



Bluebonnets: A TX Treasure
How well do you know the treasured Texas bluebonnet?



Texas Ag. Profile
Mr. Texas Bluebonnet, Carroll Abbott, a Texas wildflower icon.



TDA Updates
Division updates from Food & Nutrition, GO TEXAN, and more.



TEXAS AGRICULTURE Matters!

Your monthly connection to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Volume 1
Issue 4
April 2020



Howdy Neighbors!

Welcome to the Texas Agriculture Matters newsletter, your monthly connection to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

We are closely watching the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff members at TDA have transitioned to working remotely for the time being. Rest assured we are hard at work everyday to support farmers, ranchers and Texans with their agriculture endeavors.

Our operations will continue to serve you and we have plenty of opportunities available. Whether you're a young farmer, want to learn how to get a hemp license or need to read something that brings you joy, this newsletter will serve you well.

Remember friends, Texas Agriculture Matters!

Sid Miller
Texas Agriculture Commissioner

Bluebonnets: A Texas Treasure

Bluebonnets are as unique as Texas itself.

There is no denying a favorite springtime tradition among Texans is spotting the first bluebonnets on highways across the state. Some pop up eagerly in early March — though in 2020 some witnessed these Texas icons in early February — on Texas roadsides, parks and even in the most unlikely places along limestone and dense soil. But bluebonnets were treasured thousands of years before the first European settlers arrived in Texas, and their history is as rich as the state itself.

[The Bob Bullock Museum](#) states, “hundreds of different groups of native peoples with a variety of languages, customs and beliefs lived on the land for at least 11,000 years before the arrival of Europeans.” Native American folklore and culture is tightly knitted into the fabric of Texas history and offers several explanations as to how the bluebonnet came to be.

One story claims Native Americans



traveled to The Happy Hunting Grounds and engaged in a terrific battle in which blue chunks were knocked out of the sky. When they fell onto the Earth the pieces shattered across the land spreading bluebonnets far and wide. Another tale suggests famine and catastrophic floods were plaguing the lands and the native peoples believed the Great Spirit

bluebonnets cont...



was angry with them. It seemed they could do nothing to appease the spirit until a young girl sacrificed her doll to the Great Spirit. She left her teepee late at night and wandered into the hills, created a fire and lifted the doll to the sky in hopes of bringing peace to the land. She tossed the ashes to the north, east, west and south. The next morning, the hills

were blanketed in bluebonnets, and created the beginning of the early rite of spring. More tales of the bluebonnet can be found in [Legends and Lore of Texas Wildflowers](#).

The bluebonnet has acquired many names over its lifetime: Buffalo Clover, Lupine, Wolf Flower and El Conejo, Spanish for rabbit. Though today it's more widely known as

the State Flower of Texas. The title was adopted during the legislative session of 1901. [In an article written by Dr. Jerry Parsons](#), a bluebonnet cult figure in Texas, Dr. Parsons claims to have the true story of how the flower was

adopted from the floor leader of the legislative session at that time, Judge John M. Green of Cuero. In his article he includes a letter written to Judge Green from a reporter of a San Antonio Light column in 1925. Judge Green recalls those days by stating he was visited by a group of club ladies from Dallas, Texas that were lobbying for the adoption of the bluebonnet. "...they explained they had come before the Legislature to get the bluebonnet adopted as the Texas State Flower, and wanted me to help them, I became interested and readily promised my aid." Judge Green so casually debunks a widely believed theory that a bluebonnet painting by Miss Mode Walker of Austin was brought into The House of Representatives to sway the opinions of legislators. Judge Green states, "Although that legislature, the 27th had its full share of ignorance, I believe every member knew that beautiful little flower by sight." Concluding that there never was such a painting brought into the House of Representatives.



TEXAS AGRICULTURE *Matters!*



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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ABOUT COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Sid Miller is an eighth generation farmer and rancher and the 12th Commissioner of Agriculture for the great State of Texas. Commissioner Miller has devoted his life to the agriculture industry, and supporting Texas producers and the communities they call home. He is a businessman, rancher, community leader, former ag teacher and former school board member. Commissioner Miller is a rodeo cowboy and holds 12 world championship titles. He is an honors graduate of Tarleton State University in Stephenville, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Vocational Agriculture Education.

COVID-19

Other suggestions came before the legislature for the title. The open cotton boll and prickly pear cactus were the bluebonnets main competitors. Arguments were made that the open cotton boll stood as a symbol of wealth, production and pride. Though a powerful speech that resonated among legislators, Judge Green answered simply to this "...the basic idea of having a state flower was sentiment...as a state flower we wanted something that grew wild and free on our hillsides and broad prairies; something that did not suggest toil and grime and sweat and gains and losses." The final vote was taken and the bluebonnet officially became the State Flower of Texas. On March 8, 1971, the legislation was amended to include *L. texensis* and "any other variety of bluebonnet not heretofore recorded."

