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1-13-2016

To: Rains County Leader

From: Stephen Gowin
CEA-Agriculture
Rains County

Look Back on 2015 and Looking Forward to 2016

I hope that 2016 is a blessed year for you and your family. At the beginning of last year, we were all hoping for an increase in rain and that the beef cattle market would hold up. Little did we know that we would receive history-making rainfall, a 90-day drought, and dropping cattle prices. All of these things combined drastically hurt the agriculture industry in Rains County.

We just completed our annual Agricultural Increment Report for Rains County. Our Agricultural income dropped in 2015 by an estimated \$10,000,000.00. This drop is primarily due to the extreme drought conditions. Total agricultural income was project at \$50,000,000 for the year. The top segment is still the Beef Cattle Industry, bringing in over \$22,400,000 in gross sales. Because of the dramatic drop in the cattle prices during the last quarter of the year, we dropped estimated \$2,750,000 beef cattle sales compared to 2014. Forage production is second in receipts with estimated gross sales of \$8,100,000 with a loss of 4.5 million dollars compared to last year. This is due to not only the extreme rain causing us to lose our ryegrass hay cutting, but we also lost a Bermuda grass hay cutting because of the drought. The Nursery Industry adds approximately \$8,000,000 to the economy. Rounding out the top four segments is dairy production at \$4,600,000. Not only are dairy producers dependent on milk prices, they are also dependent on grain and hay prices. These projects listed above are based on gross sales of agriculture products sold within Rains County.

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 A&M AgriLife Extension Service are a great place to start.

Upcoming Educational Events

January 27- Northeast Texas Cattleman's Conference - \$20.00
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Carroll Green Civic Center (602 S. McAllister Street, Quitman, TX)
3 CEU's for TDA Pesticide
RSVP By – January 21st

February 12 - Tri-County Private Applicator License Training - \$10.00
8:00 am - 12 pm - Van Zandt County Farm Bureau Building

This event is for producers seeking a license and is only a training, no testing. If you are interested, please contact the Rains County Office @ 903-473-4580 to RSVP by February 5, 2016. You must purchase the Study guide (\$25) and Laws/Regulations book (\$15) which are available at the County Extension Office.

February 26 - East Texas Forage Conference
Rains County Fairgrounds
9:00 am – 3:00 pm
\$20.00 Registration at the door, 3 CEU's will be offered
RSVP By – February 19th

March 18 - Upper Sabine Cow/Calf Clinic -
Van Zandt County Farm Bureau Building, Canton, Texas
Cost: \$20.00
Registration: 8:00 – 8:45 am

May 6 - New Landowner/Watershed Stewardship Program
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Conference Center, Emory
Details to follow in coming weeks

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> for upcoming events, as well as many useful publications.

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating