



National School Lunch Week How TDA's F&N Division is gearing up for NSLW and the resources available for schools to celebrate & participate.



TALL Graduate TDA staff member graduates from prestigious agriculture leadership program.



TDA Updates Harvest of the Month, Texas Vinters Cup Winners, GO TEXAN events, and more!



TEXAS AGRICULTURE Matters!

Your monthly connection to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Volume 2
Issue 10
October 2021



Howdy Neighbors!

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

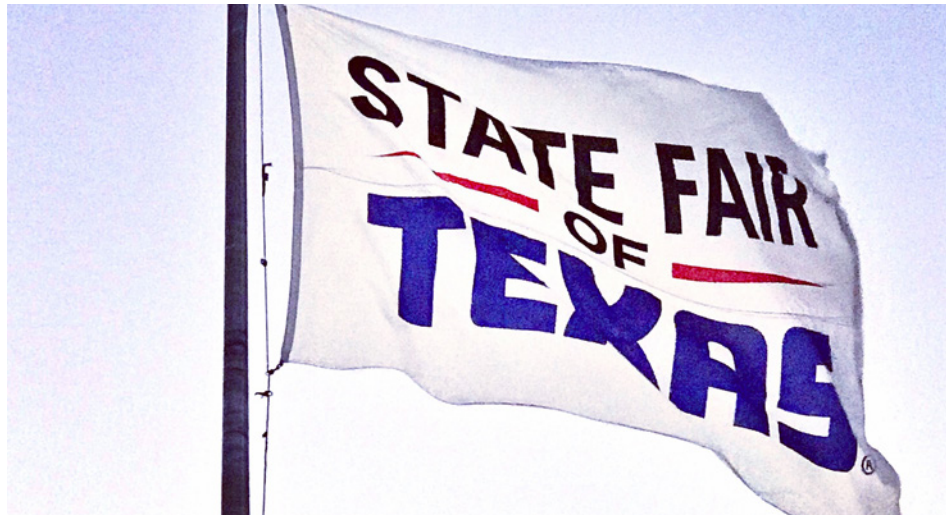
As we move into the fall season, Texans have a lot to be excited about. Cooler weather for starters, but the State Fair of Texas is a big one. The folks at GO TEXAN have geared up for this year's event at the GO TEXAN Pavilion, sponsored by Southwest Dairy. The General Store is chock-full of everything from boots to salsa and barbecue sauces to candles.

You'll also be able to sample Texas foods and wines, visit with Texas-based organizations, and more. Be sure to visit their social media pages to plan your next visit.

October is also Texas Wine Month so be sure to pour a glass of Texas wine and celebrate our great state's award-winning industry.

Remember friends, Texas Agriculture Matters!

Sid Miller
Texas Agriculture Commissioner



It's State Fair time and I hope to see y'all in Dallas!

Gear up for 24 days of 'all things Texan' at the 2021 State Fair of Texas. COVID might've closed the gates in 2020, but we're on target for a powerful comeback this year and it's expected to be better than ever. With a large assortment of family-friendly activities, the State Fair is expected to bring more than 2 million visitors to Fair Park in Dallas – that's a Texas-sized crowd!

Folks, it's no secret Texans make the best stuff on earth and our GO TEXAN partners are here to prove why the only label better than 'Made in America' is 'Made in Texas.' Each year, the Texas Department of Agriculture's GO TEXAN program hosts its largest outreach event of the year in the GO TEXAN Pavilion sponsored by Southwest Dairy Farmers. The 25,000 square foot building promotes all things Texas agriculture and houses the large Pioneer General Store stocked to the brim with GO TEXAN products

made right here in the Lone Star State. Fairgoers can sample a variety of products - from soaps and salsa to boots and BBQ sauces - there's nothing you won't find!

In 2019, GO TEXAN sales generated from the Pioneer General Store totaled over \$400,000. That's a record in our 40-year presence on the fairgrounds and what I like to call a home run! When you support Texas businesses, you're supporting the whole state. So, be sure to bring your appetite and

swing by the GO TEXAN Pavilion while you're at State Fair.

I always say the future of agriculture depends on our youth and we owe a round of applause to the dedicated folks at State Fair for giving young agriculture leaders opportunities to shine and excel. With over 46 different livestock competitions, kids across Texas will showcase their hard work and talent.