The bluebonnet, though known and loved by so many, has secrets that many Texans don't know. "Contrary to various folk stories and legends claiming that the plant originated outside the state, *L. texensis* and *L. subcarnosus* are native to Texas. In 1933, the legislature adopted a state flower song, "Bluebonnets," written by Julia D. Booth and Lora C. Crockett. Also in the 1930s the Highway

Department began a landscaping and beautification program and extended the flower's range," according to the [Texas State Historical Association](#).



The Texas Department of Agriculture is committed to providing the same high level of service to our customers during the COVID-19 emergency as they've come to expect. Whether we're helping Texas farmers and ranchers continue to provide a safe and dependable food supply, ensuring Texas school children continue to have access to regular, healthy meals or supporting our vital rural hospitals and clinics, the Texas Department of Agriculture is here for Texans.

Due to the Coronavirus emergency, The Texas Department of Agriculture is now operating on a Skeleton Crew and will continue to do so until it is determined otherwise by agency leadership. As a result, we are asking all constituents, customers, licensees and others to contact TDA by email, as there will be limited staff in the office answering the phones. Additionally, TDA is not accepting external visitors in the office during this time. If you need to make a payment, you may do so online or via USPS.

Please visit our [website](#) for updated information. 🇺🇸

ABOUT TDA

The Texas Legislature established the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) in 1907. The agency's key objectives are to promote production agriculture, consumer protection, economic development and healthy living. The agriculture commissioner oversees the agency and is elected every four years. The current commissioner, Sid Miller, was elected in 2014. TDA is a diversified state agency that provides value-added services through our regulatory and marketing and initiatives. TDA is headquartered in Austin and has five regional service offices, two sub-offices, three laboratories and five livestock export facilities.

Mission:

TDA's mission is to partner with all Texans to make Texas the nation's leader in agriculture, fortify our economy, empower rural communities, promote healthy lifestyles, and cultivate winning strategies for rural, suburban and urban Texas through exceptional service and the common threads of agriculture in our daily lives.



bluebonnets cont...

But even more surprising is that the bluebonnet is within the same family as legumes (beans and peas). That's right, the bluebonnet is a member of the pea family, Fabaceae. This is how Dr. Jerry Parsons, a vegetable grower and scientist, worked so well with bluebonnets in the early 1980s, creating several new colors and becoming a Texas legend because of his efforts.

Exciting colors like white and pink are rare but, if lucky, can be found nestled into fields of blue. Carroll Abbott, or "Mr. Texas Bluebonnet", challenged Texas A&M Extension horticulturalists (Dr. Jerry Parsons would become a close working partner) to grow a Texas flag of bluebonnets to celebrate the 1986 Texas Sesquicentennial. The team set out to find pink and white bluebonnets to isolate, proliferate and eventually develop red and maroon bluebonnets. This was a difficult task for Abbott, in failing health on his search he had only come across three pink bluebonnets in his entire lifetime.

However, a motherlode of pink bluebonnets were discovered in San Antonio, and the original [story of the Pink bluebonnet](#) surprisingly coincides with its discovered location. The pink strain of bluebonnets was so rare and special that it was named after the mentor of the flag project.

"Abbott Pink" bluebonnets are a subtle yet distinct reminder of Carroll Abbott's inspiration and dedication to those who love and appreciate nature's rarities.

In later years, white, red and blue bluebonnets were sewn together and the Texas flag was grown into the earth. With the popularity of maroon bluebonnets, University of Texas students and alumni rallied for a burnt orange bluebonnet, which has not yet made its debut but according to Dr. Parsons, maybe seen in the near future. 🇺🇸

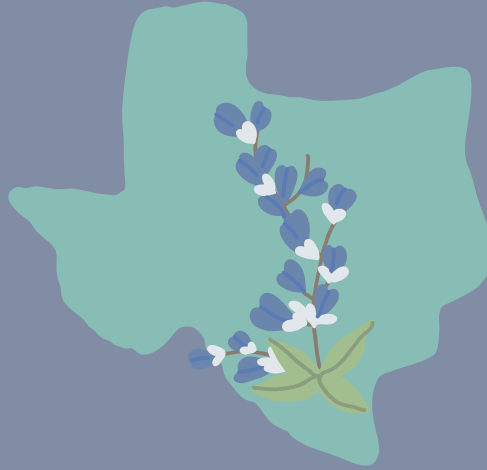


Photo by Dr. Jerry Parsons, courtesy of [KUT.org](#)

THE FIVE STATE FLOWERS OF TEXAS ARE:



Lupinus subcarnosus, the original champion and still co-holder of the title, grows naturally in deep sandy loams from Leon County southwest to LaSalle County and down to the northern part of Hidalgo County in the Valley. It is often referred to as the sandy land bluebonnet. The plant's leaflets are blunt, sometimes notched with silky undersides. This species, which reaches peak bloom in late March, is not easy to maintain in clay soils.



Lupinus plattensis sneaks down from the north into the Texas Panhandle's sandy dunes. It is the only perennial species in the state and grows to about two feet tall. It normally blooms in mid to late spring and is also known as the dune bluebonnet, the plains bluebonnet and the Nebraska Lupine.



Lupinus texensis, the favorite of tourists and artists, provides the blue spring carpet of Central Texas. It is widely known as THE Texas bluebonnet. It has pointed leaflets, the flowering stalk is tipped with white (like a bunny's tail) and hits its peak bloom in late March and early April. It is the easiest of all the species to grow.



Lupinus havardii, also known as the Big Bend or Chisos Bluebonnet, is the most majestic of the Texas bluebonnet tribe with flowering spikes up to three feet. It is found on the flats of the Big Bend country in early spring, usually has seven leaflets and is difficult to cultivate outside its natural habitat.



Lupinus concinnus is an inconspicuous little lupine, from 2 to 7 inches, with flowers which combine elements of white, rosy purple and lavender. Commonly known as the annual lupine, it is found sparingly in the Trans-Pecos region, blooming in early spring.



"Mr. Texas Bluebonnet" the Carroll Abbott story.

Carroll Abbott, "Mr. Texas Bluebonnet", shaped the future of Texas wildflowers. His dedication to natural beauty and Texas flair has resonated throughout each corner of the state. Being the main influence behind Texas Wildflower Day and founder of The Native Plant Society of Texas, Carroll Abbott is nothing short of a Texas icon.

Abbott was born a native Texan in Texarkana, 1925. His love and appreciation for wildflowers began at a young age. His mother claimed he always had a jar of wildflowers in his room. As a teenager he dug up lily bulbs and sold them to a bank associate in California. He continued to dig up plants along railroads and highways; he kept a list of bulbs and plants he could supply and circulated the list amongst nurseries. His early successful business often helped his family make ends meet during The Depression.

Being a natural written and spoken communicator, he started a job with the Houston Post at 16. He graduated from high school and moved to Los Angeles to continue

work as a journalist. He attended The University of Southern California for two years before returning to Houston to recuperate from a serious ear problem. He married his wife, Pat Black, on Valentines Day in 1947. They started their family and discovered new struggles everyday but Abbott continued to do what he did best — write, speak and sell plants. He started a position in 1955 at the Times in Kerrville, Texas. He soon became editor and won the Press Association first place award for a weekly newspaper three years in a row.

Carroll embarked on political trails and by 1961 began working for the State Democratic Executive Committee. He ran several campaigns, including John Connally's, one of which Abbott sent out 10,000 packets of seeds as a promotion. During his travels throughout the state, Abbott kept a log of wildflowers, never straying far from his first love. At this time, First Lady Ms. Johnson was leading a campaign to beautify Texas highways. The two would cultivate a special relationship that would



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M Aggie Horticulture

flourish in later years. In 1970, Abbott resigned from his successful public relations career and devoted himself to wildflowers.

Abbott started his own business, Green Horizon, a seed company. Again, he experienced trials and tribulations but ultimately his business saw consistent profitable success in 1981. He wrote a book, *How to Know and Grow Texas Wildflowers* and had a wildflower calendar illustrated by friend

(and cartoonist) Ace Reid. In 1976, he started a newsletter to reach native plant enthusiasts and it was so successful that he won the Men's Garden Club of America Golden Quill Award. This would also be his vehicle to start The Native Plant Society of Texas which organized in April 1981 with the help of staff at Texas Woman's University in Denton.

Abbott once noted, "...it seem[s] that only God and Lady Bird Johnson, not necessarily in that order, were concerned with wildflower survival. Somebody had to step up and get the job done. I decided I would be that person." By 1973, he became a registered (unpaid) lobbyist to the Texas Legislature for wildflowers. His 'slush fund' totaled \$6. On April 6, 1981, HCR 110 was passed on a motion by Rep. Earnestine Glossbrenner to set aside the fourth Saturday in April as Texas Wildflower Day.

Abbott lobbied every legislator possible, held a large banquet in which Society members provided handmade clay lace cactus gifts, and secured 3,000 signatures to support the bill. It was signed into law on April 27, 1981. In 1982, Lady Bird Johnson started the National Wildflower Research Center and planted seeds from Abbott's seed company. On her 70th birthday, she donated \$125,000 to the Center. In 1983, Abbott was awarded the President's Award by the Society. He kept writing and speaking up until his death on July 6, 1984.



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M Aggie Horticulture

A memorial garden was created in Kerrville in his honor. His love for preservation of natural beauty lives on through the Society and celebration of wildflowers each year. It is truly remarkable to see native plants growing in commercial and residential landscapes, because a Texan loved wildflowers so much. 🇹🇽





Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller is a strong supporter of industrial hemp production as a new market opportunity for Texas farmers to expand their operations and grow alternative crops.

The 2018 Farm Bill legalized the commercial production of hemp and authorized states to submit state plans to administer hemp programs. On June 10, 2019, House Bill 1325 was signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott. The bill authorizes the production, manufacture, retail sale, and inspection of industrial hemp crops and products in Texas. This also includes products for consumable hemp products which contain cannabidiol (CBD), as well as other edible parts of the hemp plant.

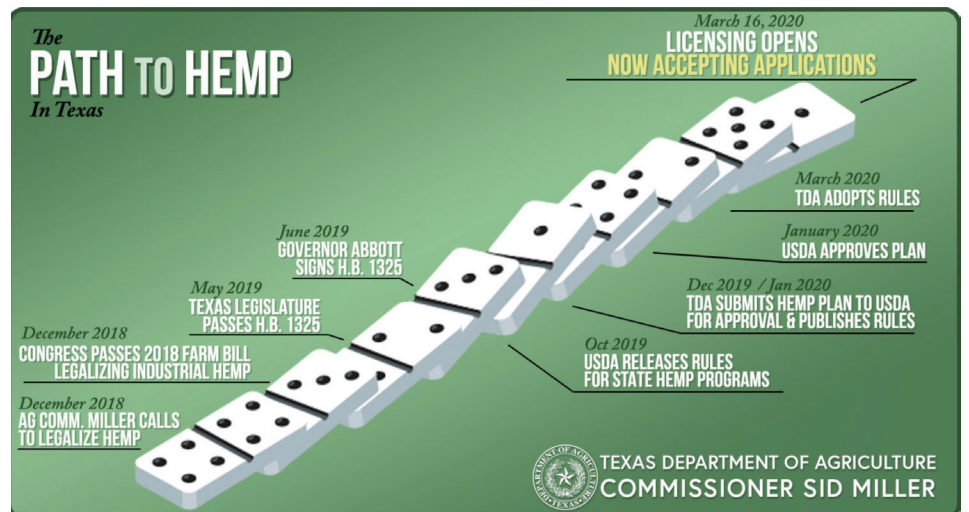
The TDA submitted the state hemp plan to USDA on December 2, 2019 and it was approved by the USDA on January 27, 2020. Administrative rules were published in January 2020 and became effective March 11.

Commissioner Miller and TDA staff held a public hearing on January 22nd to take input during the comment period for the rules.

The TDA rulemaking process ensures the Department receives stakeholder and public input regarding the new hemp program. TDA's administrative rules relate to licensing, production, testing, seed certification and other program oversight, as necessary.

The hemp growing license and permit application process opened online on March 16, 2020. The regulation of CBD consumables, including CBD oil, will be handled in accordance with Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) guidelines. The state agency with oversight of CBD consumables is the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and not TDA. Questions regarding those matters should be directed to DSHS. 🇹🇽



Produce Safety Rule Compliance Assessment Continuing

Assessments are part of the Texas Department of Agriculture regulatory program related to the Produce Safety Rule, established by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act to ensure that the minimum requirements of the standards are being implemented.

- Continuing, large farms with average food sales of \$500,000 and above*.
- Beginning in April 2020, small farms with average food sales of \$250,000-\$500,000*.
- A Produce Safety Specialist will contact the farm in advance to schedule Assessments.
- Farms growing covered produce considered “high- risk” such as leafy greens and herbs will receive a higher priority for scheduling.

*Adjusted for inflation using 2011 as the baseline year for calculating the adjustment.

On-farm Consultations may help farms prepare for an Assessment but do not take the place of an Assessment.

Visit our website to learn more about the Produce Safety Rule, the services offered to help prepare farms for an Assessment and to contact a Produce Safety Outreach Specialist near you.

www.texasagriculture.gov/TOPS



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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Young Farmer Grant: *Applications Due!*



The purpose of the Young Farmer Grant program is to provide financial assistance in the form of dollar-for-dollar matching grant funds to young agricultural producers that are engaged or will be engaged in creating or expanding an agricultural business in Texas.

TAFA's (Texas Agricultural Finance Authority) Young Farmer Grant Program aims to:

- ★ Grow and support Texas agriculture
- ★ Help meet a financial need that is otherwise not met
- ★ Help grow an operation that also impacts the community

Grant applications will be accepted from any person 18 years or older, but younger than 46 years of age as of the application deadline, who is engaged or will be engaged in creating or expanding agriculture in Texas. Applications that merely

propose to sustain an existing agricultural business are not eligible for an award under this program.

Corporations, limited liability companies, partnerships or other types of foreign or domestic entities are not eligible for awards under this program. TDA will immediately disqualify any application filed on behalf of a corporation, limited liability company, partnership or other types of foreign or domestic entity. The applicant must be able to make dollar-for-dollar matching expenditures to sustain, create or expand the proposed project.

Applicant must be a U.S. Citizen and applicants must reside and operate in Texas.

Grant funds will not be awarded to multiple family members for the same project. Each individual grant applicant must clearly describe a distinct project and

demonstrate how the individual grant applicant will independently benefit from the Young Farmer Grant.

Application with signatures must be RECEIVED by close of business (5:00 p.m. CT) on Thursday, April 9, 2020. See [guidelines for submission instructions](#). 🇹🇽



Rebecca Hume, of VRDNT Farms, harvests an Asian long bean at her Bastrop, Texas, farm on Oct. 4, 2019. Hume is a recipient of the Texas Department of Agriculture's Young Farmer program, which aims to inspire the next generation of agriculture producers in the state. ([Nexstar Photo/Wes Rapaport](#))

Fresh From the Field

TDA field representatives across the state promote various programs of the Trade & Business Development division.

These programs include the GO TEXAN marketing program, Texas Agriculture Finance Authority (TAF), Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) program and agency administered grants. On any given day field representatives are meeting with county judges, city officials, business owners, event planners and consumers to work together to highlight the best Texas has to offer. 🇹🇽



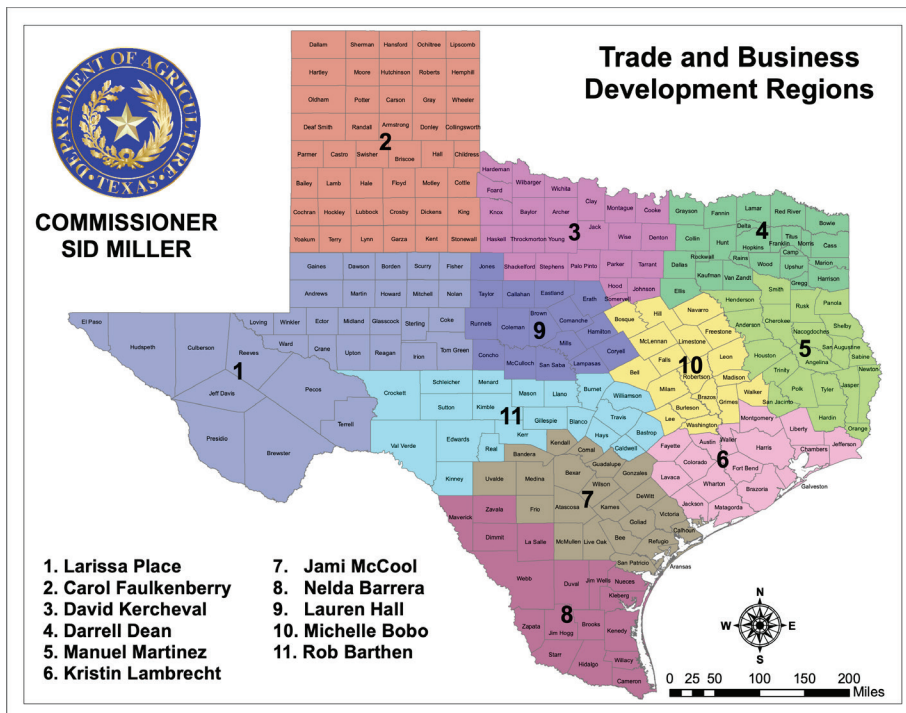
Texas Department of Agriculture Field Representative, Darrell Dean, attended the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo to represent TDA, answer questions and inform the public of what TDA does everyday.



NEW MEMBERS!

GO TEXAN.

