



**Texas Agriculture Matters**  
**TV Now Airing on RFD-TV!**  
 Tune in each Tuesday at  
 6 PM CT!



**Gypsy Moth**  
 An invasive species that  
 Texans need to be aware  
 of.



**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 5  
 May 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

## Texans Helping Texans

Texans have experienced all  
 types of hardships throughout  
 the years. But one thing  
 always stands true; we're  
 there to help each other  
 in times of need.

The motto of the Lone Star  
 State is friendship. Being  
 there for neighbors, near  
 and far, is at the core of  
 a true Texan. This state  
 and her people are no  
 stranger to disasters. According  
 to [scientists at NASA](#),  
 Texas actually ranks the  
 first among the states for  
 variety and frequency of  
 natural disasters. One  
 thing that remains true  
 during these times of  
 need and that is  
 Texans are there for  
 fellow Texans.

COVID-19 has shifted the  
 world into a new normal.  
 Everything and everyone  
 has been effected by this  
 pandemic and people are  
 looking upon Texas as  
 one of the leaders in the  
 U.S. Despite closures of  
 retail stores, restaurants,  
 office buildings and  
 "non-essential" businesses,  
 community partners have  
 stepped up to serve and  
 assist.

TDA and GO TEXAN are  
 proud of these fellow  
 community members



that have gone above and  
 beyond. From changing the  
 purpose of facility  
 equipment to produce a  
 different product, breaking  
 out home sewing machines  
 and providing meals for  
 front line workers are just  
 some examples. Hand-  
 shaking, hugging and  
 gatherings are not common  
 acts anymore but  
 compassion, humanity and  
 friendship is more  
 prevalent than ever in the  
 Lone Star State.

# CLEAN Cause.



CLEAN Cause delivers drinks to essential workers while practicing social distancing.



CLEAN Cause is on a mission to supply essential workers with energizing tea while providing to support recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. According to their team, "we have donated over 100 cases of CLEAN Cause Sparkling Yerba Mate to energize grocery store employees in and around Austin at HEBS, Whole Foods, Central Markets, Wheatsvilles, and others. We have donated over 320 cases to hospitals and healthcare workers in and around Austin, with another 400 cases committed before the end of the month. Additionally, we have donated 200 cases of CLEAN Cause to families removed from domestic violence situations amidst COVID. In total, we will donate more than 1,000 cases valued at nearly \$33,000.

Our Cause is more important than ever with 50% profits supporting recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. To-date, we have granted 1,228 sober living scholarships with a value of \$614,000." -CLEAN Cause Team 🇺🇸



TEXAS AGRICULTURE *Matters!*



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

*Produced by the Office of Communications  
Editor, Katlyn Gast*

www.TexasAgriculture.gov  
(800) TELL-TDA



## ABOUT COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Sid Miller is an eighth generation farmer and rancher and the 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

# Aloe King

John Sigrist has been an aloe vera farmer, processor, manufacturer and distributor since 1975 in the Rio Grande Valley. He is a founding member of the GO TEXAN marketing campaign and developed the aloe vera mature leaves as a produce commodity since the early 90s. John and his company have been a supplier of the bulk resource of aloe vera fillets for many of the larger companies involved in the production of aloe vera based products that do not maintain farming operations for a supply of the fresh aloe.

"I have experienced many adversities during my career in the aloe vera industry over the years including droughts, hurricanes, hail-storms and floods, multiple freezes and unscrupulous competition from foreign and domestic suppliers," says Sigrist. "Throughout, I have always maintained that growing a crop with such amazing attributes for helping people has been my calling. Hard work, resilience and perseverance have been my hold cards.

With the experience I gained learning about propagating and marketing the aloe vera, I have been able to take this knowledge abroad and consulted in the development of other aloe projects and farms in Mexico, Hawaii, Okinawa, Africa and China. Currently I am a hired consultant with the hair

care company CHI-Biosilk in Houston in the development of organic aloe farms and nurseries to maintain an aloe resource for their CHI hair care products.

Within the last month, all production strategies have evolved with the emerging interest in the aloe vera juice and gel for the hand sanitizer demand. I have not experienced this kind of growth for the aloe resource in my 45 years in the industry. With the diminished availability of the resource from foreign suppliers, our higher quality Texas grown, made in the USA products are being sought after and our purpose for staying true to our objectives will make 2020 a banner year for the this company as we adjust our efforts to helping controlling the Coronavirus."

-John Sigrist 🇺🇸



Aloe King owner John Sigrist

## 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.

# Kolache Rolf's



Rolf Larson makes kolache deliveries to schools and essential workers.



Rolf Larson GO TEXAN member and owner of Kolache Rolf's, has been busy delivering kolaches to kids across the Brazos Valley.

Each student gets to take home two kolaches in addition to the meals provided by their school district.

