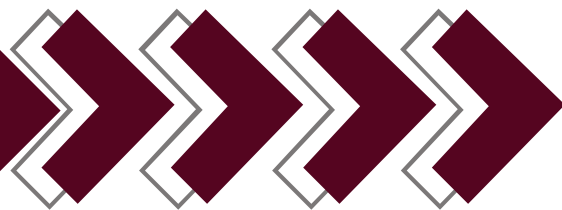


Zavala County- Agriculture and Natural Resources

December 2025 Newsletter



Welcome to this month's Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter! This publication aims to keep you informed about upcoming programs and provide valuable insights into agriculture and natural resource topics relevant to our area.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

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[https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/
counties/zavala-county/](https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/counties/zavala-county/)



Zavala County- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Inside This Issue:

- Save the Date WGRC Conference
- County Stock Show Invitation
- December Gardening Tips
- TPWD Statewide Carcass Disposal Requirements
- Plant of the Month
- BQA Tips

Upcoming Programs:

- County Stock Show
 - (1/8-10/26)
- Winter Garden Row Crop Conference (1/26/26)
- ZANRC Meeting
 - (1/29/26)



TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION



Coming January 26, 2026

3rd Annual Winter Garden Row Crop Conference

Stay tuned for more information and details coming later in December!

Brought to you by the Atascosa, Dimmit, Frio, Guadalupe, Medina, Uvalde,
Wilson, and Zavala County Extension Offices



Aloha!

SAVE THE DATE

ZAVALA COUNTY JUNIOR LIVESTOCK SHOW

JANUARY 8-10, 2026

1685 US 83, CRYSTAL
CITY, TX 78839



December Gardening Tips with Dr. Larry Stein

- There is still time to select and plant such as annuals as pansies, violas and ornamental cabbages and kale; if you have deer pressure, they will quickly devour these plants!
- Continue to harvest cool season crops like cabbage, broccoli and spinach and other greens.
- Don't get in a hurry to prune woody plants. Late December through February is usually the best time to prune them.
- Plan now for your spring flowering season with a mixture of annuals and perennials. If you have not received rain where your wildflowers germinate, you may want to water to get them up and going.
- Now through February is a good time to plant trees and shrubs.
- Bring in late-blooming plants such as decorative kalanchoes or Christmas Cactus so they may finish flowering in the warmth of the house.
- Reduce fertilization of indoor plants to mid-March. An exception would be plants in an atrium or a well lighted window.
- Drain gasoline from power tools and run the engine until fuel in the carburetor is used up. Drain and store garden hoses and watering equipment in a readily accessible location. The lawn and plants may need water during a prolonged dry spell. Continue to mulch leaved in your lawn with your mower or bag to use as mulch or compost.
- Prepare beds and individual holes for rose planting in January and February. Use composted manure, pine bark, and similar materials mixed with existing soil.
- Use good pruning practices when selecting Christmas greenery from landscape plants. Don't destroy the natural form and beauty of the plant.
- Prolong the life of holiday-season gift plants by providing proper care. Check to see if the pot wrap has plugged up the bottom drainage. Don't overwater. Keep out of drafts from heating vents and opening doorways.
- Take advantage of good weather to prepare garden beds for spring planting. Work in any needed organic matter and have beds ready to plant when needed.
- If you have not yet received a freeze and you have cold sensitive plants, you will need to be prepared to move them in or cover, or possibly mulch the crowns of the plants.





STATEWIDE CARCASS DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Importance of Proper Carcass Disposal

Proper disposal of carcass parts from white-tailed deer and mule deer is an important management action for reducing the risk of unintentional transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) to susceptible wildlife from CWD-positive areas to areas where the disease is not yet known to exist.

PREFERRED DISPOSAL METHOD »

Leave unused carcass parts at the property of harvest.

This greatly reduces the chance of spreading CWD to other parts of the state.

Hunters are allowed to debone a carcass at any location, provided that:

- Meat is processed no further than whole muscles and may not be ground, chopped, or sliced.
- Meat from multiple deer must remain in separate bags or containers while transported.
- Proof of sex and tagging requirements remain with the meat until reaching a final destination.

