

>>> AGRICULTURE NEWS <<<

December 2025



TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

WINTER GRAZING & PREPARATION

>>> PAGE 2-3

Winter grazing for a greener spring, and other tips to prepare for cold weather

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New factsheet and website for Equine Herpesvirus information

EQUINE HERPESVIRUS

UPCOMING EVENTS

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December 29-30, Jan. 3 - Blanco County Youth Show & Exhibit Hall
February 18 - Herd Health Management
Online - Generation Next, Grassland Management School.



Winter Grazing

Protect Pastures Now for a Greener Spring

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Winter may feel like a quiet season, but it is one of the most important times for rangeland health. Once grasses go dormant, they stop producing new growth and rely completely on the energy stored in their roots. How we manage grazing pressure in December and January has a direct impact on how quickly pastures recover in spring.

Even though grasses look brown and inactive, the stubble left standing plays a major role in protecting the plant. That leftover growth insulates the growing points from cold weather, shields the soil from moisture loss, and helps maintain a healthy root system.

When grasses are grazed too short during winter, roots shrink and plants struggle to green up quickly in March and April. Overgrazed winter pastures often come back thinner, weaker, and more vulnerable to weeds.

Leaving adequate residual grass height through winter is the best protection. In the Hill Country, keeping several inches of stubble on key native species provides enough cover for those plants to rebound once temperatures warm. This remaining growth also reduces erosion and offers valuable structure for wildlife during a season when natural cover is limited.

Because forage growth has stopped for the year, livestock will continue to consume what's left without the pasture's ability to recover. Adjusting stocking rates, increasing hay or supplement quality, or rotating livestock more often can help reduce pressure on rangeland. These small management shifts now can prevent months of slow recovery in the spring.

The benefits of good winter grazing show up early. Pastures that enter winter with moderate use almost always green up faster, produce more forage, and require fewer inputs than those grazed too heavily. A little careful management now sets the stage for a healthier, more productive spring.

Top 3 Winter Prep Tips for Livestock

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As temperatures drop, December is the ideal time to make sure your water systems and livestock areas are ready for freezing weather. A little preparation now can prevent frozen pipes, damaged equipment, and unnecessary stress on animals.



Insulate Water Lines

Wrap exposed pipes and fittings to protect them from freezing and bursting. Insulation sleeves or heat tape on trouble spots can save both time and costly repairs later.



Keep Water From Freezing

Make sure livestock always have access to fresh water. A safe trough heater can prevent solid ice during hard freezes, and placing a floating object, like a soccer ball, helps keep a small opening from freezing over on cold, windy nights.



Provide Reliable Shelter

Give animals a protected space to escape wind and moisture. A sturdy windbreak, along with clean, dry bedding, helps maintain body heat and reduces cold stress during winter snaps.

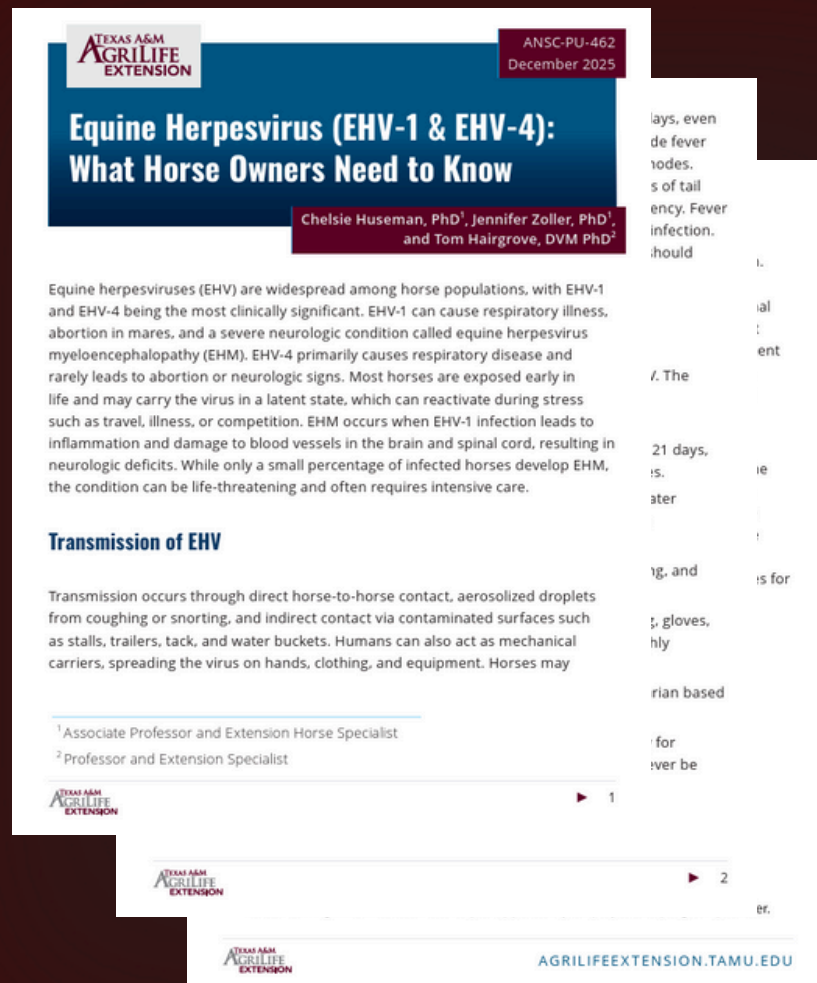
Equine Herpesvirus (EHV-1 & EHV-4): What Horse Owners Need to Know

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The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has made available an EHV-1 fact sheet as well as a Web companion resource page. Compiled by AgriLife Extension's Drs. Chelsie Huseman, Jennifer Zoller and Tom Hairgrove in the Department of Animal Science, this resource covers disease basics, how the virus spreads, recommended biosecurity practices as well as reporting cases to the Texas Animal Health Commission.



Click the
pages to
access the
website



Prescribed Fire

5

FIGHTING WILDFIRE WITH FIRE

FIRE SUPPRESSION PARADOX

Fire suppression leads to increased fuel loads, making future fires harder to suppress



OVER
8.9
MILLION

acres consumed by
wildfires in 2024
in the United States.



Texas had the **largest**
wildfire in the United
States in 2024

1,054,153 acres in size.

PRESCRIBED FIRE TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK & SEVERITY



WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE (WUI):

The zone where human development and wildland vegetation meet, creating a high-risk environment for wildfires



FIRE CAN BE A TOOL FOR PROTECTING YOUR COMMUNITY!

- ✓ Establish a community wildfire protection plan
- ✓ Implement annual fuel reduction projects
- ✓ Foster community support



This is made possible through a grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, with support from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through the Conservation Technical Assistance: Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) Cooperative Agreements program. Funding is provided by USDA-NRCS-NHQ-ST-24-NRFD0001313.

Blanco County Master Gardener Program

A big thank you to Nina
Sozansky, our outgoing
Master Gardener President
for all of her hard work and
dedication to the
Blanco County
Master Gardeners



≡Welcome≡

We want to welcome
Charlie Buescher as
the new
Master Gardener
President!



27 VOLUNTEERS
Contributed hours
towards
horticulture education.



1643 Contacts
Reached in Blanco Co. in
education & community
programs

For more information on Blanco County Master
Gardeners, visit
<https://txmg.org/blanco/>



**Blanco County Annex Master
Gardener's Courtyard Garden**

Blanco County



Upcoming Events



December 29-30, 2025
January 3, 2026



Youth Show December 29-30, 2025

Youth Show SALE January 3, 2026

Exhibit Hall SILENT AUCTION for Food Items - Dec. 30, 2025

**SILENT AUCTION for Sewing, Hobbies, Fine Art
& Photography Projects - Jan. 3, 2026**

Join us in showing support and encouragement for the aspiring talents shaping the future of our community. Your presence makes a meaningful impact, so let's unite to uplift and celebrate the promising achievements of Blanco County's youth.



January 12-17, 2026 & SALE January 17, 2026

Generation Next: Our Turn to Ranch

Online Ag Business Start-up School

The **Generation Next** curriculum targets new landowners, those inheriting land, or those looking to start a new agricultural operation on an existing ranch. It is taught as an online school where participants will work towards developing a business plan with plenty of support from professionals who specialize in each field and topic.

Course Includes: 12 online classes of expert instruction with a complete business plan by the end of the course, and a Generation Next t-shirt and certificate.

Topics covered:

- How to start an agricultural business
- Understanding business taxes
- Insurance needs for your ranch
- Tracking your finances
- Evaluating your land resources
- How to set up grazing and wildlife management leases
- Basic ranch laws – fencing, water, etc.
- Land management techniques
- Alternative operations & direct marketing
- Setting goals with measurable objectives for success

To read what graduates are saying about the course, visit generationnext.tamu.edu

NEXT ONLINE CLASS: JAN. 26 - APR. 19, 2026

The course will require approximately 2 hours of your time (at any time!) per week, for 12 weeks. You only need access to a computer with internet capabilities.

For more information contact:
Dr. Megan Clayton
megan.clayton@ag.tamu.edu
830-988-6123
generationnext.tamu.edu

Registration Fee: \$300
Enrollment is limited to the first 100 people who register.

Registration Link:

[RWFM-CO-001 Generation Next:
Our Turn to Ranch — Spring 2026](http://RWFM-CO-001 Generation Next: Our Turn to Ranch — Spring 2026)



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

GENERATION
NEXT
Our Turn to Ranch

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GRASSLAND management SCHOOL

THIS SCHOOL OFFERS:

- 30 educational videos
- 10+ hours of expert recommendations
- Guidance for producers and agencies on:
 - Developing project teams
 - Land preparation and planning
 - Selecting seed mixes
 - Planting technologies
 - Establishing strong stands
 - Key lessons learned from the field



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



The Nature
Conservancy
South Dakota



NORTHERN
GREAT PLAINS

Save the Date!

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Blanco County Fairgrounds
619 US 281
Johnson City, TX

Tentative Topics:

- Herd Health Management
- Parasite control in small ruminants
- New World Screwworm
- Vaccine schedules for livestock
- Windfall Tax

Click the flyers
on the left to
learn more!

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

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION



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