Larson has partnered with Daniel Stark Law, Brazos Land Company, Slovacek Sausage, Edward Jones, Carter's Burger, Wiesner of Huntsville and Rollo Insurance to donate more than 16,000 kolaches.

So far they've delivered to College Station ISD, Hunstville ISD, Anderson-Shiro CISD and Normangee ISD and plan to delivery plenty more. Larson has also delivered breakfast to front line workers in hospitals.

"Depending on how long this lasts, we'll probably give out another 30,000. There's a lot of schools and we're just excited to be able to help. The partnerships that we have is what's going to help continue this," said Larson. 🇹🇽

# The Letter Lounge

The Letter Lounge's social media master and website manager is giving back to his community by sewing masks. "My son Cooper is 16 years old, sophomore at Townview High School Science, Engineering and Math in Dallas. He does all our social media at the letter lounge including our website. He also runs our booth at craft events on weekends when needed. Did I mention he is an Eagle Scout? We saw a need for making N95 mask covers for the pandemic and Cooper likes to sew! Sew far he has made and distributed 50 masks to various health care workers across E. Dallas. He intends to keep doing his part until this over"- The Letter Lounge Family

LetterLounge was created in 2013 and their studio is located in East Dallas, Texas. LetterLounge is a small independent family business founded by Mike Clem. Mike considers himself a craftsman and an artist. He carefully considers each reclaimed book's story as he transforms it into a piece of typographical art. 🇹🇽



Cooper Clem sews masks for front line workers during COVID-19 pandemic.

GO TEXAN member and community hero, TFP Nutrition, has generously provided a donation of 400 medical-style masks to the COVID-19 call and testing center in Nacadoches.

Steele Wright, Marketing Director for TFP said it was the least the manufacturer of animal feeds could do during the pandemic. The N-95 respirators are used in the feed industry, but will now serve well for the front line workers for COVID-19.

Donna McCullum and Jeff Cunningham with local news channel KTRE cover this perfect example of how Texans are helping Texans. 🇹🇽

## TFP Nutrition (Texas Farm Products)

*Video by KTRE*

## Desert Door

Veteran-owned distillery Desert Door knew they could provide for their fellow Texans by changing their facility to produce hand sanitizer. Their production has benefited first responders in Austin and surrounding areas; Austin Police Department, San Antonio Fire Department, and are now giving out hand sanitizer in gallon bulk jugs to front line workers.

GO TEXAN member, Desert Door Texas Sotol, was founded by three U.S. military veterans who met at the University of Texas Austin while pursuing MBAs. The idea for the company began in a class called "New Venture Creation". A few years later Desert Door had produced it's first batch of unaged sotol in their distillery in Driftwood, Texas using sotol plants harvested in the Chihuahuan Desert of West Texas. 🇹🇽

*Video: Fox News*



*Photo by John Anderson, Austin Chronicle*



*Photo: San Antonio Police Officer's Association - Facebook*



# Nuluv



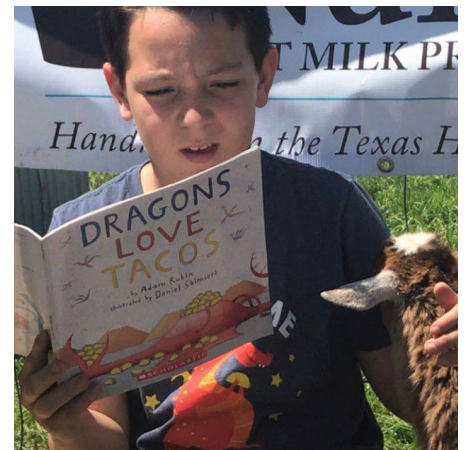
Jonna Davis, owner of Nuluv, shares what her family is doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. "I wanted to share what Nuluv is doing to help others during the Covid crisis," says Davis.

"Of course, we are still busy making soap and lotions, because people are washing their hands so much more frequently these days! We've offered

all of our liquid hand soaps On Sale for 25% off during the month of April on our website, and will most likely continue that sale through the month of May.

We've also been encouraging our own children to look for ways to show kindness to others right now, and our 4th grader said he could lead a story time for kids who are stuck

in apartments or homes with out animals. He has been hosting a "Story Time with Baby Goats" every weekday afternoon at 2PM. He and our ranch hand's daughter (who is in kindergarten) go Live on the Nuluv Facebook page every weekday afternoon, reading a story to the baby goats. Mostly, it's Pace reading and Brooklyn trying to keep the goats from eating the book. But it's entertaining and brings a chuckle. And, I love that it's something our children are doing for others. I don't know that too many people other than grandparents, cousins, and family friends watch it. But even if it only brings joy to one person, it's effective". -Jonna Davis, Nuluv



Nuluv's Pace Davis reads on Facebook live to children during quarantine.

