

Top o' Texas Agriculture



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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
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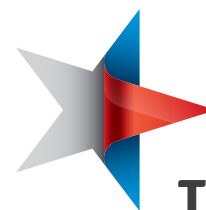
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Goode Angus: Producing the best Angus possible



By JOHN LEE

pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Twitter: @jcl1987

Jimmy and Glennette Goode own a number of businesses in Pampa and Gray County, but among their prominent properties is Goode Angus.

In 2001, Goode Angus sold their entire commercial cattle herd and began a registered cattle herd with the American Angus Association.

“We wanted to add value to our cattle,” Jimmy said. “You can do that a couple of ways. You can use better bulls, retain ownership and get paid for what

you’re raising. You can go registered and do like we do and raise seedstock that help other herds improve their herd value with better genetics. Our bulls go primarily to commercial herds all over the country. We also have sold bulls to Mexico, Argentina and Russia.”

“Goode Angus has an annual female production sale in Herford each fall with 2 Bar Angus. We have several potential customers attend, but we also have online bidding and usually sell across the US, with more head going out of state than in Texas.”

Goode Angus uses a number of techniques to ensure they produce the best cattle.

“We’re using artificial insemination (AI) and embryo transfer (ET),” Jimmy said. “We don’t use clean-up bulls. That allows us to use the best bulls in the country with our very best cows.”

Using AI and ET allows for the Goodes to breed for specific traits through expected progeny differences (EPDs) and characteristics in the pedigrees of their cattle and bulls.

“The most important trait for profitability is a live calf.

The Goodes' bull Fireball



There's an EPD for calving ease which tells you how good that bull should calve in heifers," Jimmy said. "We select for calving ease as well as how much growth we can put into them in a moderate, mature frame size."

"The next most profitable value is carcass traits like marbling, rib-eye size so you can get paid extra money for the choice, CAB (Certified Angus Beef) and/or prime carcass."

EPDs look at up to 27 specific traits, develop accuracies to project how the cows will produce.

"When I make mating decisions on my cows, I look at her EPDs and I look at my choice of bulls," Jimmy said. "I use four to five AI sires a year. We can design what we consider to be the most effective traits and that's what we try to do."

The Goodes go through a very thorough and

extensive process not only in breeding but as the calves develop to maturity.

"We weigh the calves at birth, weaning and yearling. We also ultrasound the calves at yearling to measure the size of the rib-eye and marbling," Jimmy said. "We also take blood on them and send DNA samples off on them which confirms parentage and it also enhances the EPDs and predictions on what they are expected to produce. Our goal is to give ourselves and our customers every bit of information we can about our animals."

The drought and side effects of the pandemic on the supply chain has presented a number of challenges for Goode Angus and the cattle industry.

GOODE cont. on page 6

Goode

Continued From Page 5

“We had one of our best grass growing seasons last year from January to August,” Jimmy said. “We hadn’t had a grass growing season like that since 2016... There was a bunch of hay out there to start the season with. Now hay is hard to find. One of my hay suppliers runs cows on wheat pasture. There is no wheat out there. So instead of running cows on wheat, he is having to feed the hay he would normally sell to me to his own cows.”

Input costs besides

hay including feed cost, gas and other costs have created an uphill climb for area producers.

“I know guys that travel more than 100 miles a day checking their cows all over the area,” Jimmy said. “It’s wherever you have land whether owned or leased. You’ve got to travel when you’re in the commercial business because it’s about volume.”

Jimmy said demand is high in the beef industry as a result of a log-jam in the slaughter houses.

“They (slaughter houses) couldn’t get staffing because every-

one was sick,” Jimmy said. “They were shutting down complete plants because of Covid and there were fires at two 3,600 head per day plants causing them to shut down. Mom and pop, smaller plants shut down because of the drought...The big packing plants were all that was left...You’ve got all of these cattle ready to leave the feed yard and nowhere to send them.

Despite the challenges the industry often poses, the Goodes said they have made friends across the country through their endeavors. “It’s a remarkable

business and a remarkable community,” Glennette said. “We truly have our Angus family all over the country that we call each other all of the time. During the drought of early 2012 we had ranchers from all over the country checking on us to if we needed hay.”

The Goodes also own the properties Dawkins Energies, Pampa Pack n Mail and their son Jeremy and daughter-in-law Liana own Good3 Concepts.

For more information on Goode Angus, call 806-665-9432.



From left, Jimmy, Glennette, Liana and Jeremy Goode.

Submitted photo

Advancements in livestock technology

Consumer demand drives changes in industry, and the agricultural sector is no exception. Consumer demands for improved animal welfare have led to changes in the livestock sector, and various technologies have been developed and are in development to help this particular segment of the agricultural industry thrive.

According to the Animal AgTech Innovation Summit, various startups have developed technologies that can make the livestock industry more sustainable and efficient.

Treatment

The Israeli firm Armenta has developed a non-antibiotic treatment for bovine mastitis that utilizes acoustic pulse technology. The treatment has a 70 percent cure rate.

Another firm working to treat livestock is the United States-based General Probiotics. Animal AgTech

reports that General Probiotics develops cellbots and antimicrobial probiotics that eliminate harmful pathogens in livestock. That can reduce dependency on antibiotics and make food production safer.

Welfare

Faromatics, a firm based in Spain, has combined robotics, artificial intelligence and big data to improve animal welfare and farm productivity. One Faromatics product utilizes a robot suspended from a ceiling to monitor certain variables, including equipment function and health and welfare, that affect broiler chickens.

The American firm Swinotech utilizes voice recognition and computer vision technology in its SmartGuard product to prevent piglet deaths from crushing and starvation. The product also makes it possible to track and facilitate obstetrical assistance.

Operations

Based in Uganda, Jaguza Tech has developed a livestock management system that utilizes sensors, data science and machine learning to improve the efficiency, productivity and sustainability of modern farm operations. Farmers can utilize Jaguza to perform a host of functions, including monitoring their animals' health and identifying their livestock.

The Netherlands-based H2Oalert is a water control management system that checks the quality and quantity of cattle drinking water in real time. The management system also checks for pollution and malfunctions in the water supply.

Livestock technology continues to advance, and firms across the globe are developing new products and platforms to help livestock farmers make their operations more efficient, sustainable and productive.



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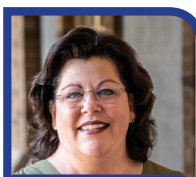
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Spotlight on Youth: Marlee Quarles



Photo by Amy Dillingham

Marlee Quarles, with her horses JoJo and Cash

BY JOHN LEE

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Seventeen-year-old Marlee Quarles has competed in Kansas Rodeo since she was in eighth grade.

Marlee always had a love for horses and competes in the breakaway event on her eight-year-old horse named Cash. She also uses George for pole-bending, Mercedes for barrel racing and JoJo for team-roping.

She competed in the short-go for poles and team-roping at Little Britches last July and the short-go for Shawnee International Finals

Youth Rodeo.

Marlee is working to train young horses in breakaway and barrel racing. Her "rodeo family" is huge and includes Wade Helton and Jake Booze who help her rope and tune on horses.

Outside of attending Manhattan Virtual Academy, Marlee is very dedicated to her sport and rides at least two horses every day.

Marlee plans to go to college for rodeo and aims to work in a career with her passion for horses.

High School Rodeos start on March 26 in Guthrie, National Little Britches Rodeo Association starts

on March 19 in Lakin, Kan. and Marlee's summer will be full of rodeos.

Marlee said, "I am thankful for God holding my hand and my parents hauling me all over and could not do anything without great horses. I could not be more excited for the upcoming season."

As for advice for young rodeo riders?

"Never give up on your dreams," Marlee said. "There are always bumps along the way but they make you stronger."

Marlee is the daughter of Chad and Amy Quarles.

Marlee's Resumé

2021 – Made High School Nationals in Poles- Made top 10

2021- Qualified and went to Junior American Poles and Breakaway

2021- Invited for the Junior NFR in Ft. Worth Breakaway

2021 – Little Britches Finals – Made short go in team roping and poles.

2021 – Made short go in Breakaway at World Championship Junior Rodeo.

2020 - Won Senior girl Breakaway roping Little Britches Finals.

2020 - Won Kansas State Pole Bending, Ended up 12th at Nationals in poles.

2020 – 2nd in Young Guns Heeler, 2nd in poles Been to High School Nationals the past 3 years.

Events: Barrels, Poles, Ribbon Roping, Team Roping, Breakaway, Trail

School: Senior at Manhattan Virtual Academy 3.7 GPA

Involved in these associations:

**High School Rodeo
Little Britches**

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Explaining precision agriculture

Few, if any, aspects of life in the 21st century have not been touched by technology. Advancements in technology have affected everything from the way students learn in the classroom to how senior citizens connect with their grandchildren. Technological advancements also have left their mark on industry, including the agricultural sector.

Modern agriculture bears some similarities to farming of past eras. Technology has affected the agricultural sector for centuries, and modern farmers know that's no different today. One of the more recent developments in the agricultural sector is the rise of precision agriculture, a farming management concept that can pay dividends for generations to come.

What is precision agriculture?

Precision agriculture (PA) is rooted in improving crop yields through the utilization of technology. PA is designed to help

the agricultural sector maximize resources and improve yields and the quality of crops. That's a critically important function as the world population continues to grow and the demand for food increases as a result.

What are some examples of PA technology?

Sensors are a prime example of PA technology that helps make farms more efficient and productive. Sensors serve various functions by helping farmers gather data on the availability of water in soil, the level of compaction in soil, leaf temperature, insect and disease infestation, and other areas.

Weather modeling is another component of PA that can help farms be more cost-effective and efficient. Whereas in years past many farms would need to manually assess certain variables to determine when to harvest, weather modeling technology has

enabled some farmers to generate remote readings, saving time and money.

How does PA help farmers?

Each situation is unique, but the principles of PA can help farmers access a wealth of information. It might have been possible to access such information in the past, but PA has sped up the process and made it more hands-off, allowing farmers to save both time and money. PA technology can help farmers maintain accurate records of their farms; inform their decisions; make it easier to detect and identify problems, sometimes before they escalate into larger issues; and avoid potentially costly mistakes.

Technology has left no industry untouched. The growth of precision agriculture is a testament to the influence that technology is having on a vital sector of the global economy.



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The basics of vertical farming

Farms often inspire awe thanks to their beauty and the serenity of the areas that surround them. Though no farms may inspire such feelings as strongly as those in the heart of the countryside, another type of farm can induce a sense of awe as well.

Vertical farms vary in size, but the largest ones mimic the appearance of skyscrapers if the skyscrapers were made from plants. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, increasing production of fresh greens and vegetables near urban populations will be a necessity in the decades to come. That's because estimates from the United Nations indicate the global population will exceed nine billion persons by 2050, by which time two-thirds of the world's people will live in urban settings. Vertical farming could be vital to meeting the demands for healthy foods by 2050, making it worth anyone's while to gain a basic understanding of this unique way to grow fresh fruits and vegetables.

What is vertical farming?

Vertical farming is a type of controlled environment agriculture (CEA). According to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, CEA combines engineering, plant science and computer-managed greenhouse control technologies to optimize plant growing systems. CEA systems enable stable control of the plant environment, making it possible for growers to control temperature, light and CO2 during the growing process.

Vertical farms grow foods in stacked layers, which gives large vertical farms their skyscraper-like appearance. Some vertical farms employ techniques similar to greenhouses, utilizing natural light when it's available and augmenting that with artificial lighting to ensure the plants grow regardless of the conditions outside.

What are some advantages to vertical farming?

Perhaps the biggest advantage to vertical farming is the potential for the practice to meet future food demands in a way that the USDA deems environmentally responsible and sustainable. Vertical farming op-

erations in urban areas can offer lower emissions because fresh fruits and vegetables will not need to be transported from rural areas to urban locales.

The USDA also notes that vertical farming operations reduce water runoff by a considerable margin, helping to conserve water. The Vertical Harvest farm in Jackson, Wyoming, produces 100,000 pounds of vegetables per year and uses a fraction of the water of traditional farms with similar outputs. Utilizing hydroponics and moving carousels, Vertical Harvest consumes 90 percent less water than traditional farms.

Access to nutrient-rich foods is another benefit to vertical farms. As urban populations grow and climate change affects crop yields, city dwellers may struggle to procure healthy, nutrient-rich foods like fruits and vegetables. Vertical farming operations that are not vulnerable to climate change can eliminate that concern, ensuring urban populations access to healthy, nutritious foods.

Vertical farms can be awe-inspiring and figure to play a vital role in the future of agriculture.

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The effects of the latest drought

By JOHN LEE

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It's no secret that the Texas Panhandle is a very dry region of the country, but having not received significant rainfall since late September/early October



Dr. Jourdan Bell

has posed a challenge for area producers and others in the agriculture business.

"The whole region is under an extreme drought right now," Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension center Dr. Jourdan Bell said. "As we look at our current conditions, especially in regards to wheat crop, the best wheat was wheat that was established early from late August to early October and wheat that was drilled after that has not germinated."

Looking forward to the summer crop, winter is a critical period to capture snowfall and spring rainfall contributing to soil water storage.

"Because we increasingly are dealing with a reduction in groundwater supplies, producers are having to become more dependent and careful with soil



(Texas A&M AgriLife photo by Laura McKenzie)

High fertilizer prices have Texas wheat producers questioning their potential to produce a profitable grain crop as high input costs, including fertilizer, continue and drought conditions expand across the state.

"Storage soil water can make or break a crop if we don't have timely, in-season precipitation," Dr. Bell said.

"Making matters worse, many producers don't have the irrigation to make up for deficits during the season, and how that contributes to soil storage water.

"Looking forward, many producers are looking forward to their summer cropping plans and crop selection," Dr. Bell said.

"If they do not have the well-capacity for corn, they are re-evaluating and considering sorghum or cotton because those are drought-tolerant options. Or producers are just reducing the irrigated corn acreage so they can concentrate a greater quantity of water reduced corn acreage."

Input costs has been a hot topic among producers as the drought and lack of irrigation has caused yield potential to decrease.

"A high commodity price can make up for that reduction in yield, but we also see when we have higher input prices such as fertilizer costs, seed prices, herbicide prices, etc.," Dr. Bell said. "We have commodity prices but because of the drought we have a production in yields next year. Because of high commodity prices, that's going to affect the return. We're probably not looking at greater net returns."

Dr. Bell said the long-term forecast is not calling for heavy rainfall into March and April, but that could always change. Breaking the drought would take consistent, substantial rainfall.

Light on area farmers/ranchers

“We would need several weeks with slow soaking rains,” Dr. Bell said. “Because precipitation efficiency is very important. When we have two to three inches at once, a large percentage is going to run off into the playas.

“That’s when it becomes important that producers are managing residues. They are managing their soils so they minimize surface ceiling and have less run-off.”

Dr. Bell added producers need to analyze their individual situations and the water they do have, and make a decision on whether it’s conceivable to use cover crops to capture what moisture may be on the way.

“One thing about agriculture I have learned, there is always an ‘it depends’ answer to everything,” Dr. Bell said. “What works for one farmer may not work for another farmer. But I do know, no matter what, when in a drought, precipitation and storage soil water is so important when we no longer have the well-capacity to meet

our crop-water demand.”

Dr. Bell said the long-term forecast is not calling for heavy rainfall into March and April, but that could always change.

Last season’s rainfall in the spring and summer led to the wildfire season the Texas Panhandle has experienced, as it grew more fuel for the fires.

“The rain is very beneficial for the range lands and encouraged a lot of growth, but it left a lot of biomass that became fuel for fires during really dry periods,” Dr. Bell said. “That’s always a caveat and I think that becomes a question of how to manage your grazing system that is brush and grass that becomes fuel (for wildfires).”

Dr. Bell added there has been a decrease in wheat acres for wheat grazing this year, which has been an economic hit for the region.

“This region is what we call a dual-purpose wheat region,” Dr. Bell said. “Meaning we grow wheat for our forage and we grow wheat for grain. If we have a fall/winter drought, we have poor wheat forage. Those pas-

tures can’t hold cattle at all or have a shorter grazing people.

“Which means producers have to pull their cattle off of the wheat pasture early and take them to a feed yard. Feed prices are very high right now, which increases the cost of grain in the feed yard for producers. This drought is not just impacting farmers, it’s impacting our cattle producers.”

Dr. Bell noted that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has a

number of resources, including county agents.

“They (County Agents) can work with producers to evaluate cropping systems and in-season management to help improve water-use efficiency,” Dr. Bell said.

For more information on Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or to read some of the informational pieces available, visit <https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/>.

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Spotlight on Youth: Miami FFA



Submitted photos

The 2021-22 FFA Officers for Miami FFA. Tori Underwood, Abby Skidmore, Lettie Locke, Garrett LaDeau, Caleb Homfeld, Elizabeth Gorecki and Haiden Thompson

Nov. 1 201 District FFA Contest

- Senior Creed Speaking: Haiden Thompson placed 1st at District to advance to Area. Garrett LaDeau placed sixth.
- Greenhand Creed Speaking: Landry Dukes placed first at District meet.
- Radio broadcasting: Cheyenne Demerritt, Elizabeth Gorecki and Caleb Homfield placed 2nd at District and advanced. Caden Cooke, Haley Hurst and Tori Underwood placed 3rd at District but didn't advance.

Nov. 20 Area FFA LDE Contest

- Senior Creed Speaking: Haiden Thompson placed 7th.
- Radio Broadcasting: Cheyenne Demerritt, Elizabeth Gorecki and Caleb Homfield placed 10th.
- Greenhand Skills: Landry Dukes, Fletcher Gill and Trevor Gill all placed 5th at Area.
- Greenhand Creed Speaking: Landry Dukes placed 10th at area.

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Spotlight on Youth: Miami FFA



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Left, Trevor Gill, Fletcher Gill and Landry Dukes. Right, Landry Dukes, Caleb Homfeld, Haiden Thompson, Cheyenne Demeritt and Elizabeth Gorecki



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The challenges climate change poses to agriculture

Climate change poses an array of challenges. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration notes that the impacts of climate change on various sectors of society are interrelated, a connection that mirrors the ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The human health crisis that arose during the pandemic affected all aspects of life, as illnesses limited worker productivity, thus affecting the global supply chain, including the availability of food.

Scientists warn that a similar scenario could play out as a result of climate change. The agricultural sector could face considerable challenges in the years to come. The Fourth National Climate Assessment is a government-mandated report that must be delivered to the United States Congress once every four years. Among the many aims of the report are to provide an analysis of the effects of global changes on the natural environment and agriculture. The report also must project major trends for the next 25 to 100 years. The most recent report, delivered in 2018, noted that changing precipitation patterns could intensify in the coming years, leading to more intense periods of heavy rain and longer dry periods.

Those shifting patterns and other changes could lead to an increase in conditions and weather events that pose unique challenges to the agricultural



sector.

- **Flooding:** The Union of Concerned Scientists notes that many agricultural regions of the United States have already experienced increased flooding. The effects of flooding on the agricultural sector are often devastating and include accelerated soil erosion, water pollution and damage to infrastructure that challenges farmers' ability to get food from their farms to stores and, ultimately, consumers' dinner tables.

- **Drought:** The National Integrated Drought Information System reports that the primary direct economic impact of drought in the agricultural sector is crop failure and pasture losses. The Government of Canada notes that areas of western Canada are already experiencing frequent and severe droughts, and scientists expect other areas of the country to be affected by drought more often in the years

to come. The same goes for the United States, which the UCS notes has already dealt with severe drought in California, the Great Plains and the midwest. Depleted water supplies are a byproduct of drought, and such depletion can take a toll on crops and livestock.

- **Economics:** The effects of climate change on crops and livestock may force farmers to change the nature of their farms. The UCS notes that farmers may be forced to choose crop varieties and animal breeds that are suited to the new conditions sparked by climate change. Going in a new direction could force farmers to make potentially costly investments in machinery and other changes as they make the transition.

Climate change will pose unique challenges to the agricultural sector that could force farmers to make some difficult decisions in the years ahead.

Prime Kuts brings wagyu beef to Pampa



By JOHN LEE

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Twitter: @jcl1987

Article was featured in a previous 2021 edition of The Pampa News.

Pampa has a new location to get wagyu beef at Prime Kuts, located at 726 N. Hobart, owned by Dennis and Brenda Kuempel.

The Kuempels were inspired to get into the wagyu market after eating some at a Japanese restaurant in Aspen, Colo.

“Wagyu is a Japanese cow with beef that is extremely marbled,” Brenda said. “It’s not tough at all. You’re going to get a lot more flavor and tender. It’s the ‘Cadillac’ of beef. It’s a very heart-healthy type of beef.”

The Kuempels now raise their own wagyu beef at the RAAH Ranch, hoping to create the best possible genetics in full-blooded wagyu. All Kuempel 100% Full-blood cattle are DNA Parent Verified and registered with American & Australian Wagyu Associations.

Brenda and Dennis bought 11 Fullblood Wagyu cows and heifers and began a breeding program with the goal of having 150-250 Full-blood Wagyu cows on the

ranch and by 2013 utilized modern breeding techniques, including artificial insemination and embryo transfer of premium genetics.

“[Dennis] does the genetics,” Brenda said. “He is really trying to come up with the best marbling and the best techniques. (He works on) what genetics in the wagyu family makes the best meat. He’s worked on that for years. He’s perfected it to the best marbling and best meat.”

Dennis is a fifth-generation cattle rancher on his family’s ranch.

Information on the Kuempels ranch can be found at www.kuempelwagyu.com.

About a year ago, the Kuempels decided it was time to sell their beef through a storefront.

“We had this building and we had the beef,” Brenda said. “I had been in the retail business for several years before, so I kind of knew the retail business. We decided to bring some different, unique things to Pampa.”

Beef isn’t the only product sold at Prime Kuts. They also sell unique items like gourmet cheeses, wines (wine slushies to come), home-made wagyu beef jerky and sauces.

“We have olive oils and all kinds of sauces,” Brenda said. “We try to buy things from small businesses that specialize in that one product. Our bloody Mary mix and barbecue sauce, that’s all that company does. Same with some of the sauces I have from Ruidoso, N.M. I have only Texas wines for now with grapes from around Lubbock.”

Brenda added Prime Kuts

is adding to their products every day and is still waiting for some items to be shipped in.

Prime Kuts is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information on Prime Kuts, visit their Facebook page “Prime Kuts Texas,” on Instagram “Prime Kuts Texas” or call 806-662-8462.

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S&D Spray generations of s

By JOHN LEE

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On any day in the spring, summer and even late fall, commuters from Pampa to Amarillo may see a yellow plane flying around Panhandle near U.S. Highway 60. That plane is owned by Jason and Carissa Davis, the third-generation owners of S&D Spraying.

“The business was started in 1967 and it has been Stamps Spraying Service all of the way up until 2012 whenever we became a part of it,” Davis said. “we are the third generation of this business.”

S&D offers a variety of services for area farmers and ranchers, with the primary service being aerial application. But S&D also offers ground application, chemical crop production products for sale as well milo, corn and cotton seed.

Aerial application offers the ad-



ing: Three serving the area





Submitted photo

From left, Jason and Carissa Davis.

vantage of more efficient weed and insect control.

“The biggest thing is speed,” Davis said.

“I can cover so much ground, so much faster and do just as good a job, if not better, than a

ground-sprayer.”

The airplane is an Air Tractor 502, a 500-gallon airplane. The license required to fly the plane is a commercial pilot’s license.

“We have to be trained in a tail-wheel airplane,” Davis said. “There’s a lot of qualifications to be an aerial applicator. The biggest part is getting covered by insurance with time and experience in different airplanes.”

Included in the license is more than 260 hours of flight time for a commercial license to be



able to get into a spray plane, and more than 500 hours of total time to be insured.

The aerial service is offered in about a 70-mile radius of his location in Panhandle at 1366 U.S. 60. That radius is reduced some for their ground-spraying service.

“The ground rig is a bit closer, but we’ve still gone to the other side of Pampa to do work,” Davis said. “We still service probably 30 to 40 miles with the ground rig.

S&D’s primary season

runs from March until November so it has been largely unaffected by the drought, so far. But Davis has certainly been cognizant of it.

“We really haven’t got started this year,” Davis said. “It hasn’t really affected us, yet. But it is very concerning that we are so dry this winter.”

S&D treats weeds, bugs and wheat early on, then transitions into the summer and fall crops.

“We treat wheat, milo, corn, soy beans, cotton, etc.,” Davis said. “Whatever is growing in this

part of the world.”

S&D has four full-time employees and in the summer hires a couple of seasonal employees. Davis thanks the surrounding communities in the area for their support.

“We’ve been in this location for a long time,” Davis said. “Carissa and I are the third generation owners and we plan on being here longer as our son Grayson finishes college, then returns to follow in our footsteps.



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How to incorporate tech

The agricultural industry long has been a vital part of society, providing foods for billions of people across the globe. Farming can be a challenging profession, and farmers routinely find creative solutions to overcome obstacles to effective production. Thanks to technology, finding solutions has become that much easier.

Yet not every farmer who is set in his or her ways is ready to welcome changes that incorporate technology right away. In fact, reluctance to turn over operations in some part to artificial intelligence or smart technologies could be due in part to farming being such a nuanced skill and the role intuition plays in the growth of crops. The following are some ways for sea-

soned and novice farmers to seamlessly incorporate technology into their operations.

Start with peripheral tech

Farmers can begin implementing technology that does not directly relate to farming operations. Examples include switching to efficient and intuitive accounting and payroll systems to save time. If a farm also includes a retail enterprise, such as a farmers market, upgrading point-of-sale technology, like credit card readers or e-commerce websites for new revenue potential, can be good a good starting point.

Assess operation weaknesses

Figure out where the business is lacking and could use some help.

Perhaps you're having difficulty maintaining adequate irrigation or plant nutrition is compromised due to soil deficits? Precision automation farming advancements that employ remote sensors can assess conditions and fine tune adjustments to alleviate these issues.

Get training

Novel technologies can increase crop yield and make for more efficient use of limited resources. However, people who may never have employed drones, IoT devices or soil sensors can expect a learning curve. Visiting a nearby farm operation to learn how they have implemented technology and gaining hands-on experience can be invaluable. In addition, request that



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into a farming business

a tech vendor provide thorough instruction on products to make it easier to seamlessly integrate new technology into an agriculture business.

Tap into workforce talent

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations says agriculture and food production accounts for 28 percent of the entire global workforce. There are more than 570 million small-holder farms worldwide. Technology can be utilized by agricultural businesses to zero in on intelligent and qualified employees who can take operations to the next level. Websites like Glassdoor, Indeed and ZipRecruiter remain helpful tools when looking for qualified



job candidates. The internet is an essential employment resource, and farms can utilize it to acquire new hires.

Agricultural businesses can explore various ways to gradually and seamlessly make technology part of their operations.

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How farmers and growers can adapt to meet emerging demands

The world is ever-changing, and those changes include consumer preferences. Identifying what consumers want is a challenge for any business, and farmers and growers are no exception. Food trends come and go, but identifying key segments of the population and catering to their needs and interests can help farmers and growers meet consumer demand and increase profits.

Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers may no longer be the largest living adult generation, a distinction that the U.S. Census Bureau reports now belongs to Millennials. However, there are still more than 71 million Baby Boomers in the United States, and Statistics Canada reports that this influential demographic, which includes individuals born between 1946 and 1965, makes up nearly 30 percent of the Canadian population.

Such figures underscore how lucrative it can be for farmers and growers to cater to the Baby Boomer demographic. Many Baby Boomers have reached an age where their doctors have recommended certain foods to reduce their risk for problems associated with aging, such as heart disease. The Mayo Clinic reports

that whole grains are great sources of fiber that can help regulate blood pressure and heart health. Many seniors are urged to eat more fruits and vegetables as they grow older, ideally increasing their intake of these nutrient-rich foods while simultaneously cutting back on high-calorie foods like meat and cheese.

Generation X

Generation X is the generation between Baby Boomers and Millennials. Gen Xers include individuals born between 1966 and 1980, though some metrics suggest Generation X extends into the early 1980s.

