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Agriculture Organizations and how to contact them

United States Department of Agriculture

12125 E. Frederic, Pampa, Texas 79065 806-665-1751

Farm Service Agency

12125 Frederic Pampa, Texas, 79065 806-665-6561

Gray County Extension Service

12125 E. Frederic, Pampa, Texas 79065 806-669-8033 nick.simpson@ag.tamu.edu

Gray County Game Warden-Coby Sanders

806-683-6205

Red River Dairy

12618 US-60, Pampa, Texas 79065 806-665-5225

Gray County Sheriff's Office

218 N. Russell St., Pampa, Texas, 79065 806-669-8022

Gray County Commissioners Court

County Judge: Chris Porter

Commissioner, Precinct 1: Logan Hudson Commissioner, Precinct 2: Lake Arrington

Commissioner, Precinct 3: John Mark Baggerman

Commissioner, Precinct 4: Jeff Haley

Courthouse: 205 N. Russell, 806-669-8007

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District

201 W. 3rd Avenue, White Deer, Texas, 79097 806-883-2501

Lonestar Cotton Gin

7949 Highway 70, Pampa, Texas, 79065 806-665-0677

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More than 4-H



County Agents work hand-inhand with producers.

By John Lee pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Twitter: @jcl1987

Nick Simpson, Agriculture and Natural Resources County Extension Agent for Gray County, joined the County Extension Office a couple of years ago. As a County Extension Agent, his and others like him serve in the primary role of educating the public and producers about agriculture-related topics.

"We edcuate farmers, ranchers, consultants, industry personnel and crop consultants," Simpson said. "In a normal year, I'll have five to 10 in-person programs and conferences. On the farming side, we will talk about irrigation, crop physiology, herbicides and fertility, etc. One new thing we've been asked to do is Auxin trainings."

Simpson said a variety of cottons are considered an auxin, which requires a one-hour credit training. Auxin is a hormone in cotton which initiates fibers inside of the cotton.

Simpson and other County Agents also conduct results demonstrations, which is research on varieties of seeds for corn and cotton and how their traits yield under varying conditions.

"We take that data and put it in a report and then

Continued on next page

"We try to do some local research and spread that out to the producers so hopefully they can make the best decisions." Nick Simpson

send it to the growers i the area," Simpson said. "The growers then have an unbiased report on yield data. That's the most important part about the data we put out, it's unbiased."

This year, the Extension Service is also doing some moth-trapping for research on what harm they may present to the producers' crops.

"We'll be tracking moth flights for some harmful worms that may come into cotton and corn," Simpson said.

Simpson said the Texas Panhandle hasn't seen too much of an issue from the sugarcane aphids, but down south closer to Lubbock there have been pockets of them affecting crops.

Simpson said there is some communication between County Agents from county to county. But for the producers, sometimes they have a preference with a particular agent.

But County Agents do communicate when it comes to issues affecting their county that may spread to others.

"Usually those are insect issues or disease," Simpson said. "That information gets passed on. All agents in the district get that information."

At the conferences Simpson has hosted, he has seen a wide range in ages among the producers who attend.

"We have everything from 20 to 90-year-olds," Simpson said. "That's the good thing about the inperson versus the digital. We tried to do a Zoom meeting recently and canceled because we had no interest. The older men are probably in charge of whether or not the rest of the family (working in the business) goes to the meeting."

Simpson said Gray County is definitely a generational farming area, compared to other areas even within a couple hours that may be more corporate.

All-in-all, the County Agents role is for education and research.

"We try to do some local research and spread that out to the producers so hopefully they can make the best decisions," Simpson said.

When asked what a normal day looks like for him, Simpson said there are no two alike.

"If it's growing season, I try to go out and scout a few fields to look at and see if I notice changes," Simpson said. "I like to see if I can pick up trends or let the farmer know what we are noticing. But there are a lot of things we are also involved with and community development."

As for the issues facing

the County and industry, drought is always No. 1, but volatility of the market is also becoming a challenge.

"Markets have really rebounded from where they were last year," Simpson said. "But what happens is once the price goes up (for corn), everybody realizes that their seed is worth more and all of the inputs go up."

Inputs are some of the products (herbicide, fertilizer, water, etc.) that go into the process of farming.

Another issue facing the area is the insect resistance to some of the traits.

"There are different bugs that attack corn and 15-20 years ago they were able to make these hybrids (genetically-modified) to release a toxin that kills/sickens the bug," Simpson said. "Then they came out with a bunch of different proteins for a bunch of different worms. Which is why I'm trapping moths, they have genetic target (for the plant)."

Root-worm is another big bug that is a problem, although not in the Texas Panhandle at this time.

For more information on Gray County Extension Agency, visit gray.agril-ife.org or call 806-669-8033.



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The role of technology in agriculture

Modern industry is driven by technology. Advancements in technology have changed how business is conducted, with some industries undergoing dramatic changes since the dawn of the 21st century.

While agriculture might not be the first industry people think of when reflecting on the changing nature of industry, The National Institute of Food and Agriculture notes that modern farms are vastly different than those from a few decades ago.

Farmers have long relied on technology to make their operations as efficient, productive and profitable as possible. Precision agriculture, which refers to technological advances designed to propel agriculture into the modern, computerized and information-based world, is helping

the agricultural sector become more profitable and efficient while also improving safety and making agriculture more ecofriendly. In addition, the NIFA notes that the modern agricultural industry employs technology such as robots, temperature and moisture sensors, aerial images, and global positioning systems.

If it sounds complicated, that's because it is. For example, modern sensors can detect soil conditions, potentially producing hundreds of readings per second. These sensors help farmers know the best possible time to plant seeds so they can reach their full potential. That improves both the efficiency of modern farms as well as their output.

The NIFA also notes that agricultural technology has reduced waste. For in-

stance, thanks to agricultural technology, farmers no longer have to apply water, fertilizers and pesticides uniformly across entire fields. Technology has shown that farmers can simply target specific areas or even treat individual plants differently. That saves time and allows farmers to use only minimal quantities of water, fertilizer and pesticides. In addition, according to the NIFA, employing agricultural technology in this fashion leads to higher crop productivity and reduces runoff of chemicals into rivers and groundwater, thereby reducing the farm's impact on local ecosystems.

Modern farms are technological marvels where various technologies are being employed to produce crops more efficiently and safely than ever before.



JOHN DEERE





A resource for producers of the county, out in the county

By John Lee pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Twitter: @jcl1987

Farmers Equipment, located at 12078 N. Ragsdale Road south of Pampa off of State Highway 70, opened in 1981 and offers all of the accessories and attachments for tractor equipment, but do not sell tractors and combines themselves.

"We also do a lot of hydraulic hay-beds and handle all of the brands of hay-beds/flat-beds," owner Bill Ragsdale said. "We do all of the plows and drills up to 50-foot and plows up to 50 or 60 feet. We do 2,000-bushel grain carts. So it's large equipment, just not tractors or combines."

Ragsdale said many of the customers that come to him

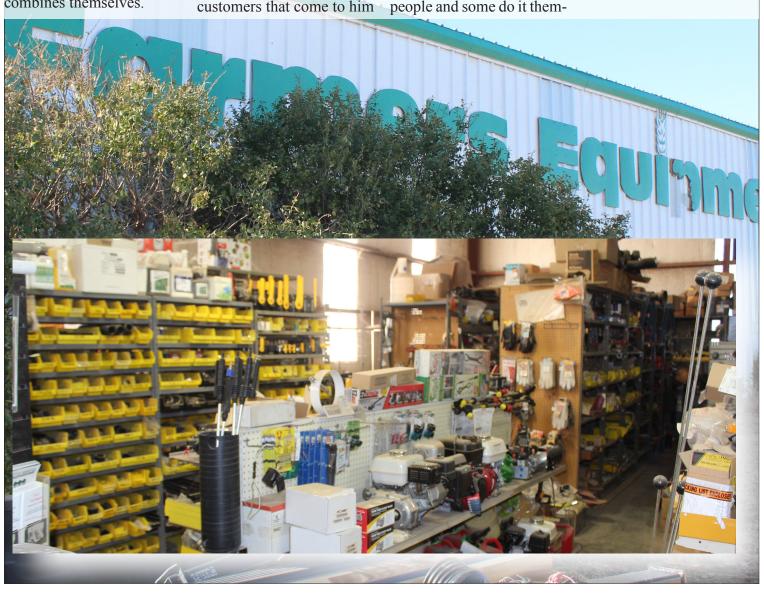
just need someone who understands what they need.

Farmer's Equipment takes care of that need with three experienced full-time employees and two part-time employees.

Ragsdale said despite the drought conditions, the repair side of his business has been pretty consistent.

"We do a lot of repairs for people and some do it themselves," Ragsdale said. "We do lawnmowers, too. We have mowers from 42-feet wide to 32/36 inches."

Farmers Equipment is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday. For more information, call 806-665-8046.





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Explore a career in agriculture



The agricultural industry provides a variety of opportunities to professionals interested in this often misunderstood field.

According to the employment resource AGCareers. com, more than 250 career profiles are available to people interested in a career in agriculture. And while jobs in agriculture may not be as prevalent as they were a few centuries ago, when 72 percent of the workforce was employed in farm occupations in the United States, agriculture remains a booming industry that greatly affects the nation's economy. Today, one in 12 American jobs is depends on agriculture, according to the career resource Payscale.

The following are some potential professions for those considering careers in agriculture.

- Agricultural business manager: This person oversees the business operations of a farm by providing organization and leadership during the production process. He or she contacts creditors, selects seeds, buys new equipment, and ensures the distribution of product.
- Agricultural lawyer: Attorneys who specialize in agriculture deal with water and environmental issues, represent agricultural labor in disputes, ensure proper marketing techniques are followed, handle real estate and land use issues, and much more.
- Animal control officer: These officers enforce local and regional laws that pertain to the treatment and care of animals. They patrol for distressed animals and ensure cruelty-free practices are adhered to.

- Grain buyer: Grain buyers build relationships with producers so they can purchase grain for their particular companies. They negotiate purchase agreements, source grain supplies and issue purchase orders.
- Poultry hatchery managers ager: Hatchery managers oversee all of the aspects involved in poultry hatching. These can include management of personnel, handling and sorting of eggs, maintenance of equipment, coordination of pick-ups and deliveries, and overseeing quality control.
- Soil scientist: Among the many tasks they might perform, scientists in the field of agriculture test soil samples for minerals and contaminants. By studying the soil, scientists can recommend which crops the land can support, how much livestock can feed in an area and the implications of agriculture on the area as it pertains to managing natural resources.

A career in agriculture presents many exciting opportunities in a number of different applications. It's a vast industry that utilizes professionals with an array of skillsets.



Texas Farm Bureau, for Photos provided by Texas Farm Bureau

r farmers and everyone



By John Lee pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Twitter: @jcl1987

It's not every day that an agency that sounds so niche like Texas Farm Bureau branches outside of it's agriculture-natured name.

But Texas Farm Bureau does just that, and has been in Pampa since 1960, when they were originally located downtown on Kingsmill Street.

They moved to their present location, 2419 N. Ho-

bart Street, in July 2019.

Agency manager for Gray County, Cade Taylor, said each County has their own County Board of Directors who advocates for the local producers and

agricultural producers.

"It's the largest voice for local agriculture as a whole," Taylor said. "Each county has their own voice. I manage Gray/Roberts and Carson/Armstrong. But the board is responsible for the members in the County."

But Texas Farm Bureau's services reach beyond

those working in agriculture.

"A lot of our customers are producers," Taylor said. "But a lot of our customers have insurance for other products. In order to get insurance through us, you have to be a member of Texas Farm Bureau. When they join (\$45/year), they become a part of Texas Farm Bureau. When you become a member, you are allowed to have whatever services we provide, one of them being insurance."

Along with their services, Texas Farm Bureau (established in 1933) offers education, legislative advocacy and information on the issues facing agricul-

ture and producers.

"The Board, in a normal year, spends time in the classrooms education kids on what agriculture is and how food/fiber products brought to you," Taylor said. "It's a unique set-up and we love it. We work well with the other agriculture teams whether it's the extensions or the FFA, Land Banks, etc. It's amazing because we really fit into the mainstream for the farmer/producers, but we cater so much to the general public. We're not a farm-exclusive company."

Taylor said it's most important for the Farm Bureau is to, of course, take care of it's insurance customers,

but to be a resource for the producers.

Continued on next page

"They want to back the rural, grassroots movement," Taylor said. "Make sure the farmers/ranchers have every tool and every resource they can considering things like this year's winter storm (in February). How can we talk to our congressman about how to make it better for our producers."

At the local level, Texas Farm Bureau spends a lot of time supporting the youth in agriculture.

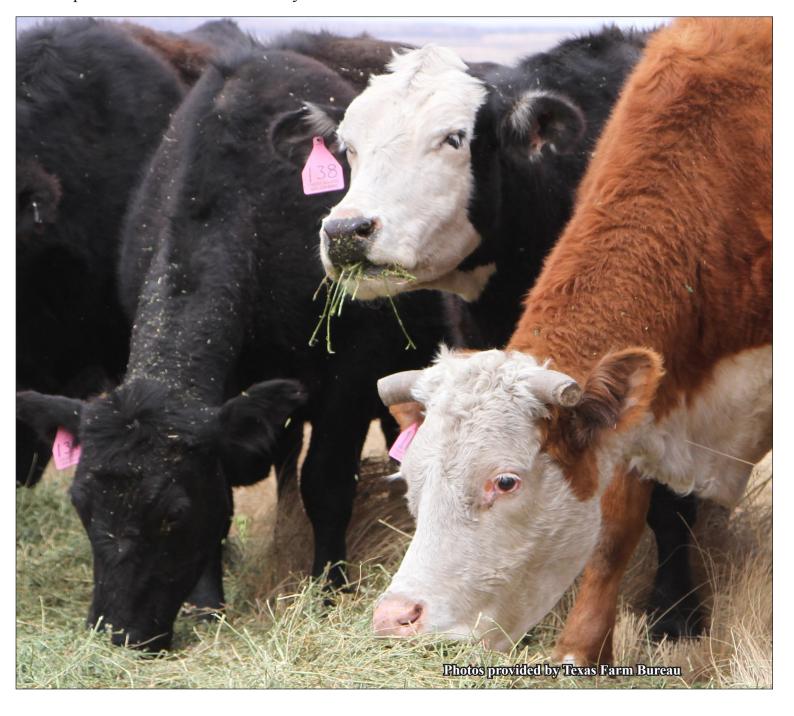
"We spend a lot of time at the

Gray and Roberts County Stock Shows," Taylor said. "Making sure those kids have the ability to do that project or to do those things year in, year out."

As small farming operations are becoming more scarce, it's so important for the Farm Bureau board to help youth understand the importance of agriculture.

"They work their tail off volunteering to get in the classrooms," Taylor said. "We haven't had an Ag-Day in Gray County in a couple of years because of the logistics and the school district is so big, but we do one in Carson County and they bring out animals, a miniature cotton gin and it's important for those kids to see agriculture in action."

For more information on Texas Farm Bureau, visit https://texas-farmbureau.org/. You can also call the local branch at 806-665-8451.



How farmers are using drones

The farmers of yesteryear might not be too familiar with their surroundings if they were to visit a modern farm. While the men and women who made their livings as farmers decades ago would no doubt still recognize certain farm features that have withstood the test of time, they might not understand the inner workings of the modern farm, particularly in regard to the role technology now plays within the agricultural sector.