# One Shot Distillery



Phil Waldron, owner of One Shot Distillery poses with hand sanitizer.



One Shot Distillery has been hard at work during COVID-19. Like other distilleries, One Shot Distillery is using their resources to produce hand sanitizer and is supplying it to various doctors' offices and home health companies. In addition, they are supplying TDA with hand sanitizer for five export facilities and five regional offices. TDA has delivered One Shot Distillery hand sanitizer to the El Paso and Fort Worth State Office Buildings, College station Pest Lab, Giddings Seed Lab and the Metrology Lab.

# Continental Dairy Facilities, LLC

CDF HAS  
DONATED  
CRITICAL PPE FOR  
FRONT LINE  
WORKERS

SPECTRUM HEALTH

MERCY  
HEALTH

Lamb County Health Services

Our local hospitals in West Michigan and Littlefield, are in desperate need for PPE for the front line healthcare workers.

Be proud our company has donated:

- ▶ 325- N95 Respirators
- ▶ 8000+ disposable protective sleeves.
- ▶ 1200+ Disposable Lab Coats
- ▶ Dozens of Tyvek coverall suits
- ▶ 60 pair of Safety Glasses
- ▶ 5 Face Shields



[@cdfswllc Facebook](#)

## TUPPS Brewery

# HELP NOW! +

### PEOPLE NEED HELP NOW!!

The coronavirus has threatened our way of life, but it is especially difficult for people with pre-existing medical conditions, no savings, or inflexible jobs. We need blood donations, money for those who have lost their jobs, and food donations to replenish food banks. JOIN US TO HELP THOSE IN NEED! A SIGNIFICANT portion of the proceeds (damn near all besides what we need for rent and payroll) from this 12-pack will go to support local charities that keep our community strong. TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THIS!

We will be working with the RED CROSS along with other LOCAL CHARITIES to make sure our communities stay strong. We're asking other partners to also contribute.

Visit [tuppsbrewery.com/HELP](https://tuppsbrewery.com/HELP) for more information on how you can help.



For more information on how YOU CAN HELP follow the link below

[www.tuppsbrewery.com/HELP](https://www.tuppsbrewery.com/HELP)

### ALRIGHT BEER PEOPLE, THIS IS WHERE WE COME IN

We'll be selling this across all markets we currently distribute and at the taproom for curbside pick up. Buy a 12-pack almost all the proceeds go to charity to support those in need.

Share this with your family, tag your friends, support your community.



6 cans of National Standard  
6 Cans of Juice Pack

Beer in the bar may change based on availability. We're trying to get as much out as public.



[@TUPPS Brewery Youtube](#)



[@tupps\\_brewery Instagram](#)



[@tupps\\_brewery Instagram](#)



[@tupps\\_brewery Instagram](#)



**T**exas 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.

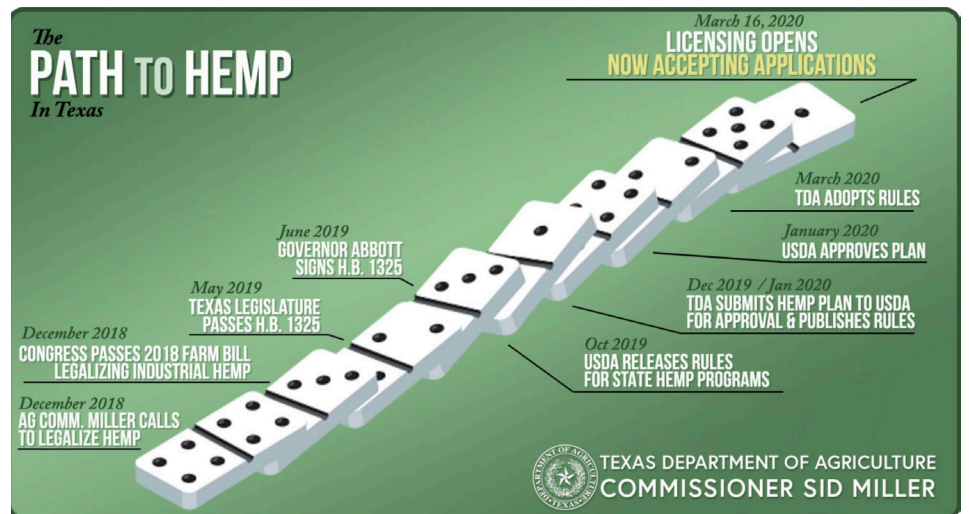
The TDA submitted the state hemp plan to USDA on December 2, 2019 and it was approved by the USDA on January 27, 2020. Administrative rules were published in January 2020 and became effective March 11.