The State Fair of Texas currently awards \$6,000 in scholarships

to selected applicants who have competed in specific competitive youth livestock events held at the State Fair. Scholarships are given to applicants who are graduating from a Texas high school, with preference to those enrolling in an agricultural-related or agricultural-benefiting natural science curriculum at a Texas college or university. Since 2014, almost \$4.4 million has been awarded to youth livestock scholarship recipients - that's my kind of investment in Texas' future.

TEXAS AGRICULTURE *Matters!*



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Produced by the Office of Communications
Editor, Katlyn Gast

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ABOUT COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

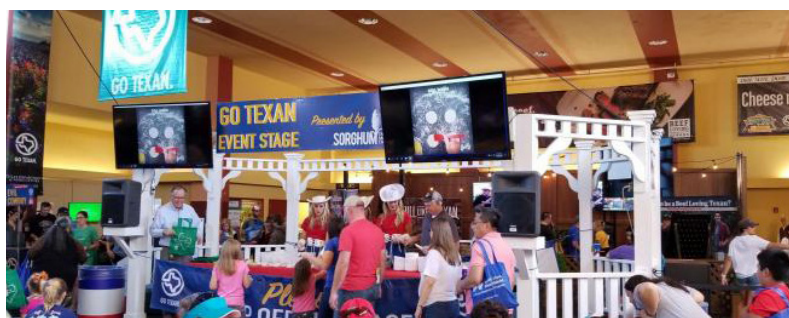
Sid Miller is an eighth generation farmer and rancher and the 12th Commissioner of Agriculture for the great State of Texas. Commissioner Miller has devoted his life to the agriculture industry, and supporting Texas producers and the communities they call home. He is a businessman, rancher, community leader, former ag teacher and former school board member. Commissioner Miller is a rodeo cowboy and holds 18 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.

Folks, the State Fair of Texas is definitely worth the trip to Big D. So please join me! I'll be in Dallas for State Fair and you should too. Make your plans to attend the State Fair anytime from September 24th – October 17th.

Also, be sure to check out the State Fair of Texas GO TEXAN Ezine where you'll find information about stage schedules, exhibitor bios, pop-up porches, and sampling all from Texan makers, producers, and organizations. 🇺🇸

For more information on the State Fair of Texas, please click [here](#).

To learn more about TDA's GO TEXAN Pavilion, please click [here](#).

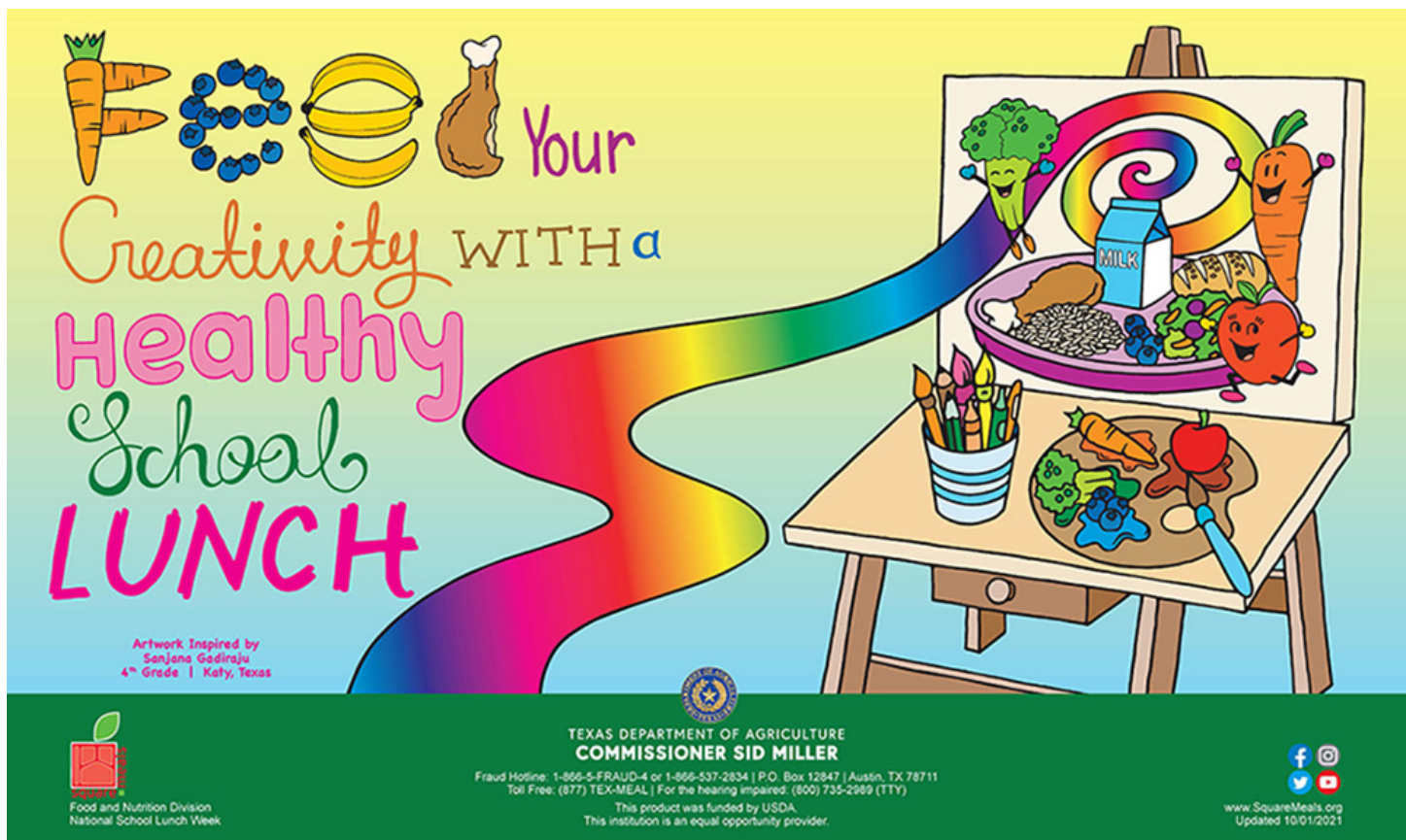


ABOUT TDA

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.



National School Lunch Week - *School Meals Fuel Student Success, Creativity*

This year's National School Lunch Week takes place October 11-15 and will highlight the impact school meals have on student creativity. The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) theme "Feed Your Creativity with a Healthy School Lunch" celebrates the role school nutrition plays in student success. TDA's theme also reminds families that children can use their creativity to solve math problems, write essays, and do just about anything else in school and out. TDA administers the National School Lunch Program in Texas and works with more than 8,000 schools to help them increase participation in nutrition programs. For National School Lunch Week celebrations, TDA is providing free cafeteria posters, participation charts for

classrooms, floor decals, static clings, staff buttons, and "Enjoy Your Meal" stickers, as well as digital resources available on SquareMeals.org. More than 700 orders were received and TDA delivered about 800,000 items to the school districts and charter organizations requesting them. All these materials showcase the creativity of Texas students with illustrations inspired by the winning entries of TDA's "You Art What You Eat" student art contest. The students' artwork illustrated "Feed Your Creativity with a Healthy School Lunch." TDA supports events like the art contest and National School Lunch Week to engage students in learning about good nutrition and healthy lifestyles.



TDA encourages everyone to recognize National School Lunch Week and celebrate the great work done by Texas school nutrition professionals. The Lone Star State remains a leader in school nutrition thanks to the thousands of professionals serving about 3 million lunches every school day. These meals help Texas children exercise their creativity in the classroom and thrive academically. 🇹🇽

To learn more, visit [SquareMeals.org](https://www.SquareMeals.org).

TDA Staff Member Graduates from *Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) Program*



The Texas Department of Agriculture's Region 6 Field Representative, Kristin Lambrecht, recently graduated from the Gov. Dolph Briscoe Jr. Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) program. Kristin serves as an Ambassador for TDA's GO TEXAN marketing, rural economic development, and Young Farmer Grant programs.

The TALL program is a "competitive leadership development program for Texas agriculture industry leaders," according to Texas A&M Agrilife Extension. Participants in the TALL program must be actively involved in agriculture, or a business closely related to agriculture and includes the food and fiber industries. The TALL program aims to "create a cadre of Texas leaders to help ensure effective understanding and encourage positive action on key issues, theories, policy, and economics that will advance the agriculture industry."

Twenty-four participants, including Kristin, recently graduated from the two-year program which involved classroom instruction, tours of agriculture-related businesses, industries, marketing, and financial sectors of agriculture. Class members represented a wide range of professional occupations within agriculture including state government, marketing, legal and financial. "Our graduating class represents nearly every segment of the agriculture industry," said Jim Mazurkiewicz, Ph.D., director of the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership program, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. "It prepares them as future leaders to provide expertise and help guide our state and nation to preserve the most abundant, affordable food supply anywhere across the globe."

Class members of the program spend 455 hours of intensive training, which is the equivalent of a Masters of Ag degree from an accredited university. They will meet over 2,000 people during their two-year experience and attend six in-state seminars that cover the current issues facing Texas and agriculture, and a one-week seminar that covers the Texas Legislature. In addition, members participate in an international seminar to study foreign governments, culture, religion, trade, markets, and the ag industry. The TALL program provides men and women the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of agriculture and related industries, and develop the skills necessary for leadership at local, state, and national levels.

"Being part of the TALL program has truly been an amazing experience. I have learned an incredible amount about the agriculture industry and the people who make it happen every day," says Kristin. "Expanding my knowledge about ag policy and seeing the ingenuity of folks planning for the future of the industry will greatly help me in my role as field representative at the Texas Department of Agriculture. During the program I met some amazing people working in agriculture. Whether it is my fellow TALL cohorts or people I have met during each of our sessions, I look forward to working with them in the future."



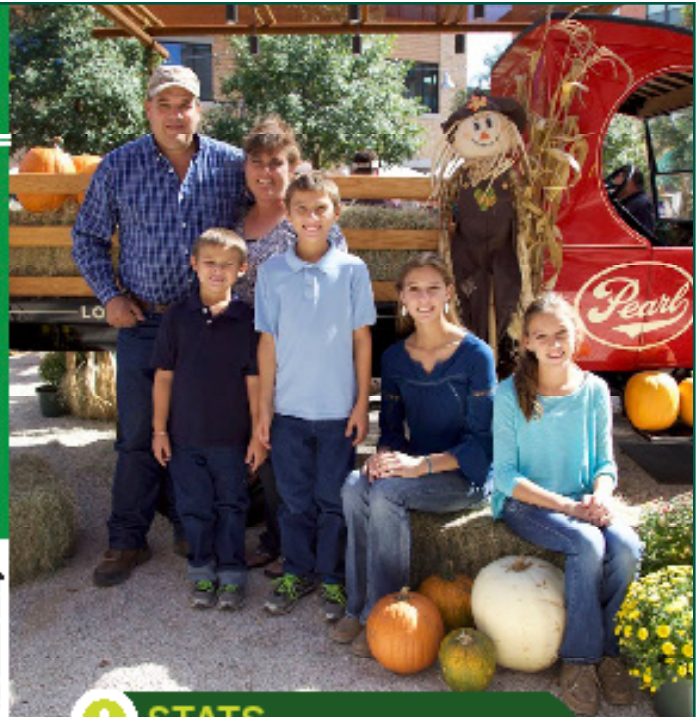
The program is administered by the AgriLife Extension. The Texas program started with the first class in 1988 and the program concept began at Michigan State University in 1966. The first state programs were sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation. Currently, there are 45 state programs and five international agricultural leadership programs. 🇺🇸

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

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COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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



The purpose of this 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.

The 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

Past YFG recipient Rebecca Hume.
Photo by Scott David Gordon, The Daily Dirt Farm Blog



YOUNG FARMER GRANT *Recipient*

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Jordan Pleasant
Albany, Texas


Jordan Pleasant is a 2019 and 2021 Young Farmer Grant Recipient who originally applied for the grant to start a small cattle business while in college. His hopes were to be able to support his family and after a few months, realized

agriculture was exactly the industry he needed to be in and work in the rest of his life. His ultimate goal is to create a sustainable cow/calf operation and one day pass it on to his children.

“The generous funds provided by the TDA provided me with the opportunity to pay for my cattle sooner than originally anticipated. Because of the Young Farmer Grant program, it has allowed me to purchase high-quality cattle and to expand my cow/calf operation twice as fast.”

His advice to other young farmers is that genetics are incredibly important and bringing outside genetics into your herd can give you better calves and improve your herd. “Buying cattle with good bloodlines can give you excellent calves that buyers will prefer. Also, keeping your best heifers will save you money in the long run.”

We asked why Texas agriculture mattered to Jordan. Here’s what he had to say, “Texas agriculture matters to me because

my family has been farming and ranching this land for the last three generations. It is a great honor to be able to follow in their footsteps and take care of this land for another generation.” 



The Young Farmer Grant accepts applications in the Spring and the Fall.

For more information on the grant and how to apply please visit our website, www.texasagriculture.gov

TEXAS WINE



DID YOU KNOW?



Texas is home to more than 400 wineries.



The wine industry contributes more than \$1.3 billion to our state's economy.



Lone star wineries attract more than 1.7 million visitors each year.



GO TEXAN.®



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



CULTURE ☆ COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



HARVEST OF THE MONTH
OCTOBER



DID YOU KNOW?

Apples are the most popular fruit in the United States. Gala apples rank No. 2 out of the Top 10 apples grown in the country. Red Delicious apples are ranked No. 1.

FUN FACT

Apples float when dropped into water because they consist of 25% air.

Gala apples come in all colors and sizes. They have stripes and are orange in color. Gala apples are sweet and can be cooked, baked in pies, or enjoyed raw as a fresh snack. They are often used to make apple sauce. Gala apples grow on trees in the Texas Hill Country and other parts of Texas. In the spring, their trees are covered in white flowers. Gala apples continue to grow throughout the summer and are ready to be picked in the autumn.



GALA APPLES
GROWING REGIONS

1. The High Plains 2. Central Texas



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Photo courtesy of USDA-APHIS

Asian Citrus Psyllid: A Texas Citrus Threat

The Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), *Diaphorina citri*, is a phloem-feeding hemipteran insect that feeds on citrus. While the insect causes little damage, it can carry *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLAs), the bacterium that causes the disease huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening. HLB is the most serious threat to U.S. citrus.

ACP probably originated in India, but it is common throughout citrus-growing regions of Asia. Host plants for ACP are Citrus species and citrus relatives including the curry tree and orange jasmine.

The best way to prevent the introduction of HLB is to prevent the introduction of ACP. Intensive chemical control of ACP is the primary management tool currently being used to reduce ACP populations, but this strategy is costly, and increasingly ineffective. Even intensive pesticide programs have little effect on the spread of HLB, and populations of ACP in Florida are becoming less susceptible to some

insecticides. The scientific community is searching aggressively for solutions, and with USDA support, has made advances toward that goal.

Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) is a small insect (2.7 mm long) with mottled brown wings. Adults have three distinct abdominal colors: blue/green, gray/brown or orange/yellow. Adults rest and feed on young citrus flush with their bodies held at a 45 degree angle from the plant surface. Females lay approximately 750 eggs over a period of two months under optimal conditions. Because ACP nymphs feed exclusively on young, new shoots, ACP populations fluctuate with the availability of new flush.

ACP cannot fly very far or sustain a long flight, and therefore spread through a series of short flights. Long distance spread of ACP occurs through human-assisted movement of this vector on people, farm equipment, and vehicles.

The Asian Citrus Psyllid causes serious damage to citrus plants and citrus plant relatives. Burned tips

and twisted leaves result from an infestation on new growth. Psyllids are also carriers of the bacterium that causes Huanglongbing (HLB) disease, also known as citrus greening disease, spreading the disease to healthy citrus plants. Citrus greening is one of the most serious citrus plant diseases in the world. Once a tree is infected, there is no cure. 🇺🇸

Information courtesy of USDA-APHIS. For more resources, facts and data about ACP, please visit their [website](#).



