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1-22-2021

To: Rains County Leader

From: Stephen Gowin

 CEA-Agriculture

 Rains County

***Look Back on 2020 and Looking Forward to 2021***

I hope that 2021 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, then a dry summer, and dropping cattle prices, and a world-wide pandemic. All these things combined had various sectors of the agriculture industry in Rains County on a roller coaster.

We just completed our annual Agricultural Increment Report for Rains County.  Our Agricultural income increased in 2020 by an estimated $2,000,000.00.   This increase is primarily due to a good hay season and a strong horticultural industry.  Total agricultural income was projected at $52,000,000 for the year. Historically the top segment is the Beef Industry, bringing in over $17,000,000 in gross sales annually. Because of the pandemic and the up and down cattle prices during the year, we dropped estimated $5,000,000.00 beef cattle sales compared to 2019. Forage production is second in receipts with estimated gross sales of $15,000,000 with increase of 4.0 million dollars compared to last year. The Nursery Industry adds approximately $12,000,000 to the economy.  Rounding out the top four segments is dairy production at $2,200,000. Not only are beef and dairy producers dependent on milk prices and/or beef cattle market, 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 – Held Virtually

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**February 26** - East Texas Forage Conference

                        Details to follow in the coming days.

**March**        Upper Sabine Cow/Calf Clinic – Official Date to be Announced. Details are still pending.

**TBA -** Private Applicator Training -Official Date to be Announced. Details are still pending.

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*