- ☆ [Devil's River Whisky](#)
- ☆ [Leafers Microgreens LLC](#)
- ☆ [The Meat Board](#)
- ☆ [Arche Family Farms](#)
- ☆ [Proportion Foods LLC](#)
- ☆ [Harvest Natural Market](#)
- ☆ [Pinkerton's Distillery LLC](#)
- ☆ [Brewchew LLC](#)
- ☆ [Outside, Texas](#)
- ☆ [Bell Mountain Vineyards, Inc](#)
- ☆ [Dos Rios Winery, LLC](#)
- ☆ [Sattvic Brands, LLC](#)
- ☆ [Cowtown Farmers Market](#)
- ☆ [Zero Point Organics](#)
- ☆ [Simple Findings and More](#)
- ☆ [Spirit of Texas](#)
- ☆ [Vault Coffee](#)
- ☆ [By The Horns Brewing Co.](#)



AMERICAN HERITAGE GARDENS

FARM PROFILE

This month's featured farm is near the Texas-Arkansas border at American Heritage Gardens in Wake Village.

American Heritage Gardens is a young company that mostly grows heirloom tomatoes and red tomatoes. The company was opened not too long ago by William Weitzel, who is more than 80 years old. Running a farm is something Mr. Weitzel always wanted to do and when he finally started, he only had a half-acre of land.

American Heritage Gardens is now able to grow about 13,000 tomatoes using both old-fashioned and newer farming styles, like using a greenhouse. With a small, hard-working staff, American Heritage Gardens grows delicious tomatoes.

William Weitzel of American Heritage Gardens



+ STATS

Owner: William Weitzel

Founded: 2016

Location: Wake Village, Texas

Specialty: Heirloom tomatoes



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This product was funded by USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Food & Nutrition MENU App

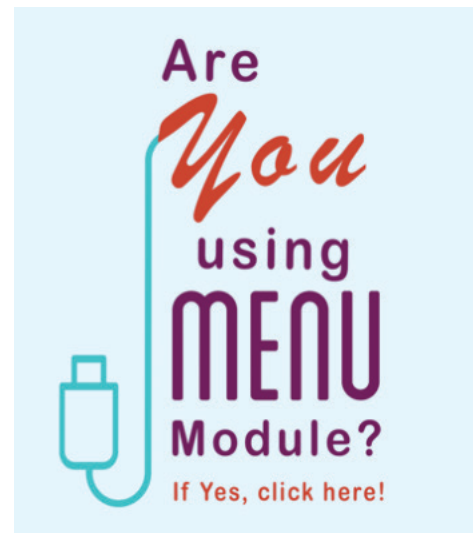
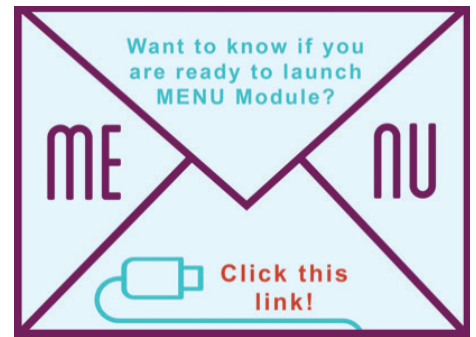


TDA offers all Texas school districts the Menu Enhancement Nutrition (MENU) Module at no cost. This menu planning software helps them ensure the meals they serve meet federal regulations and provide good nutrition. As the COVID-19 pandemic changes school meal service, MENU Module is helping schools streamline the meal planning process and the digital production records are helping reduce the number of people handling possibly contaminated paper and pens. Also, quick and up-to-date menu changes can be made due to MENU's tracking of the products schools have on hand. Currently, more than a quarter of TDA's school nutrition partners use MENU.

TDA's efforts to support schools have continued throughout the state's response to COVID-19. New MENU features were recently tested and made available to help further

streamline school food service operations across Texas. These enhancements include features that allow for faster menu planning and more efficient reporting, which may provide valuable time savings during this pandemic.

Since COVID-19 began impacting schools, TDA has requested waivers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that would allow TDA to grant schools the freedom — on a case by case basis — to provide meals to students even if temporarily closed due to coronavirus. TDA is making all information about these waivers available online at SquareMeals.org/coronavirus. The information includes questions and answers for program operators, guidance for meal service, necessary forms, and much more. 🇺🇸





TDA HOSTS BI-ANNUAL *Quilt Competition*

■ Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth Lies a Texas Sunset". Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller is asking quilters from across the Lone Star State to participate in TDA 2020 Quilt Block Competition.

Quilters are asked to submit patterns depicting scenes that illustrate Texas sunsets. Participating quilters will create patterns from a selection of natural fibers provided by TDA and up to three additional

cotton fabrics provided by the participant. TDA wants quilters to include one special piece of cotton fabric that personally represents family, history or heritage.

Entries for the 2020 Quilt Block Competition are due June 30, 2020. TDA will start accepting applications and mailing the fabric packets in February. For more information on this opportunity, please contact Emily Miller.

