Look Back on 2011 and Looking Forward to 2012

I hope that 2012 is a blessed year for you and your family. At the beginning of last year we were all hoping for decreases in fuel and fertilizer prices. Little did we know that those issues were the least of our worries with La Nina delivering us the worst drought in over fifty years!

We just completed our annual Agricultural Increment Report for Rains County. Our Agricultural income dropped in 2011 by $4,411,020. This drop is primarily due to the extreme drought conditions. Total agricultural income was $30,813,800 for the year. The top segment is still the Beef Cattle Industry, bringing in over $13,207,000 in gross sales. This number will drop considerably next year due to the reduction in the cow herds. Dairy Production is second in receipts with estimated gross sales of $7,086,350. The Nursery Industry adds approximately $6,000,000 to the economy. Rounding out the top four segments is hay production - at $1,800,000. Forages are normally within the top two industries in Rains County; however, the drought took its toll on production.

The old saying goes “You have to remember where you’ve been to see where you are going.” With the increase in all facets of productions costs - it is more imperative than ever that land owners educate themselves to stay afloat. Educational events conducted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service are a great place to start.

Upcoming Educational Events

**February 2** - East Texas Turfgrass Conference - $30.00 (pay at the door)
8 am - 3 pm - Overton Research and Extension Center- Overton, Texas
5 CEU’s for TDA Pesticide - (4 General, 0.5 IPM, 0.5 Laws and Reg)
4 CEU’s for Structural Pest - (1 Lawn and Ornamental, 1 Weed, 1.0 Gen Law, 1.0 General)

**February 22** - East Texas Forage Conference - $15.00
9:30 am - 3:30 pm - Rains County Extension Office- Emory, Texas
(410 Tawakoni Drive, Emory, Texas 75440)
3 CEU’s for TDA Pesticide
RSVP By – February 15th

**February 24** - TDA - Private Applicator License Training and Testing - $10.00
8:30 am - 3 pm - Van Zandt County Farm Bureau Building,
OR May be in the new County Extension Office (please watch for updates)

This is for producers seeking a license only. If you are interested, please contact the Van Zandt County Office @ 903-567-4149 to get on our list. You must purchase the Study guide ($25) and Laws/Regulations book ($15) which are available at the County Extension Office.
The day will consist of ½ day training and a TDA representative will be in after lunch to administer the test. Please bring proper ID.

**February 28** - East Texas Fruit/Vegetable Conference  
Rose Garden Center, Tyler, Texas  
8:00 am - 2:30 pm  
$30 Registration at the door  
3 CEU’s

**March 14** - Rains Cattlemen’s Association, Lunch and Learn  
11:00 am – 2:00 pm - Rains County Extension Office - Emory, Texas  
*(410 Tawakoni Drive, Emory, Texas 75440)*  
3 CEU’s for TDA Pesticide  
Cost: $10.00, Lunch will be provided  
RSVP By: March 2nd

**March 30** - Upper Sabine Cow/Calf Clinic  
Van Zandt County Livestock Auction, Inc. - Wills Point, Texas  
Cost: $20.00  
Registration: 8:00 – 8:45  
Great program planned!

To stay informed of upcoming Ag related events, watch the local newspapers and if you aren’t already on my e-mail list (I have one for Beef/Forage and one for Pesticide) - please e-mail me at s-gowin@tamu.edu in the subject line - ADD TO AG EMAIL LIST. Also watch our county website - [http://rains-tx.tamu.edu](http://rains-tx.tamu.edu) for upcoming events, as well as many useful publications.

*Information from Texas AgriLife Extension Service is available to people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.*