Photo courtesy of USDA-APHIS



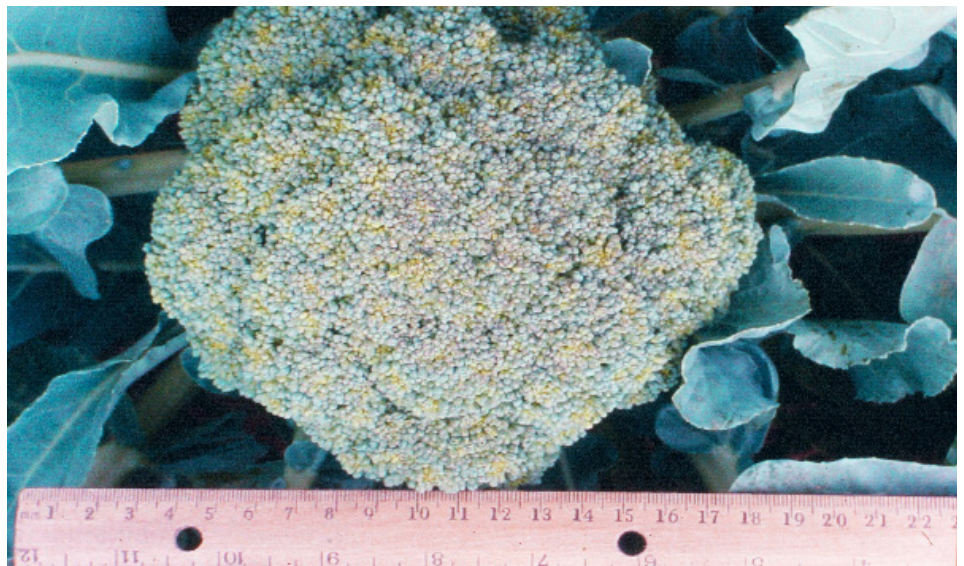
Fall Vegetable Planting: *Green Magic Broccoli*

Now is the time to get those cool weather vegetables growing! Lettuce and other leafy greens are always great options, and another good producing crop for home gardens would be broccoli, especially the Texas Superstar® variety Green Magic Broccoli. Green Magic is a hybrid variety and since it's a Texas Superstar® it has endured extensive field trials and proven to perform under Texas' tough growing conditions.

Green Magic is a variety that produces high-quality, attractive dome-shaped heads with tight green beads. Plants will produce heads that can weigh up to 12-14 ounces. Green Magic will mature in approximately 90 days from direct seeding or 60 days from transplanting. For Fall planting, be sure to plant at least 10-12 weeks before the first frost.

Another great benefit to Green

Magic broccoli is the foliage. Did you know that the leaves are edible? Broccoli leaves actually have more nutritional value than the heads. Try using the leaves instead of lettuce or cabbage as a wrap, or substitute broccoli leaves for kale in salads. Not only are the leaves of your Green Magic broccoli nutritious, but they are also attractive. The large showy leaves make an excellent addition in mixed-use gardens. 🇺🇸



Texas Superstar® variety Green Magic Broccoli.

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Candlelight Ranch

presented by Save the Date for Our Annual Fundraiser: *Light a Path*

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ROCKPORT-FULTON **SeaFair**

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In Memory of Momma!

FOR MORE INFO

For more information on GO TEXAN event grant winners and remaining events for 2021, please visit the Experience GO TEXAN Events [website](#).

BIG TOP
Entertainment™



November 2-3,
2021

Sheraton Austin Georgetown
Hotel & Conference Center

The GO TEXAN Program is a Texas Department of Agriculture initiative dedicated to identifying and supporting Texas-based businesses and connecting them with customers across the Lone Star State and around the world. Our inaugural outreach and educational event, the GO TEXAN Expo, will offer a two-day event including a tradeshow for buyers to meet and sample Texas-made products, networking opportunities and workshops for our GO TEXAN partners on topics geared for all types of food, health and beauty, home and textile product businesses. The GO TEXAN Expo will showcase businesses who grow, harvest, produce, and/or manufacture agriculture and non-agricultural products in the great state of Texas. TDA is proud to host a trade event that connects exhibitors directly with buyers from major grocery stores, restaurants, schools, specialty shops, distributors and more! 🇺🇸

Venue Information:

Sheraton Austin Georgetown Hotel & Conference Center
1101 Woodlawn Avenue, Georgetown, Town, 78628
Hotel Number: (737) 444-2700
Room Block Rate: \$139.00/night
Booking Link: [BOOK HERE](#)

VENDOR REGISTRATION

\$200 (includes 2 exhibitor badges, carpeted, draped exhibit space with one 6ft table, 2 chairs, and a wastebasket) [Click here to register.](#)

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION

[Click Here](#)

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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VIRTUAL EXHIBIT HALL

[Click Here](#)



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that matters

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BIG TEX. Corn Dogs. TEXAS FUN.

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For over 40 years, The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has partnered with the State Fair of Texas to promote the Best of Texas....

