required to participate in 4-H events and contests,  
it is how we know where to send Excused School Absences.

*(If you will be missing school to participate in a 4-H event)*

March 2-6, 2026



# PROJECT FAIR

**OPEN TO ALL PANOLA COUNTY 4-H AND FFA MEMBERS,**

as well as students enrolled in art classes, photography classes or culinary/life skills classes.



**Entry fees:** \$10 Grades 3-12, \$5 Clover Kids

Entries & payment due to the Extension Office by **February 6**

*Entry information coming soon!*

## DIVISIONS

Foods • Fabric and Fiber Arts

Arts and Crafts • Legos

Photography • Floral Design

Educational Displays

Clover Kids



## SCHEDULE

### Monday:

Exhibits with attached entry tags may be dropped off at the Civic Center Conference Rooms from 3:30-6:30pm

### Tuesday:

Closed judging in the morning, awards can be viewed at 5:00pm, building closes at 6:00.

### Wednesday - Thursday:

Public viewing 12:00-4:00

### Friday:

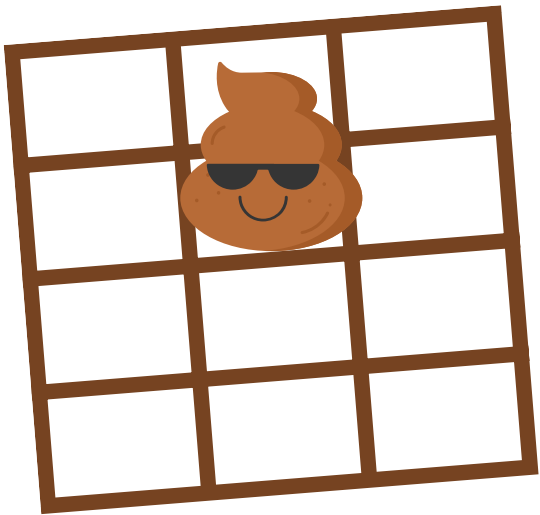
Exhibits will be moved from the Conference Rooms to the Gymnasium in the Civic Center. They will be displayed during the buyers' luncheon and released from 1:15-4:00pm.







# Cow Patty PLOP



**December 14, 2025**  
**10:00am • Expo Hall**

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Winner to Receive  
**\$1,000 Walmart Gift Card**

**\$20 per ticket**  
**Only 256 tickets sold**

For questions or to purchase a ticket contact an  
ALPA Member or the Extension Office 903-693-0380



Need not be present to win. Winner will be announced on Facebook and via phone call. Winner has thirty days to pick up from the Extension Office, 110 S. Sycamore St., Carthage, TX



# — THE PANOLA EXTENSION —

## Panola County AgriLife Extension Service

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[/PCAgriLife](https://www.facebook.com/PCAgriLife)

**LEE DUDLEY**

Agriculture & Natural Resource, County Coordinator

**CLARISSA MOON**

Family & Community Health, 4-H Coordinator

**LANI WEST**

Support Staff - Secretary

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