Older Gen Xers are nearing retirement age, and that means they likely have more disposable income than Baby Boomers, many of whom are now retired, and Millennials, who are just beginning their careers or still raising families. A report on consumer trends from the consultant firm Technomic Inc. found that Gen Xers are willing to pay extra for fresh foods and prefer foods that benefit their overall health by promoting better sleep and providing more energy. Such foods may include blueberries, kale, quinoa, and watermelon.

Millennials

The size of this generation can make it hard to define its needs and wants, as it includes a diverse array of people born between 1981 and 1996. However, Millennials can be an especially valuable market for small farmers and growers, as research indicates individuals in this demographic prefer small and mid-sized manufacturers over larger producers. Research from Wells Fargo found that, as millennials matured and gained more buying power between the years

of 2012 and 2017, small and mid-sized manufacturers accounted for 46 percent of overall industry grains.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that millennial households buy more unprocessed foods, including fruits and vegetables, than the generations that came before them.

Recognition of consumer demands is important, especially for small farmers and growers trying to increase profits and serve the needs of an evolving consumer base.



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Capital Farm Credit: Here for those serving the heartland

By JOHN LEE

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The Farm Credit System was established in 1916 to get funding and capital to the agriculture markets.

“As many people know, during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, not a lot of people were in line to give money to agriculture,” Vice President And Relationships Manager Ty Koonce said. “That’s why we were established and that’s still our focus. If there was ever any big ‘black swan’ event like a Dust Bowl, the economic downturn of the 1970s/1980s or something like that. We’re still here to help farmers and ranchers find the capital they need to keep operating.”

Koonce added those assets could be cattle, crops, equipment, operating lines of credit, land, etc.

“We can lend on anybody purchasing an agriculture asset,” Koonce said. “If someone is purchasing a quarter-section of land, even if they’re not farmers right now, we can still loan on that. Or, if you’re in agriculture and need a tractor or more cows, we can lend on that.”



Photo by John Lee

Ty Koonce of Capital Farm Credit.

The Pampa office, located at 424 N. Hobart Street, and Wheeler office, located at 501 S. Alan L Bean Boulevard, are combined with two loan officers and two loan administrators, but Capital Farm Credit has more than 70 branches across the State.

Koonce said he hasn’t seen the full effect of the most recent drought as there are still variables yet to play out.

“A lot of that is still up in the

air,” Koonce said. “There are insurance programs that are put into place to mitigate risk. We’ll have to see how that turns out whether it’s rainfall protection on pasture lands for cattle, or ranchers having to buy more feed or if that’s farmers and their wheat crop. Wheat is way behind this year.”

Koonce added the combination of the drought and the supply chain shortage have created the disaster scenario for many

farmers.

“Some guys have wheat that’s irrigated but their irrigation pivots have parts that are on back-order,” Koonce said. “In another year if you needed to wait a couple weeks on parts, that’s fine because we have received a little bit of moisture. But with this drought coupled with manufacturing process being behind, it puts us under the gun because farmers are having to make a decision.”

Add in the risk of wildfires and the question of livestock safety and food supply, it’s the wrong kind of perfect storm.

“It’s kind of a perfect storm this year with the drought and

the manufacturing production that hurts,” Koonce said. “There’s a lot of decisions that the producers today are facing that their parents or grandparents never saw.”

Capital Farm Credit’s slogan is “together we’re better” and the entity operates like a co-op.

“When you become a member of our co-op, you get stock and you become a voting member,” Koonce said. “Some decisions we make come back to the voting members. But we know that our youth is the next level.”

As a result, Capital Farm Credit participates in sponsorships for 4-H, FFA, Texas

A&M AgriLife, rodeos and scholarships for students in Pampa, Lefors, McLean, Fort Elliott and Shamrock.

“That (buying stock) also means at the end of the year we take our profits and return them back to the stock-holders,” Koonce said. “It looks a lot like a stock dividend but we call it a patronage. Your bottom dollar has improved because you get money back.

Capital Farm Credit is open from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. on Friday. For more information call 806-665-3786.

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From left, Katie Davis, Jennah McDonough, Faith Hall and Emma McDonough.



Kaylee Wilhite and Autumn Woods

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