Technology has changed agriculture in myriad ways. The methods farmers employ to produce food and improve the efficiency of their operations has changed as technology has evolved. One of the more noticeable changes that's hard to miss on modern farms is the use of agricultural drones.

Drones have been around for decades. Sometimes referred to as "unmanned aerial vehicles," or "UAVs," drones can be utilized in ways that can save farmers money and protect the planet.

· Monitor crops: According to senseFly, the commercial drone subsidiary of Parrot Group, drones can help farmers effectively monitor their crops. With a drone flying overhead, farmers can spot and quickly identify issues affecting their crops before those issues escalate into something larger.

· Soil analysis: Another potential benefit of agricultural drones highlights their role in analyzing soil. Agricultural drones utilize complex mapping functions to gather data about the soil, including areas where it might be stressed. That enables farmers to develop accurate soil samples that can be used to guide deci-



sions in regard to irrigation and fertilization.

· Reduce waste: SenseFly notes that data gathered by drones can help farmers determine the vigor of their crops at various stages of growth. Such information can prevent overfertilization and overwatering, thereby reducing waste and runoff, benefitting the planet as a result.

· Planning: Drones can be used to collect data on crop

growth and health at various times throughout the growing season. That can help farmers develop accurate predictions regarding harvest quality and crop yield, making it easier for them to plan ahead.

Agricultural drones are one of the many examples that illustrate how technology has changed and will continue to change the ways modern farmers conduct business.



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Youth in Agriculture

Miami FFA



2020-21 FFA Officers for Miami High School. From left, Tori Underwood (Treasurer), Cooper Hale (Reporter), Abby Skidmore (Secretary), Taylor Underwood (Student Advisor), Haiden Thompson (Vice President), Elizabeth Gorecki (President) and Tucker Long (AG Teacher).

2020-21 First Semester Contests

District LDE's Senior Creed Speaking Taylor Underwood - 15th Place Kyler Ortega - 18th Place

District LDE's Radio Broadcasting

Cheyenne Demeritt, Elizabeth Gorecki, & Brayden Haigood - 3rd Place

Hope Hartwig, Caleb Homfeld, & Tori Underwood - 4th Place

District LDE's Greenhand Skills

Collin Bryant, Garrett LaDeau, & Haiden Thompson - 4th Place

District LDE's Greenhand Creed Speaking

Haiden Thompson - 1st Place Cooper Hale - 7th Place

Area 1 LDE's Greenhand Creed Speaking

Haiden Thompson - 7th Place



Safety tips for parents of young farmers

People who live in cities, exurbs or suburbs may not come across farms very frequently. But millions of people, including children, still live on farms. In fact, in 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that more than one million children under the age of 20 lived, worked or had a regular presence on farms in the United States.

Protecting children from injury on farms, especially those who perform work on farms, is of paramount importance. The American Society of Safety Engineers offers the following safety tips to parents of children who will be spending time on farms.

· Know and obey the laws. Various state and federal laws are in place to protect young children from farm-related accidents and injuries. Age requirements dictate which jobs children can perform on a farm, and parents should adhere to those requirements. Asking children to do more than

they're physically capable of can lead to accident, injury or even death.

· Review equipment operation instructions.

Before assigning children a task on the farm, parents should review the equipment operation instructions. Doing so can help parents reacquaint themselves with tools and equipment they may not have used in awhile, and that can make it easier for them to teach kids how to use such equipment. In addition, reviewing equipment instructions may provide insight to parents unsure if their children are old enough to use certain tools.

· Inspect equipment.

Before children perform any tasks on the farm, parents should inspect the equipment their children are likely to use to make sure each tool is safe. Make sure tools are in proper working order, as broken or poorly working equipment increases the risk of accident or injury.

· Enroll children in

farm safety camps. The ASSE recommends that parents contact their local Cooperative Extension and Farm Bureau offices to enroll children in farm safety camps. Such camps can teach kids safe farming techniques and the proper ways to use age-appropriate tools.

· Set a positive example. Another way for parents to protect their children on the farm is to set a positive example. Parents can do so in various ways. Using equipment properly, removing tractor keys from ignitions when tractors are not in use and exercising caution when using hazardous materials shows kids the importance of caution when working on farms.

Hundreds of thousands of children perform jobs on farms across the country. Parents who want to teach their kids to farm should always do so with safety in mind.



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Youth in Agriculture

McLean FFA



Nathan Fransted, Jasmine Schwalk, Emma Jones, Noah Dickey, Cruz Rodriguez, Lyanna Rice and Rory Rojas. This was The Greenbelt District Winning 8th Grade Opening and Closing Ceremonies Team.

Area- Greenbelt LDE

Second Job interview- Mia Mc-Cracken

First opening and closing ceremonies- Noah dickey, Jasmin Schwalk, Cruz Rodriguez, Kyanna Rice, Emma Jones, Rory Rojas, Nathan Fransted

Braunvieh Beef Clinic Judging Contest

6th Place High point individual-Mia McCracken

5th place High point Jr Team-Abby Woodward, Noah Dickey, Rory Rojas

Top of Texas Swine show

Mia McCracken- Class winner both days and breed champion

Many other kids placed in their classes

Mclean Local Show Champion

Goat- Mallery Reynolds

Reserve Champion goat- Rory Rojas

Champion Junior showman-Abby Woodward

Champion Intermediate showman- Rory Rojas Champion

Senior showman-Mallery Revnolds

Reserve champion senior show- Scott Caldwell man- Ben Woodward

Champion Sheep- Mia Mc-

Cracken

Reserve Champion sheep-Malanee Allen

Junior Champion Showman-Abby Woodward

Intermediate showman- Levi en Sparling

Reserve Intermediate Showman- Elizabeth Schwalk

Senior Champion Showman-Mallery Reynolds

Reserve Champion Senior Showman- Mia McCracken

Swine

Berkshire Breed Champ- Brycen Meadows

Breed Rice Berkshire Reserve Champ- Abby Woodward

Duroc Breed Champ- Mia Mc-Cracken

Duroc Reserve Breed Champ-Kyanna Rice Hampshire

Hampshire Breed champ- Mia McCracken

Reserve Breed Hampshire Champ-Levi Sparling

Black Other Purebred Breed champ- Jasmine Schwalk

Black Reserve Champion-**Hunter Sparling**

Yorkshire- Breed champ- Miles Revnolds

Yorkshire Reserve Champion-

Cross

Breed Champion- Hunter Spar- Woodward

Reserve Breed- Scott Caldwell Grand Overall

Grand- Mia McCracken

Reserve Grand- Mia McCrack-

Showmanship

PeeWee showman- Colt Sparling

Junior showman- Abby Wood-

Reserve junior showman- Brycen Meadows

Intermediate Champ-Sparling

Reserve intermediate- Kyanna

Senior champ- Mia McCracken Reserve Senior- Levi Sparling

Grey County Show

Sheep & Goats

Breed Champ Southdown, Jr Showmanship, Second Place Goat, Third Place Goat- Abby Woodward

Second Place Medium Wool Lamb, Third Place Medium Wool, Intermediate Sheep Showman-Levi Sparling

Third Place Medium Wool-Elizabeth Schwalk

Third Place Goat- Rory Roias Reserve Champ Southdown, First Place Medium Wool- Ben

Third Place Medium Wool-Malanee Allen

Second Place Medium Wool-Mallery Reynolds

Breed Champ Fine Wool Cross-Mia McCracken

Swine

Grand Champion Overall, Reserve Champion Overall, Breed Champion Hampshire, Breed

Champion Duroc, Grand Senior Showman- Mia McCracken

First Place And Reserve Breed Berk, Second Place Wopb, Junior Showman- Abby Woodward

Second Place Berk, Breed Champ WOPB- Bryce Meadows

Third Place Berkshire- Kassidy Russell

First Place Duroc, Third Place Dopb- Jacque Altis

Second Place Dark OPB- Jasmine Schwalk

Second Place Dark OPB, First Place Cross-Hunter Sparling

First Place Duroc, Reserve Breed Hampshire, Intermediate Showman- Levi Sparling

Second Place Duroc- Trayton Mann

Reserve Breed Duroc- Kyanna

Second Place Yorkshire. Third Place Cross- Scott Caldwell

Third Place Yorkshire- Miles Reynolds









Pampa FFA

Information from Pampa High School

Highlights of FFA

Leadership Development Events in the Fall, Stock Shows in the Fall and Winter, Career Development Events (Judging Contests) in the Spring, Leadership Camp and State FFA Convention in the Summer.

How FFA helps students:

FFA is a dynamic youth organization that changes lives and prepares members for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

What you learn:

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems. Students learn about the science, business, technology of plant and animal production and about the environmental and natural resources systems.

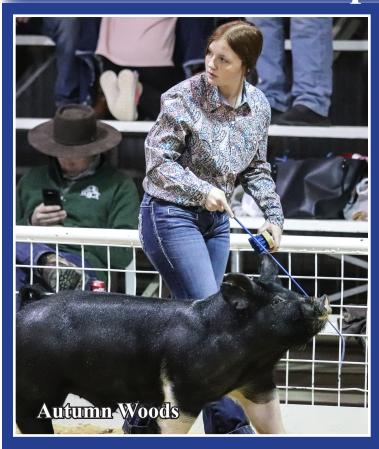
How to join:

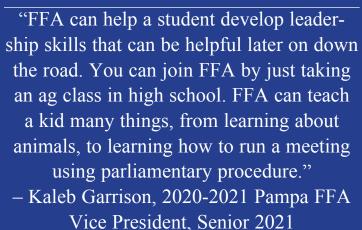
Kids at least 8 years old and in the 3rd grade can join Junior FFA to show livestock through their 8th grade year. Once they are in high school, they must be enrolled in an Agriculture Science class to join FFA. Anyone interested in joining just needs to contact the Ag teacher.