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. 🇹🇽





## Texas Agriculture Matters TV Show

*Now on RFD-TV!*

**T**exas Agriculture Matters hosted by Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller, is a new weekly show on RFD-TV that seeks to answer the question, “Why Does Texas Agriculture Matter?”. From cattle to cotton and rodeos to rockets, Texas Agriculture Matters is a fun, informative look at the role of agriculture in our daily lives. Hosted by 8th generation farmer and rancher, and 12-time world champion rodeo cowboy Commissioner Sid Miller, the show utilizes Miller’s trademark wit and wisdom to explore a new Texas agriculture-related topic every week. Kicking off every show with his trademark catchphrase “Howdy Neighbors”.

Sid Miller tackles topics from hemp to horses and cattle genetics to international trade. Through feature segments, one-on-one interviews and eye-catching infographics, the show delivers equal doses of ag policy, local products, western heritage and rural lifestyle.

“This is a crucial time for Texas agriculture,” Commissioner Miller

said. “There has never been a better time to highlight our ag producers and the industry that provides the food and fiber that keeps us going. Our show is a great opportunity to give folks from across the nation a big Texas welcome and show them exactly why Texas agriculture matters. We’ll be talking about the big issues in Texas agriculture and highlighting hooves, hide, hair, horns and everything in between. A huge thank you to Patrick Gottsch and his entire team at RFD-TV for giving us this incredible opportunity. While you spend time with family during this national crisis, I hope you can take a moment to watch this new show highlighting the best of Texas agriculture.”

The first episode aired April 21 and will continue to show on Tuesdays at 6pm CT. Tune in to RFD-TV and join Commissioner Sid Miller as he takes you on a weekly look into why Texas Agriculture Matters! 🇺🇸

# COVID-19

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 or view our [COVID-19 Resource Guide](#) for additional resources and information.



## FAST FUND: *Ballinger Fire Department*

**T**DA celebrates with the City of Ballinger as it upgrades firefighting equipment! A recent Texas Community Development Block Grant from TDA is assisting the City in replacing several aging and outdated fire response vehicles. Last month, the City took delivery of a new Type 5 command vehicle, which replaces a repurposed truck that is difficult to operate and can slow response time. The new truck will be able to maneuver during emergency situations and ensure communication among responders, as well as addressing small fires before they become major incidents. Still to come – a new Rescue Pumper to better address structural fires and other emergencies!

Improving the safety of rural communities and their emergency response personnel is an important goal for programs like Texas CDBG. In 2019, TDA awarded over \$10 million to 25 communities through the CDBG's Fire, Ambulance and Service Truck (FAST) Fund – reallocating

previously unused funds to be able to maximize the impact in rural Texas. Texas CDBG is once again accepting FAST Fund applications – if your community serves primarily low- to moderate-income residents, check out the FAST Fund Application Guide ([www.texasagriculture.gov/CDBG](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/CDBG), and choose the FAST Fund from the menu on the right). TDA is proud to be able to assist communities to meet vital needs, including public safety. 🇹🇽



*City of Ballinger Fire Department shows off new truck possible through TDA FAST Fund Grant.*



# TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

# COVID-19 CRISIS RESPONSE

Since 1907, the Texas Department of Agriculture has worked hard to serve and promote the Texas agriculture industry as well as protect Texas consumers. From inspecting eggs and grain warehouses to regulating ag pesticide and opening overseas markets for Texas ag products, TDA is here for Texas farmers and ranchers. We are also responsible for implementing over 5 million federal school meals here in Texas.

But just like you, thanks to COVID-19, we've had to learn new ways of doing business. TDA is doing everything in its power to serve Texas agriculture throughout this COVID-19 pandemic.

In March, when the restrictions on businesses and travel increased, Commissioner Miller successfully petitioned Governor Greg Abbott and USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue for Agriculture be listed as an essential industry, allowing our farmers and ranchers to continue to work and provide the food and fiber our nation depends on. This designation included an agricultural workers and food production workers, nursery and landscape workers, florists, and pesticide and herbicide applicators.

Once that designation was made, Commissioner Miller also released an Essential Critical Infrastructure Worker Authorization letter and posted it on our website for farmers and ranchers to travel as needed to continue doing business.

Commissioner Miller also directed our regional TDA employees to help deliver supplies such as

masks, hand sanitizer and other personal protective equipment to their community. Commissioner Miller himself delivered a shipment of sanitizer to a rural hospital in Caldwell.

TDA has pitched in to help on a wide range of issues affected by the pandemic, from rural hospitals to school meals, emergency feeding and the food supply chain. For instance, TDA successfully secured \$90,000 per hospital in federal funding for over 130 Texas rural hospitals to keep their doors open. We got over 2 dozen waivers to help schools closed by the pandemic to continue to provide meals to students. We worked with USDA to expedite 51.7 million pounds of USDA food shipments to Texas Food Banks and eliminated or suspended regulations to ensure consumer access to goods and services like eggs and toilet paper.

