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Ag Reviews Mason County Agriculture Newsletter

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Texas A&M AgriLife researchers investigate impact of adaptive grazing management on Conservation Reserve Program lands

Researchers at the <u>Texas A&M AgriLife Center for</u> <u>Grazinglands and Ranch Management</u> are investigating the impact of grazing practices on the long-term sustainability and biodiversity of landscapes enrolled in the <u>U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation</u> <u>Reserve Program</u>.

Supported by the <u>USDA Farm Service Agency</u>, the project will focus on adaptive grazing practices such as managed timing, intensity, frequency, duration and resting period.

About the Conservation Reserve Program

"The Conservation Reserve Program continues to be one of the signature conservation efforts of the USDA," said Jeff Goodwin, Ph.D., director of the Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management, Bryan-College Station. "The effort has a 38-year legacy of successfully protecting the nation's natural resources while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the U.S."

Established in 1985, the Conservation Reserve Program, or CRP as it is commonly known, is one of the nation's largest private-land conservation programs with more than 23 million acres enrolled across the U.S.

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How to help beneficial insects survive winter

While a decrease in insects as the weather cools is a plus to many people, Texans should keep in mind that beneficial insects in gardens and yards could use a little help.

"Although many insects die off in the colder months, some hibernate while others are still active as needed," said Sonja Swiger, Ph.D., <u>Texas A&M</u> <u>AgriLife Extension Service</u> entomologist and professor in the <u>Department of Entomology</u> in the <u>Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences</u>, Stephenville.

Some insects have it harder than others depending on where they are in Texas. Some also migrate south to locations where the climate is typically milder. Whether you do a little or a lot, protecting beneficial insects benefits all Texans, Swiger said. <u>Read More</u>

Texas A&M begins construction on Animal Reproductive Biotechnology Center

<u>Texas A&M AgriLife Research</u> hosted leaders from across <u>The Texas A&M University System</u> in a groundbreaking ceremony of the new Animal Reproductive Biotechnology Center at <u>Texas A&M-RELLIS</u>, a 2,400-acre applied research campus in Bryan.

The \$13 million facility is a joint construction project of AgriLife Research and the <u>Texas A&M College of</u> <u>Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Animal</u> <u>Science</u>, with completion expected in 2025.

The center will be integral to new opportunities for advancing collaborative research, teaching and outreach in the department while supporting an overarching vision of leading the science around animal pregnancy and development.

"The beginning of this construction is another step in carrying out the land-grant mission across The Texas A&M University System," said Chancellor John Sharp. "This technologically advanced facility



will keep Texas A&M at the forefront in advancements in animal expertise and propel innovative, science-based solutions that lead the industry in overcoming challenges."

"Innovations in livestock reproduction are crucial to agriculture in Texas, and this building will be an important part of the big 'ecosystem' of agriculture and life sciences at Texas A&M," said Jeffrey W. Savell, Ph.D., vice chancellor and dean for Agriculture and Life Sciences. "This new facility will move research forward and will help train producers and students to carry on this work into the future."

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Mistletoe: Is the Christmas plant friend or foe?

Mistletoe may be a welcome holiday sight when hung over a doorway if a loved one is near, but, it can be an unwelcome intruder when found in your trees, said a <u>Texas A&M</u> <u>AgriLife Extension Service</u> horticulturist.

"Mistletoe is a hemiparasite – a semi-parasitic plant," said Allison Watkins Schwarz, AgriLife Extension horticulturist for <u>Tom Green</u> <u>County</u>. "It makes its food from photosynthesis, but the roots grow into the host tree, sucking water and minerals out from the sap."

In other words, you likely do not want to see mistletoe growing on your favorite shade tree or prized ornamental. Because once it inhabits the tree, it can survive as long as the tree lives, meaning some mistletoe alive today may still be around in 100 years.

The plant has been used across various cultures throughout history for everything from warding off demons from entering a doorway to protecting babies from fairies stealing them from their cribs in the night.



And although it is called the kissing plant, its name may have originated from Old English for the words for twig and dung. How's that to get you in the romantic holiday spirit?

The issues with mistletoe

One type of mistletoe commonly used as decoration over the holidays is in the family Phoradendron, which appropriately translates to "thief of the tree" in Greek.

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Upcoming Events

MULTI COUNTY WILDLIFE PROGRAM MENARD | APRIL 23