IF THE CARCASS IS TRANSPORTED away from the property of harvest, unused parts must be:



Disposed of in a commercial trash service

OR



Returned to the property where the animal was harvested

OR



Buried at least 3 feet below the ground and covered with at least 3 feet of earthen material

Harvested deer or deer heads can be taken to a commercial processor or taxidermist and the commercial processor or taxidermist must properly dispose of unused parts.



STATEWIDE CARCASS DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

» What species does this regulation apply to?

Carcass disposal requirements apply to white-tailed deer or mule deer or parts of a white-tailed or mule deer harvested in this state or a CWD-susceptible species or parts of a CWD-susceptible species harvested outside of Texas that are transported away from the property of harvest. Exotic deer species harvested in Texas such as elk, red deer, and sika are susceptible to CWD, and, although not required, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recommends practicing these same carcass disposal measures for exotic deer species as well. CWD-susceptible species harvested outside of Texas that are transported into Texas must follow carcass disposal requirements.

» What are considered “unused carcass parts?”

These are the parts of the deer not retained for cooking or taxidermy purposes.

» How should I transport deboned meat from multiple carcasses?

Deboned meat from multiple deer must remain in separate bags or containers until reaching its final destination. Meat from multiple carcasses can be transported in the same cooler, provided that it is kept within bags or containers separate from other deer.

» Can I still quarter deer?

Absolutely. Quarters (two front quarters, two hind quarters, backstraps, and trimmings) can still be transported away from the property of harvest, but any unused parts should remain at the property of harvest or must be disposed of properly.

» How soon should unused carcass parts be disposed of?

Unused carcass parts should be disposed of immediately. Carcasses and carcass parts not disposed of immediately shall be protected from being scattered, consumed, or removed until disposal occurs.

» I am taking the deer to a processor or taxidermist. Does this apply to me?

Harvested deer or deer heads may continue to be taken to a commercial processor or taxidermist and the processor or taxidermist must properly dispose of unused carcass parts.

For more information on CWD,
scan the code or visit

tpwd.texas.gov/cwd



Plant of the Month

Tasajillo, Turkey Pear, Christmas Cholla/Cactus

Cylindropuntia leptocaulis (DC.) F.M. Knuth (syn. *Opuntia leptocaulis* DC.)
Cactaceae (Cactus family)

Plant Description:

Tasajillo has cylindric, jointed stems in which most of the individual segments are 1 inch or less in length. A member of the Cactus family, the plant has a general brushy appearance and usually grows to less than 5 ft or 1.5 m tall. Tasajillo leaves are tiny; they appear only briefly at each cluster of spines when new segments emerge. The plant produces small, inconspicuous, greenish flowers. Bloom time occurs from April to August. The fruit is red, fleshy, globe-shaped, and less than an inch long. The spines are white, slender, and measure from 0.5 to 2 inches long. Tasajillo often reaches the greatest densities along fence lines or under trees, where the seeds are transported by birds. This plant typically spreads by seed, which is consumed by wildlife.

Habitat:

Tasajillo is most abundant on sandy loam and clay loam soils and is often found in association with Honey Mesquite. Its native distribution includes Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Native habitats include mesas, valleys, flats, and arid environments. Tasajillo grows from 1,000 to 5,000 ft or 305 to 1,524 m in elevation.



Plant Characteristics:

Flower Color: Green, Yellow

Fruit Type: Fruit/Berry

Duration: Perennial

Stem Texture: Prickly, Spiny, or Thorny

Growth Habit: Succulent/Cactus

Season: Evergreen

TEXAS BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE



BQA TIPS

A Simple Step for Serious Prevention

**December 1, 2025
Emily Lochner**

Have you ever found a container of something in a barn and not been sure what it was?

Items on a farm or ranch should never be stored in unmarked containers. Over time it is easy to forget what was in the container. Also, if something happens to you, how will someone else know what was in the container?

It is best to store animal health products, feed additives, herbicides, insecticides, fertilizers, soil amendments, and other products in their original container that clearly identifies what the product is. This helps prevent accidental exposure that could lead to the injury, death, or residue issues.