TDA's GO TEXAN Pavilion, Sponsored by Southwest Dairy Farmers, will be the place to be - there you can learn why Texas agriculture matters, see live stage events, sample great Lone Star products and shop till you drop at the Pioneer Brand General Store.

Now is the time to start making plans to visit Fair Park between Sept. 24 and Oct 17th this fall. Be sure to check out the GO TEXAN Instagram and Facebook pages to plan your visit.

September 24 - October 17, 2021



2021 Texas Vintners Cup Winners

Master Sommeliers across Texas joined to judge and determine the 12 best wines in the Lone Star State at the 2021 Texas Vintners Cup.

The Vintners Cup, a competition hosted by TDA's Uncork Texas Wines program partnered with Texas Monthly, selected the very best wines here in the great state of Texas. These 12 individual wines make up the ultimate case of Texas wine.

The winners of the Vintners Cup competition were featured in a special spread in Texas Monthly.

The winners of this years competition in alphabetical order.

For more information about the Vintner's Cup, [visit here](#).

For more information about Uncork Texas Wines, [visit here](#). 🇹🇽



Bending Branch Winery 2017 Tannat, Newsom Vineyards
Fall Creek Vineyards 2019 Chardonnay, Certenberg Vineyards
Kerrville Hills Winery 2019 Semillon
Lewis Wines 2020 Swim Spot
Lost Draw Cellars 2019 Sangiovese, Alto Loma Vineyards
McPherson Cellars 2020 Carignan
McPherson Cellars 2020 The Queen Viognier
Slate Theory 2020 Cinsault Rosé
Texas Heritage Vineyards 2018 Souzao
Triple N Ranch 2019 Malbec
Vinovium 2016 Sketch Tempranillo Blend
Wedding Oak 2019 Roussanne

Did You Know?

TDA Urban Schools Agricultural Grant Program provides funding to elementary and middle schools for agricultural demonstration projects and to improve students' understanding of agriculture.

TDA Texas Agricultural Finance Authority Board establishes TAFE program rules, reviews annual budgets, selects Young Farmer Grant recipients, sets agriculture loan guarantee limits, and provides general oversight of all TAFE operations. Members are appointed by the Commissioner.

TDA Price Verification Program Inspects price scanners for accuracy.



Texas Ag Stats:

- ★ Texas farmers operate on 126,000,000 acres of land.
- ★ 14,831,000,000 pounds of milk was produced in Texas in 2020.
- ★ 15,300 acres of potatoes were harvested in Texas in 2020.
- ★ About 8,150 pounds of rice were harvested per acre in 2020. Texas rice farmers planted on 179,000 acres.
- ★ 82,000 tons of fresh market grapefruit was produced in Texas in 2020.

Recipe of the Month

Jalapeño Popper Soup Southwest Dairy Farmers

Ingredients

4 slices uncooked bacon
4 ounces cream cheese
1 cup heavy cream
2 cups water or chicken broth
2 tablespoons salsa verde
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
3/4 cup shredded Sharp Cheddar cheese
3/4 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
4 large Texas jalapeño peppers

Directions

1. In a medium saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Scoop out bacon with slotted spoon and place on paper towel to remove any excess grease. Chop the bacon for garnish. Set aside.

2. In the same saucepan with the bacon grease, add the heavy cream, water (or broth), and cream cheese. Simmer gently, stirring often, until the cream cheese is melted and liquid is smooth. Whisk in garlic powder, salsa verde, Sharp Cheddar cheese and Monterey Jack cheese until completely incorporated. Set aside.

3. Meanwhile, wash the jalapeños. Broil or grill the jalapeños until softened and charred. Remove the skins and seeds from the jalapeños. Chop finely and add the jalapeños to the soup mixture. Cook for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat. Garnish with chopped bacon and serve.



Your thoughts on...

Texas sized chicken nuggets...



Tweet



Michael Gianotti
I got some in my freezer!

Mandi Williams
If they're anything like waffles, they'll actually taste better when shaped like Texas 😊

Affrey D Moore
Wow I never dreamed it would be possible to top the dinosaur shaped chicken nuggets but HEB done gone and did it!!!



Tell Us... *what Texas wine are you drinking this fall?*



@TexasDepartmentofAgriculture



@TexasDeptofAg



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