All entries will be judged by a panel of independent, outside individuals who will select the winning blocks to be pieced together into a quilt. It will be unveiled at the Family Land Heritage ceremony at the State Capitol in Austin this fall. 🇹🇽

Emily Miller
(512) 463-7425
Emily.Miller@TexasAgriculture.gov



Plant Protection Funding & Cactus Moth

Plant Protection Funding

Plant Protection Act funding has been awarded for 2020. These are federal monies awarded as competitive grants to allow entities to conduct research and surveys that protect the food supply from exotic invasive species. In total five million dollars of the available forty-seven million in funding was awarded in Texas. The Texas Department of Agriculture was awarded

\$1,197,022 for two grant submissions. The two grants funded will allow TDA to perform Critical Entry Point Monitoring and training to nurseries on high consequence pests. To see the full list of projects approved for 2020 click the following link, [here](#). 🇺🇸



Cactus Moth

A new pest of concern has been discovered in Texas. The non-native cactus moth, *Cactoblastis cactorum*, has been discovered in the Galveston area. The moth feeds upon species of prickly pear cacti, its eggs mimicking a cactus spine, laid upon the pad. TDA is working with USDA to destroy infested plants and

TDA inspectors are conducting inspections at nurseries and grocery stores in areas where reports of the moth have been made. See the following USDA fact sheet for images, [here](#). If you would like to report a cactus moth sighting please call the Plant Quality group at 512-463-7660. 🇺🇸



Photo of cactus moth courtesy of www.gri.msstate.edu

Hold on to Your **HERITAGE**



FAMILY LAND HERITAGE

WHAT IS THE FAMILY LAND HERITAGE PROGRAM?

The Family Land Heritage program recognizes and honors families who have owned and operated a continuous agricultural operation for 100 years or more.

HOW DO I APPLY?

You can visit the Family Land Heritage website, www.familylandheritage.com, to download the 2020 application. Mail hard copies of the completed application, copies of supporting documents and photographs to TDA at the address below. Email digital copies of the completed application, copies of supporting documents and photographs by May 1, 2020 to: Justin.Rand@TexasAgriculture.gov

BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATION SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We are currently seeking sponsors of all levels to assist in funding the Family Land Heritage Program. To receive recognition at this year's ceremony, donations must be submitted by August 14, 2020. Download a Sponsorship & Donation form to view available levels and make your commitment by visiting the Family Land Heritage website, www.familylandheritage.com



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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LAWN & GARDEN TAX HOLIDAY

Memorial Day Weekend

SATURDAY, MAY 23 - MONDAY, MAY 25,

The Lawn & Garden Tax Holiday was created in 2016 to encourage responsible water use in Texas. Over Memorial Day Weekend, retailers can sell select water saving products without charging sales tax (includes all plants & more). For more information about Watersmart products and the Lawn & Garden Tax Holiday please visit: [Texas Nursery and Landscape Association](#) website and the [Texas Comptrollers](#) website. 🇺🇸

BELOW IS A LIST OF THE ITEMS THAT QUALIFY FOR THE SALES TAX EXEMPTION:

- ◆ WaterSense Products
- ◆ During Memorial Day Weekend, retailers do not need to charge sales tax on any product tax free that displays a WaterSense label or logo. These items can be bought for either personal or business purposes.
- ◆ Water-Conserving Products
- ◆ Consumers can also purchase certain water-conserving products tax free. Unlike WaterSense-labeled items, these items are only exempt when purchased for use at a residential property.

ITEMS ARE TAX FREE DURING THE HOLIDAY THAT ARE USED OR PLANTED FOR:

- ◆ Conserving or retaining groundwater;
- ◆ Recharging water tables; or
- ◆ Decreasing ambient air temperature, and so limiting water evaporation

EXAMPLES OF ITEMS THAT QUALIFY FOR THE EXEMPTION INCLUDE:

- ◆ A soaker or drip-irrigation hose
- ◆ A moisture control for a sprinkler or irrigation system
- ◆ Mulch
- ◆ A rain barrel or an alternative rain and moisture collection system
- ◆ A permeable ground cover surface that allows water to reach underground basins, aquifers or water collection points
- ◆ All plants, trees and grasses
- ◆ Water-saving surfactants
- ◆ Soil and compost

EXAMPLES OF ITEMS THAT DO NOT QUALIFY FOR THE EXEMPTION INCLUDE:

- ◆ Construction/building materials
- ◆ Awnings and other items used to create shade
- ◆ Air conditioners
- ◆ Ceiling fans
- ◆ Sprinklers

Did You Know?

TDA recognizes the importance of each Texas commodity and serves commodity boards by facilitating meetings and ensuring compliance with Chapter 41 of the Agriculture Code.

TDA provides access to healthy, locally grown foods from TDA-certified farmers markets for eligible low-income mothers, mothers-to-be and infants.

TDA collaborates with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Texas citrus industry to conduct a Mexican fruit fly program to eliminate the risk of this pest in Texas.

TDA implements and inspects price scanners for accuracy.



Texas Ag Stats:

★ Texas producers with military service accounted for 50,004 farms and 52,357 producers with an average age of 68

★ The number of female producers increased 69% in Texas compared to 2012.

★ The average age of young producers (age 35 or less) was 29 and accounted for 21,304 farms.

★ Texas producers with military service accounted for 50,004 farms and 52,357 producers with an average age of 68.

★ The average farm size of a Texas producer with military service is 385 acres.

Recipe of the Month

Zucchini Nut Bread

Ingredients

3 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
2 cups flour
1 cup quick oats
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
2 cups grated zucchini
1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 8-by-4-inch loaf pans and set aside
2. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla until well combined.
3. In a separate bowl, stir together flour, oats, cinnamon, baking soda, salt and baking powder. Stir into wet ingredients until no dry bits remain.
4. Stir in zucchini and walnuts, then divide batter between prepared pans.
5. Bake 1 hour, until a toothpick inserted into the center of each pan comes out clean.



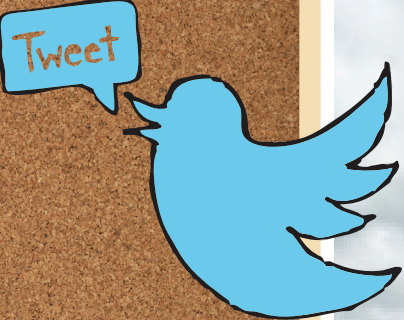
[Texas Co-Op Power](#)

Your Thoughts...

on Texans helping Texans...



TXMEMES.COM
Whataburger Delivers Food To H-E-B Workers Working Long Hours to Keep Shelves Stocked | Texas Memes



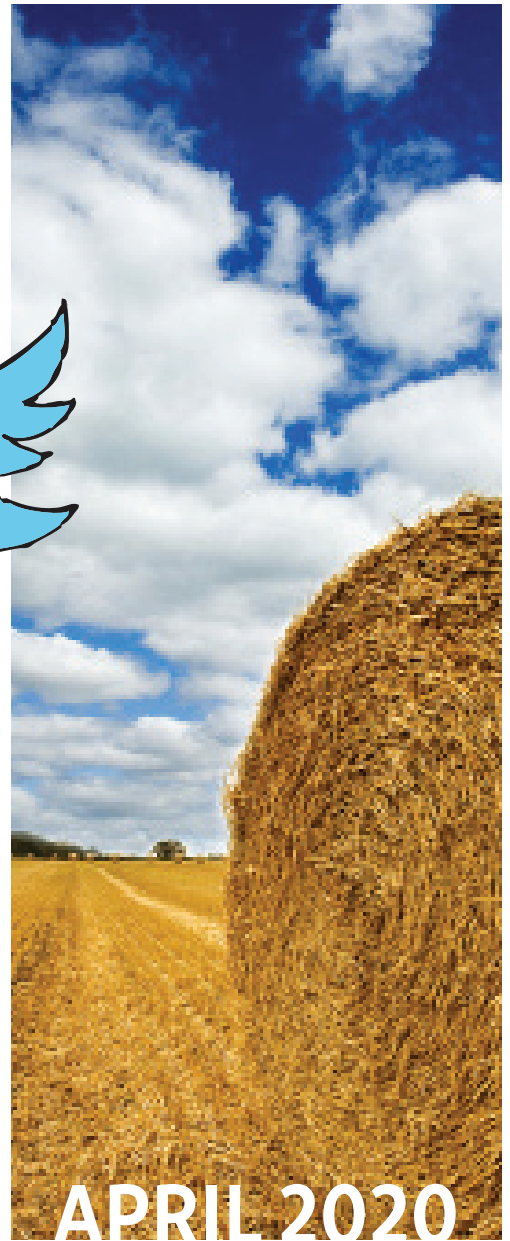
June Taverner Nice thing to do... 🍌

Theresa McLain This folks is a PERFECT example of when Jesus told the people to "love one another"! Amen!!!

Nancy J. Perez Guadarrama That's Awesome. God Bless You all. ❤️

Armando Jesus Alejandro Bravo y'all!

L.B. Ellis God Blessed Texas



APRIL 2020

Tell Us...

what are your Easter traditions?

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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