Despite COVID-19, the work of the agency continues. With most staff teleworking and limited staff in the office, TDA has maintained 100% service to our constituents. We launched the new Texas Industrial Hemp Licensing Program to kick off Texas's new hemp industry. And, Commissioner Miller's new weekly TV show, "Texas Agriculture Matters", began broadcasting to 52 million households on April 21 on RFD-TV.

"With patience and prayer, we will make it through this crisis because we are Texans." Miller said. "We've had our share of dust storms, tornados, hurricanes, drought, and famine, and we've withstood the test. We will again. When we get back to business,

it will be with the Texas swagger and pride that comes with living in the Lone Star State."



# BRAUNE FARMS

## FARM PROFILE

This month's featured farm is Braune Farms in Seguin, Texas, not far from San Antonio, on Interstate 10. This area is known for its rich agricultural history and Seguin boasts the only pecan museum in the country! Braune Farms was founded nine years ago when the Braunes started farming wheat, corn and other crops but soon found out that row crop farming did not earn a lot of money.

After talking to a helpful neighbor, the Braunes decided to make the family garden bigger. Soon, Braune Farms was growing all kinds of vegetables, including winter squash, kale, spinach, collards and various other leafy greens. Braune Farms also has a pumpkin patch every year where visitors learn how to grow pumpkins and can take a ride on the tractor.

The Braune family



## + STATS

**Owner:** Jeffrey and Julia Braune

**Founded:** 2007

**Location:** Seguin, Texas

**Specialty:** Winter squash, kale and other leafy greens



SEGUIN,  
TEXAS

© vermontaim / Adobe Stock



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
**COMMISSIONER SID MILLER**

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





**F**ederal nutrition programs administered by TDA's Food and Nutrition Division have played an important role in the statewide effort to ensure Texans could access healthy meals in the wake of COVID-19. As the pandemic's impact became apparent, program partners quickly moved from providing food in school cafeterias, food banks and child care centers to serving meals-to-go and meeting increased demand for shelf stable foods for home preparation.

One of the Food and Nutrition Division's primary efforts was ensuring schools and other program operators could meet federal regulations while performing their critical roles. TDA sought regulatory waivers from federal agencies to ensure programs could continue to serve reimbursable meals. Some waivers provided flexibilities related to regulatory deadlines; other waivers addressed challenges related to social distancing requirements and supply chain disruptions.

Food and Nutrition's strategic partnerships with USDA and the

Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty facilitated implementation of a meal delivery program in rural Texas counties. Coordination with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission enabled the division to explore using Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT), a program that provides food benefits to families with students eligible for free or reduced provide lunches. P-EBT is funded as part of federal coronavirus legislation.

Other TDA-administered programs available, as needed, include the Disaster Household Distribution (DHD) program and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). These two federal programs support disaster response by helping facilitate deliveries of shelf-stable USDA-purchased foods through food banks.

Through it all, Food and Nutrition processed more than a thousand forms and waiver requests from program operators making adjustments to the way they delivered meals. To effectively communicate all the changes being made and

resources available, web pages were created that had almost 100,000 page views in less than a month. Staff also created dozens of documents to make it easier for program operators to quickly grasp the rapidly changing climate of serving meals to hungry Texans. All the information was immediately communicated online, in weekly webinars, through emails, and in press releases from Commissioner Miller.

The results of these efforts were seen in the tireless work of the people at schools and food banks serving meals and distributing boxes of food in their communities. Everyone at TDA considers it an honor and a privilege to support all the heroic Texans stepping up to aid their neighbors in a true time of need. All across the state, these TDA partners and many others provided vital nutritional resources using TDA programs and preparations that had been put in place for disasters, even unimaginable ones like COVID-19. 🇹🇽



## 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. 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. 🇹🇽

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**GO TEXAN.<sup>®</sup>**

**FIND THE MARK**  
*that matters*

## WHAT

**does it mean?**

When you see the mark, you know the product or place has been proudly certified as authentically Texan.

## WHERE

**do you find it?**

Look for the mark anywhere you shop, from local farmer's markets to national retail chains.

**Support Texas.**

Want to learn more?  
[gotexan.org](http://gotexan.org)

**#GOTEXAN**



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

# Virtual Assistance for Exporting

Since COVID has arrived, several State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grantees have endured canceled events. Even without the ability to travel, STEP grantees have a way to utilize their grant funds through virtual assistance. Through the U.S. Commercial Services, exporting opportunities are still available for small businesses that are either entering a new market or expanding their international sales. The U.S. Commercial Services offers several programs including:

## Market Intelligence

### **Customized Market Research:**

An in depth look at overseas markets including market trends and size, customary distribution and promotion practices, market entry requirements, regulations, product standards and registration, key competitors and potential agents, distributors, or strategic partners.

### **Initial Market Check:**

U.S. Commercial services can check if a product or service would bode well in a specific market. Additionally, U.S. Commercial Services will gather feedback from up to five industry participants and provides recommendations on whether to pursue the target market.

## Matchmaking Services

### **International Partner Search:**

The International Partner Search provides U.S. firms with a list of up to five agents, distributors and partners that have expressed an interest in your product or service.

### **International Partner Search Plus Virtual Introductions:**

The International Partner Search Plus Virtual Introductions provides U.S. firms with a list of up to five agents, distributors and partners that have expressed an interest in your product or service, and includes virtual introductions via teleconference to the identified contacts. 🇺🇸

Companies can also consider training programs that focus on key factors in starting or expanding a company's market internationally. Here are a few exporting programs available:

- ★ **THE RIDDLE OF THE EXPORTER™**
- ★ **University of Texas International Trade Center**
- ★ **Global Training Center**

The U.S. Commercial Services offers several other virtual programs that can be found here: [www.trade.gov/explore-ecommerce-resources](http://www.trade.gov/explore-ecommerce-resources)







# BLUEBERRIES

HARVEST OF THE MONTH  
MAY



**Blueberries** are plump, juicy and sweet. They grow together on bushes in small clusters or groups. Each one is round and usually no larger than a marble. They are pale greenish at first, then turn reddish purple, and then dark blue when ready to eat. The darker their color, the sweeter they taste. Blueberries go great in everything from muffins to desserts. You may even find them on your breakfast cereal or in pancakes. Blueberries can ripen any time between May and August.

## DID YOU KNOW?

A one-cup serving of blueberries has only 80 calories and almost no fat. One serving gives you 25 percent of the Vitamin C needed for the day.

## FUN FACT

Every year, almost 20,000 people come to the Annual Texas Blueberry Festival in Nacogdoches, Texas.



BLUEBERRY GROWING REGIONS

East Texas



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
**COMMISSIONER SID MILLER**

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



# Gypsy Moth in Texas

**G**ypsy moth traps are beginning to appear throughout the Lone Star State. Within the sticky traps are pheromone lures designed to mimic the female gypsy moths. The unsuspecting male moths hatch prior to their female companions and will be drawn to their demise, alerting regulators to their presence. This pest has a wide host range and in states where it has become established its control has involved aerial insecticide spray programs. Early detection of this pest has proven an effective way to control its spread. Gypsy moths have been detected by TDA during past surveys, as recently as 2015, and rapid control response

the United States by an artisan looking to use them to breed hardiness into his silk moths. In 1869 the gypsy moths escaped into the wild and have been defoliating trees ever since. The spread of this pest is still correlated to human movement and the likeliest way for it to move into a new area is by way of patio furniture, RVs, PODS and in the case of a closely related species, cargo ships. The coastal port towns of Texas are high priority spots for trapping as this closely related moth, the Asian gypsy moth, is likely to be introduced by way of cargo ships from overseas.

capable of flight. The Asian moths have a broader host range, and over 500 species of plants have been observed as being suitable hosts.

We place our traps in areas that are at the highest risk of introduction.



*Gypsy moth caterpillar. Citation: John H. Ghent, USDA Forest Service Bugwood.org*



*TDA Inspector hangs gypsy moth trap*

deployed, the moth has not been able to establish.

The gypsy moth was brought into

The Asian gypsy moth is unlike the European gypsy moth in that the females of the Asian species are not only able to fly but are strong fliers traveling up to 25 miles at a time. The European female moths do not fly and therefore are not able to spread their next generation much further than they can crawl. The fear amongst the regulatory community is that the

Asian and European gypsy moths may hybridize and create a robust species where female moths are

This type of survey is called a pathway approach. In the case of this pest, we survey in areas that are experiencing population booms where many people are likely to bring

U-Hauls, PODS, outdoor furnishings and the like that may have attached the smear of egg mass laid by these insects. Other areas of concern are RV parks, campgrounds, gas stations and military bases. In addition to being

# Gypsy Moth in Texas

more targeted these pathway approaches allow us to scout for pests with similar habits.

The spotted lanternfly is a striking insect that is currently wreaking havoc in the Northeastern United States. The insect is from China and is thought to have been introduced on imported stone, a smear of eggs adhering to the shipment. This pest has been very hard to control and yielded millions of dollars in Farm Bill funding to discover control strategies to include



*gypsy moth, named for their distinctive antenna. Citation: Susan Ellis, Bugwood.org*

the training of a fly sniffing canine. The lanternfly is of concern to Texas as it has been shown to feed upon grapes, fruit and pine trees. It congregates in large groups

feeding on phloem at such a high rate that it excretes waste while feeding.