Pampa FFA



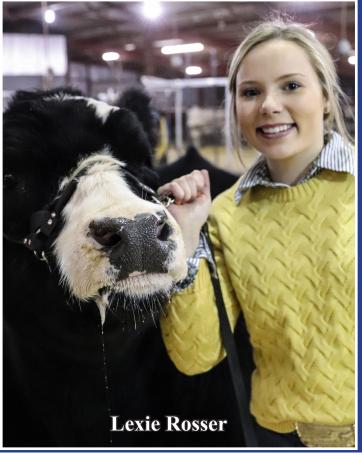


"I joined the FFA program my freshman year of high school. Throughout these four years, FFA has helped me learn valuable life lessons as well as amazing character traits I needed to know. FFA has helped me become more confident from speaking to the public as well as understanding from being in a lot of different situations."

— Taiten Sanders, 2020-2021 Pampa FFA President, Senior 2021

Photos courtesy of Charla Shults









By John Lee pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Twitter: @jcl1987

Pampa was well-represented on Dec. 3-12 when the National Finals Rodeo was held in Arlington. Steer Wrestler Matt Reeves and Saddle-Bronc Rider Wyatt Casper went into the annual event

Rider Wyatt Casper went into the annual event ranked No. 1 in the World.

Casper has wins at The American (Arlington),

World's Oldest (Prescott, Ariz.) and Kit Carson County Pro Rodeo (Burlington, Colo.).

"It's a really good feeling going in there on top, but it's not really going to change anything to how I would do it," Casper said. "I'm going to come in there focused on what I can get done"

Wyatt
Casper

Casper, who is from Pampa but lives
in Miami, competed in 60 rodeos in 2020 and said
the pandemic shutting rodeos down earlier last
year actually did him a favor.

"Last year we could only make it to 60 rodeos. I guess the pandemic kind of helped me in a way because back in March I broke my neck (stress fracture in T-1 and swelled up my T-2) in Houston," Casper said.

"The next day they canceled Houston because of COVID-19. During the months we were off I got to stay home and get my neck healthy. Nobody else ran any rodeos while I was hurt and I was able to compete in the rodeos when they started back up and was healthy."

Reeves 2020 highlights includes wins at The American (Arlington), Texas Circuit Finals (Waco), San Angelo Rodeo and Cave Creek (Ariz.) Rodeo Days.

Reeves, who was also injured when a horse fell on him earlier in 2020, said 2020 has been a rollercoaster year for him.

"The highs of this year have been some of the highest highs I've ever had," Reeves said. "But the lows have been some of the lowest lows. Which is odd. I'm usually consistent and ease along."

One of the lows for Reeves, who is also from Pampa but currently lives in Cross Plains, Texas, was the death of his horse, Rattle.

Continued on next page

RODEO

"She was the youngest horse at the NFR last year. It was kind of unexpected," Reeves said. "She had just gotten over being sick. She looked as good as she had ever looked in her life. There's not really a reason why it happened. Just bad luck."

In 2020 year Reeves will take his horse, Red, who is 12-years-old to the NFR.

"I rode him the first four rounds in 2019," Reeves said. "We were on him kind of in the winter, too. I hadn't had to run on him. I haven't had to ride him a lot, I've rode her (Rattle) everywhere I've been."

Reeves competed in a rodeo at Waco before going to NFR. Casper will compete at Waco and in Denton.

While 2020 has changed the landscape for many sports in regards to fans, Casper said it's the same ol' rodeo.

"They had all of that (the pandemic precautions) in place at the rodeos but there's not a lot of people going by the rules at those events," Casper said.

"Rodeos have pretty much stay the same. A lot of them still have big crowds and it's pretty awesome to see rodeos going on. Rodeos wouldn't be the same without fans."

Reeves echoed that sentiment, stating the crowds have been outstanding.

"Once we got started back it wasn't that big of a deal," Reeves said. "We had to wear masks for the first bit but the places that have had rodeos had them and moved on. Crowds have been outstanding in most places. There's been a lot of rodeos that set records for the attendance. That's been huge."

In 2020, the NFR was held in Arlington at Globe Life Field, as opposed to it's normal venue in Las Vegas.

"I think it's going to be good," the 42-year-old Reeves said. "Tickets have sold well, the arena's going to be much, much different. It's going to be a different rodeo but it's going to be a good rodeo. I'm looking forward to it. I'm older so it's fun just getting to go. But I'm excited for the chance."

For more information on either competitor visit prorodeo.com. For more information on NFR, visit https://www.nfrexperience.com/nfr2020/.

After the NFR, Reeves finished 2020 ranked fourth in the world, Reeves finished 1st in rounds five and nine, 4th in rounds seven and 10 and fifth in the third round of the National Finals Rodeo.

After the NFR, Casper finised 2020 ranked second in the world and won Rounds 5 and 9 and placed in seven rounds overall to finish second in the Wrangler NFR average with 774 points on nine head. Finished second in the world standings with \$320,984.





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Gary Sutherland has had his hand in the agriculture business for more than 50 years, not as a producer or rancher, however, but most recently as an associate broker for Clift Land Brokers and appraiser through TXPan Appraisal and Consulting.

"My business is primarily farm and ranch," Sutherland said. "Every now and then I'll do something different, but it is probably 95 percent farm & ranch appraisal or brokerage."

Sutherland came to Pampa, in October 1976 as a loan officer/office manager for the Canadian Production Credit Association, now Capital Farm Credit.

After spending the last 45 years in Pampa and Gray County, Sutherland has seen agriculture operations continue to grow.

"Equipment costs have multiplied I don't know how many times," Sutherland said. "Tractors, cotton strippers, pickers, etc. have gotten bigger and bigger. When I started in the Rio Grande Valley, a John Deere 4020 tractor was about \$8,000. My understanding today is that these big cotton strippers that make the round

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bales are \$600,000-\$700,000."

Sutherland has seen land prices grow exponentially, as well.

But that doesn't change the presence agriculture has in Pampa and Gray County, despite the groundwater issues the area faces.

"It has a significant presence in Gray County," Sutherland said. "We don't have the kind of irrigated land that some places have, there are a lot more pivot circles (in other regions) than what we have in this part of the world. Not every place in this area has enough water for irrigation."

Sutherland doesn't see agriculture's presence changing in the future without a change in some of the variables.

"Are we going to see more or less rainfall in the future?" Sutherland said. "It's obvious that has happened in other places at times. What will be the new technologies? But we're not here in an area that has the population and the growth that other areas have.

"We have an auction company (Clift Land Auctions) that has a big presence and has auctioned off several farms or ranches each year. We have a good company and some really great salespeople and associate brokers." -Gary Sutherland

communities that are 50 to 100 miles west of Interstate 35, all over the country, have been declining in population since 1960. Communities that are under 25,000 west of I-35 have been declining because of agricultural operations getting much larger and the old oil patch going down and not requiring near the amount of people to take care of it."

Sutherland has noticed that the Gray County area is still generational farming, as opposed to some of the areas that have seen a large amount of corporation farming.

"There are families that have been here for generations," Sutherland said. "The ones I think of right now are the ones whose families have been here since the 1920s and 1930s, or earlier."

Sutherland said Clift Land Brokers "Eighty-five to 90 percent of the is the largest land broker in the Texas Panhandle, having sold land in the 50,000-acre range in 30 counties and four states each of the last three years.

"We have an auction company (Clift Land Auctions) that has a big presence that and has auctioned off several farms or ranches each year," Sutherland said. "We have a good company and some really great salespeople and associate brokers."

About Clift Land Brokers: Clift Land Brokers and its affiliates specialize in farm/ranch and commercial real estate and offer you a complete package of services. Whether you are buying or selling real estate, our sales associates know how to handle your real estate transaction from start to finish. All of our associates have agriculture backgrounds and know how to market farms and ranches. We currently have two Accredited Land Consultants (ALC's) in our firm, including our Broker, George Clift. ALC's are recognized experts in land brokerage transactions, giving you the confidence you are dealing with a professional land broker. Hiring a land professional is the most important decision you will make in marketing your property.

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AgriLife Extension's Dr. Jourdan Bell on agriculture in the Texas Panhandle

By John Lee pampanewseditor@gmail.com

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Earlier in February 2021, Dr. Jourdan Bell of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension was going to hold a conference concern-



Dr. Jourdan Bell

ing cotton. The conference was canceled as registration didn't meet the anticipated number. but the information didn't lose

it's importance.

"We were going to focus on the 2020 cotton season and we have a variety trial that we usually conduct in Gray County annually," Dr. Bell said. "Some of it's irrigated and some of it's dry-land. I was going to discuss the results and see how weather impacted the varieties of the cotton."

The variety trials are held across the Texas Panhandle to see how they perform under various conditions and management styles.

"That provides the producers an opportunity to evaluate variety stability," Dr. Bell said. "There's always going to be that one variety that will be a home run and yield exceptionally well that one year, but then the producer tries it again and plants in next year under different conditions and it never performs the same."

That being said, AgriLife Extension tries to test more consistent varieties.

Dr. Bell said producers do have concerns on input costs.

"Seed costs are very expensive," Dr. Bell said. "We were going to discuss seeding rates and some considerations with regards to good seed stand establishment."

In the High Plains, Dr. Bell and the AgriLife Extension encourages farmers to check with their dealer with the cold germination tests.

"The germination on the bag is usually the warm germination test," Dr. Bell said. "The cold germination test will give them a better idea about germination under our conditions. In the Panhandle, normally we are looking at soil temperatures that are just under 60 degrees. That is the minimum temperature for cotton germination, unlike other cotton production regions where soils are usually warmer."

Dr. Bell also said to ask for a seed lot with a higher cool germination rating.

In the seven years that Dr. Bell has been with the Exten-

sion Agency, she has seen cotton acreage increase 500,000 acres across the Panhandle. She believes the producers have put cotton into their cropping system because of it's drought-resistant nature.

"It really provides flexibility under irrigation and allows producers to manage declining water supplies," Dr. Bell said. "They can possibly concentrate their water on a corn crop at a critical cropping stage and that cotton will be able to withstand the stress."

As water supply diminishes, Dr. Bell said producers are being more strategic in how they handle and manage the water supply.

"They are considering flooding irrigated acreage with a drought-tolerant crop," Dr. Bell said. "Cotton and corn, sorghum and corn (sorghum prices are favorable this year), sorghum is also drought-tolerant and can withstand periods of water stress much better than corn."

Producers are also considering critical growth-stage scheduling irrigation more.

"That means they are targeting their irrigation to a critical stage in crop development so that they can maximize their irrigation efficiency and yield," Dr. Bell said. "When we had greater saturation, it was not uncommon

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for producers to turn on their sprinklers at planting and not turn it off until they needed the field to dry for harvest. But we no longer have that ability."

Technology in agronomy isn't just limited to the physical technology such as drones and computers to help with farming, but within the seeds and plants themselves.

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"We have herbicide-resistant traits," Dr. Bell said. "Improved genetics and herbicide technology, insect traits and more have allowed for us to grow cotton in non-traditionally cotton producing regions and allowed for the expansion of cotton acres in the Panhandle."

Irrigation systems and equipment has also seen technology grow, as well.

"Producers are considering their irrigation systems to improve their irrigation efficiency," Dr. Bell said. "Many producers are considering variable rate technology to apply water in the field where it's needed. Also, our planters and harvest equipment helps with improving that system."

Dr. Bell has said the drought situation is the No. 1 challenge in the Texas Panhandle for producers and irrigation is another challenge.

"We can't keep up with the crop-water demand if we don't have the precipitation to supplement the irrigation," Dr. Bell said. "As we look at the costs of input, that becomes very challenging for producers. It's about the net return, but production costs continue to go up. Producers are having to evaluate decisions on how they handle input."

For more information on AgriLife Extension, visit https://amarillo.tamu.edu/.

-Top o' Texas AgricultureTop O' Texas Livestock Ambassadors



Front row, from left, Camron Northcutt, Ben Woodward, Mallery Reynolds, Sieera Sutherland, Lexi Rossier, Autumn Woods and Gracie Hapeman. Back Row, Luke Ortner, Matthew Ortner, Kaleb Garrison, Luke Dickey, Jacob Watson, Hudson Scribner and Hunter Sparling. In the stands, between the A and the S in Top O' Texas is Mia Mccracken.

How to support local agriculture this fall

The global pandemic that has upended daily life has exacted a toll on many industries. Businesses have been asked to close or temporarily scale back operations, while organizers of recreational gatherings have been tasked with reevaluating the practicality and safety of annual events.

Throughout the United States and Canada, autumn fairs, exhibitions and activities provide revenue for many people. But due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, many of these annual events have been postponed, adversely affecting local agricultural industries as a result. Governments in certain places have responded to the cancellations and offered assistance to local farmers and agricultural industries. For example, the Province of Ontario is providing nearly \$1 million to assist organizations that had to cancel fall events due to the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to supporting such efforts, the general public can pitch in to help offset some of the financial losses accrued by local farms

· Check for virtual events. Some fall fairs or livestock events have been moved to the digital realm. That means competitors who were entering livestock or even home crafts into competitions can still participate. Organizers may ask for videos or photos of entries and then a committee will vote on the winners. This is one way to keep entry fees and even cash prizes moving along.

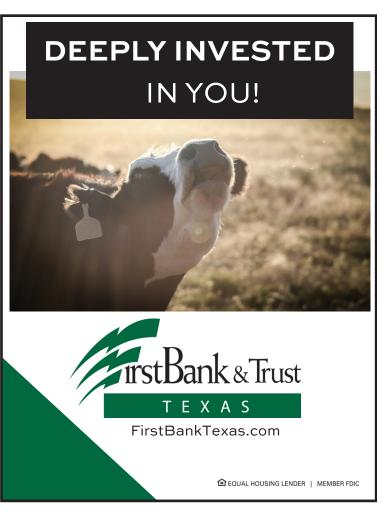
· Support local farms or orchards.

Fall is harvest season in many areas, making this a popular time of year to visit nearby farms and to purchase fruits and vegetables directly from the source. Many farms have implemented safety protocols that align with CO-VID-19 health recommendations to safely welcome visitors. Things may look a little differently at orchards and farms, but smaller crowds and wearing masks should not compromise the fun of picking your own foods.

Explore farm-to-table. Private individuals as well as restaurant owners can develop relationships with area agriculture producers to increase the availability of farm-to-table offerings. Restaurants can revamp menus to include a greater share of items sourced from nearby farms. Individuals also can rely on produce stands and farmers' markets to stock their pantries. Some farms may offer delivery and mailorder as well.

Offer financial services. Financial advisors can help farmers who are struggling with finances work through their options. Institutions may be able to extend the terms of loan repayments, refinance loans, restructure debt, or get credit extensions. Lower interest rates have created some new opportunities farmers may not be aware of. Financial advisors can help farmers navigate an uncertain financial time.

Farmers and agricultural organizations are facing greater challenges as fall fairs and other events are being canceled. The public can support







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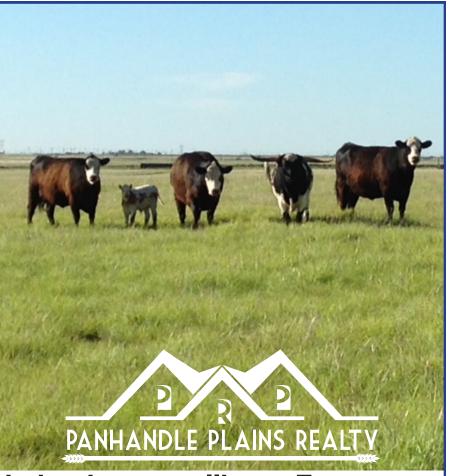




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