Colleagues from other states report that walking through an infested area is akin to being in a light drizzle. Not only gross, this creates sooty mold and attracts bees, ants and wasps. Please keep an eye out for this pest which lays eggs similar to gypsy moth.

Current events highlight the spread and severity at which a pathogen can travel through the environment. Our surveys at TDA ensure that pests and pathogens of concern to Texas agriculture are detected and eliminated quickly.

If you think you have seen a gypsy moth or a spotted lantern fly you may call our Plant Quality Department at 512-463-7660. 🇺🇸



E. Swackhamer



PA Department of Agriculture



PA Department of Agriculture



PA Department of Agriculture



PA Department of Agriculture

- A. Egg masses
- B. Early nymph
- C. Late nymph
- D. Adult, wings closed
- E. Adult, wings open

# Fresh From the Field

**T**DA field representatives across the state promote various programs of the Trade & Business Development division.

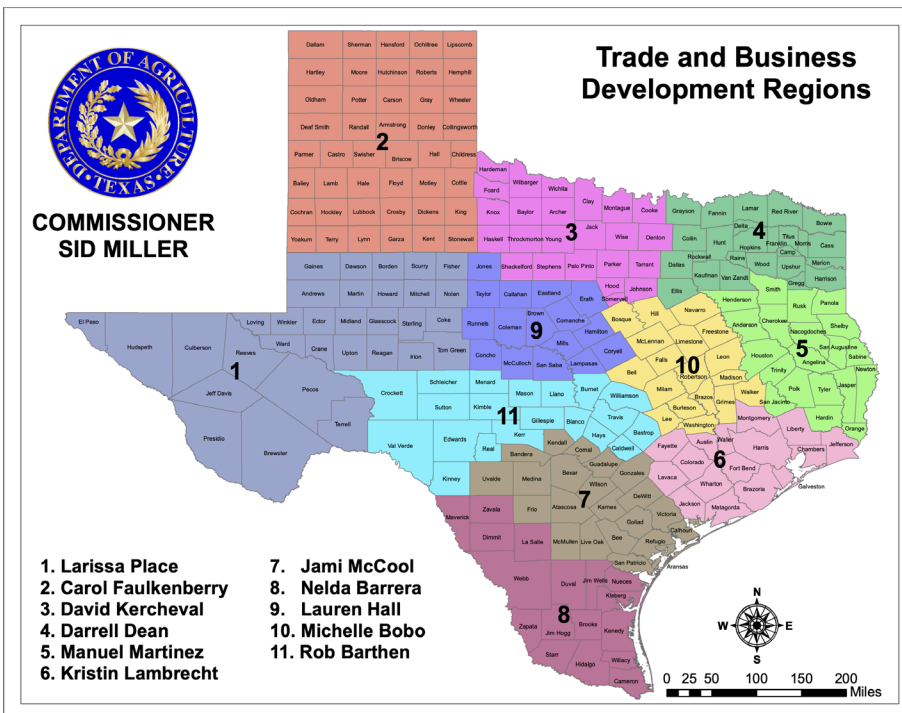
These programs include the GO TEXAN marketing program, Texas Agriculture Finance Authority (TAFA), Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) program and agency administered grants. On any given day field representatives are meeting with county judges, city officials, business owners, event planners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



**GO TEXAN.**

## NEW MEMBERS!

- ☆ [Waller Rice Drier Inc.](#)
- ☆ [Tongues Ablaze LLC](#)
- ☆ [Metro Pets LLC](#)
- ☆ [Longtab Brewing Company LLC](#)
- ☆ [Southern Star Brewing](#)
- ☆ [City of Texarkana](#)
- ☆ [Madge's Food Company](#)
- ☆ [One Shot Distillery and Brewery](#)
- ☆ [Garcia Bros Organics](#)
- ☆ [Reddy Vineyards](#)
- ☆ [High Seas Provisions Kitchen](#)
- ☆ [Lozar Apiaries LLC](#)
- ☆ [Magi Foods LLC](#)
- ☆ [Craft Cookie Co.](#)
- ☆ [Pickle Hydrate Company](#)
- ☆ [YT Ranch](#)
- ☆ [Hill Country Seedballs](#)
- ☆ [Sanababisquet Foods LLC](#)
- ☆ [Interamerican Foods Corp.](#)
- ☆ [Austin Steakhouse Inc.](#)
- ☆ [1910 Distribution Co. LLC](#)





## 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 protects consumers** by displaying consumer information stickers on scales and measuring devices throughout Texas to inform consumers how to contact TDA, and the requirements for businesses to post each device's registration certificate in the view of the public.

**TDA inspects** beehives for fireants, but bee production is regulated by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service. DSHS regulates the sale of honey.

**TDA operates** livestock export pens. The agency has no official role in animal health, as that's the responsibility of the Texas Animal Health Commission.



## 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

## Blueberry Pecan Fritters

**James Feldman | Bandera**

*Served warm and coated with powdered sugar, these sweet, nutty fritters promise to make a delicious addition to a weekend brunch. Try them with blackberries or raspberries, and add a pinch of cinnamon or cardamom.*

### Ingredients

1 1/2 cups flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup milk  
1 egg, beaten  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup blueberries  
1/4 cup chopped pecans  
Vegetable oil for frying  
1/2 cup powdered sugar

### Directions

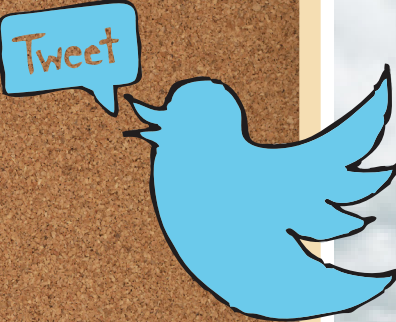
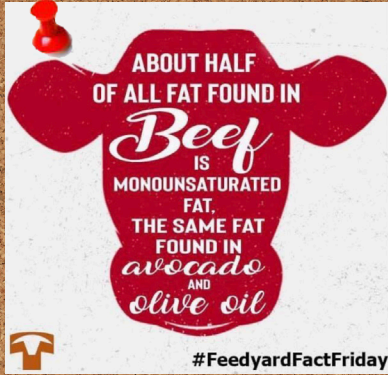
1. Whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt in a mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together milk, egg and vanilla. Fold the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until just combined. Do not overmix. Stir in the blueberries and pecans.
2. Heat oil in a deep fryer (or heat about 2 inches of oil in a medium cast-iron skillet).
3. Scoop out the batter with a tablespoon, and use another spoon to scrape it into the hot oil. Fry until golden brown, turning fritters once. Use a slotted spatula or strainer to transfer fritters to a plate lined with paper towels.
4. Roll the warm fritters in powdered sugar and serve.



[Texas Co-Op Power](#)

# Your Thoughts...

on monosaturated fats in beef...



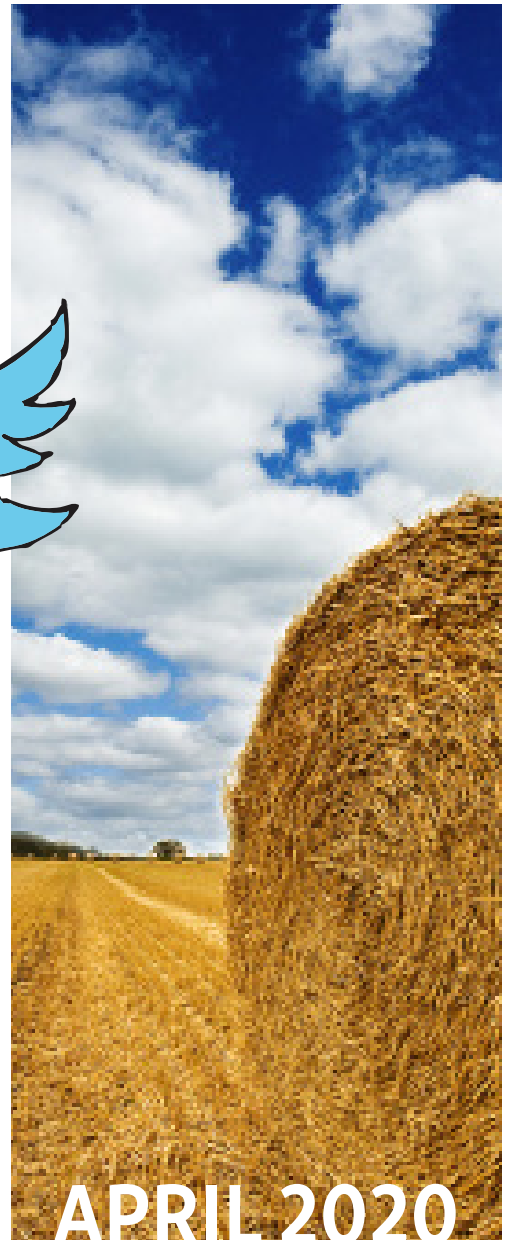
eslie Cline Hott I hope I don't get shamed for this question but I do oh well. How does a person go about buying a cow and having it processed? Can you buy them in a half and spilt with someone and what are the costs? I have only been in Texas a couple years and I'm just not sure how this process works. If someone could explain I would greatly appreciate it.

mprevedibile LilliuX Um when its eating corn, I'm not so sure..

Andrea J Ceur And tastes way better

Mark Wood Don't think olive oil contains any added hormones though.

Monica Davis Copeland EAT MORE BEEF!!!



APRIL 2020

## Tell Us...

what do you think of the Texas Agriculture Matters TV Show?



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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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