



**Kerr County Soil & Water
Conservation District**



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KERR CO. SWCD NEWS

Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District January 2017 Volume 8, Issue 1

Hill Country District Junior Livestock Show - January 15 - 21, 2017

This year's Hill Country District Junior Livestock Show and Sale are coming soon! Along with the Kerr County Livestock Show that our local 4-H and FFA students participate in. Kicking off on Jan. 13th, with the Cowboy Breakfast, you can enjoy an early morning breakfast at the courthouse and few fun contests. Then it's on to the county and state Angora show and the gilt shows on Sunday the 15th. The Angora and gilt shows continue on Monday along with arrivals of the Ag Mechanics projects. Judging for the Ag Mechanics and the breeding sheep shows take place Tuesday and continue to Wednesday. The Kerr County Market shows for lamb, swine, goats and steers and heifers all take place on Thursday. Friday is a big day as all District market shows for those same animals take place.

Saturday, the 21st, the HCDJLSA Auction will begin at 1:00 p.m. Vendors will be set up in the Exhibit Hall throughout the week until Saturday. The shows are open to the public.

Please consider attending the shows or sale to support our local youth in their agricultural project! Many of these youth have been working for months with their projects. Financial donations to the sale go towards purchasing these animals from the students that they have worked so hard to train and produce. The HCDJLSA also awards many scholarships each year to deserving students entering college. For more information or a more detailed schedule, please go to their website:

www.hcdjls.org

New NRCS Employee in the Kerrville Office

Richard Atkinson joined the Kerrville NRCS office team in July of 2016. Richard is originally from Rio Hondo and went to Texas A&M - Kingsville and received a Bachelors of Science in Agricultural Science. He is stationed in Kerrville as a Soil Conservationist and we are happy to have him here! Please welcome him next time you come by!



In this issue:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| HCDJLS | 1 |
| New NRCS Employee | 1 |
| Tax Valuation Workshop | 2 |
| NRCS & WQMP Programs | 2 |
| UGRA Rebate Program | 3 |
| Plant Spotlight | 3 |
| Women's Ranch Seminar | 4 |

Dates of Interest:

- Feb. 3 : Women's Ranch Seminar
- Feb 4 : Tax Valuation Workshop
- Feb. 11 : Tax Valuation Workshop
- Feb. 18 : Tax Valuation Workshop

WOMEN'S RANCH SEMINAR
Covering 14 Counties
February 3, 2017 9:00-3:00
Farm Bureau Building 237 Equestrian Dr. Fredericksburg, Texas
Presented By Hill Country CattleWomen
hillcountycattlewomen.com



- Livestock Management
- Land Stewardship
- Leases
- Insurance
- Financial/Estate
- Resources
- County Agents
- Vendors
- A great lunch!

Texas Beef Council will provide a wonderful lunch!

Please RSVP by January 20, 2017



Fran Hawkins
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Wildlife Tax Valuation Workshop

Riverside Nature Center and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department present a workshop on Wildlife Tax Valuation. This workshop is a three part program, happening on Feb. 4, Feb. 11, and Feb. 18. Each session has a different topic: Session 1: Overview and Property Inventory, Session 2: Management Practices and Habitat Assessment, and Session 3: WTV History and Update on the Law, Application Procedures, and... Putting It All Together.

If you have had an agricultural tax valuation on your land for at least 5 years and you are interested in a wildlife valuation, this workshop is for you! This in-depth workshop is especially for landowners with 20 or more acres. It emphasizes wildlife management strategies that improve native habitat and increases species diversity. Our presenters will help you gain land management knowledge, understand the history of this Texas tax valuation law, and fulfill requirements to qualify for a wildlife management tax valuation. Many participants complete this workshop with a concrete plan and are ready to apply!

Preregistration is required by January 28th. RSVP is mandatory as the class space is limited. All programs will be held at the Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville. Please contact the Center to RSVP and find out more info!

Riverside Nature Center

www.riversidenaturecenter.org

830-257-4837 | RNC.kerrville@gmail.com

Grass & Wildflower Seed Sales

Kerr SWCD can take care of your seed needs! From custom grass mixes, wildlife/deer/dove mixes, tank dam mixes or specific species seed, we can order exactly what your needs call for!

Call the office to discuss what you are looking for & get your seed in time for the fall planting season!

We also have a limited number of One Pound Bluebonnet Seed bags & One Pound Starburst Wild-

USDA-NRCS & TSSWCB Programs Available

Several programs are available for Kerr County residents to apply for and receive assistance in implementing management practices for agricultural land.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is designed to assist agricultural producers in enhancing their land with certain management practices. Practices that address and improve water quantity and domestic animals are given high priority in Kerr County and include such practices as brush management, livestock water systems, fencing, and seeding.

The NRCS office accepts applications for this program year round and more information can be gained by contacting the Kerrville office at 830-896-4911 x 3 or visit the NRCS Texas homepage at: www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov.

The Water Quality Management Program (WQMP) is a stated-funded program made available through Senate Bill 503. It is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by the local soil and water conservation district for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The main goal of these plans is to abate agricultural and/or silvicultural nonpoint pollutant contributions to impaired or threatened waters as prioritized. A WQMP covers the entire operating unit and includes required practices applicable to the planned land use. The first step in obtaining a WQMP is to contact the Kerr County SWCD. There is no charge for the development of a WQMP, but there may be costs for implementing required practices outlined in the WQMP.

Financial assistance is available at this time in the form of a cost-share program for WQMPs in Kerr County. You may read more on this program at TSSWCB's website at: www.tsswcb.texas.gov (click on Programs, then select WQMP). You may also contact the Kerr County Soil and Water Conservation District's office at 830-896-4911x3 and ask for Deanna (SWCD) or Laura (NRCS) for assistance or to start the application process.

NRCS is an equal opportunity provider & employer.

Updated UGRA Program!

The Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) has a rebate program to promote water conservation and watershed stewardship through rainwater harvesting. The Rainwater Catchment System Rebate Program is available to anyone with a Kerr County address and will reimburse eligible applicants up to \$100 when they provide proof of purchase of rainwater catchment system equipment. Each address is eligible once per calendar year.

This incentive program is open to businesses or individuals in Kerr County. Proof of purchase for rainwater catchment system equipment must be dated within the last 12 months. Payment by UGRA is subject to the availability of funds. For more information, contact UGRA at (830) 896-5445.

UPPER GUADALUPE RIVER AUTHORITY

Rainwater Catchment System Rebate Program

Now Up to a \$100 rebate

Rebate for rainwater catchment system equipment!

Bring your dated receipt & proof of Kerr County address to UGRA and you will receive up to a \$100 rebate.

(830) 896-5445
www.ugra.org

Eligibility terms and conditions apply.

Each Kerr County address is eligible for a rebate once per calendar year. Applications need to be submitted to UGRA within 1 year of equipment purchase. Located just off Sidney Baker South at 125 Lehmann Drive, Suite 100, Kerrville, TX 78028

Plant Spotlight: Mexican Plum by Richard Atkinson, USDA-NRCS

The Mexican Plum has a diverse look especially during bloom season which is early spring February through March. Its showy white fragrant flowers just cover the tree in awe some say the acute smell somewhat smells like grape-cool aid, but do have a sweet smell to them.

The Mexican Plum is part of the Rosaceae family and is also known as Big tree plum and or Inch plum. It is grown as a small to medium deciduous (shedding its leaves annually) flower and fruiting tree with a single trunk, non-suckering perennial. The Mexican Plum ranges in growth from 15-30 feet in height and have a spread of 15-25 feet in width at maturity.

The flowers are white, $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch in diameter in early spring before the leaves are exposed. The fruit matures mid-summer through fall, fruits are round ball shaped close to one inch in diameter they are edible though can be tart to some. The plums are mostly used for jams and jellies more than eating them fresh off the tree. Mature fruits are a dark purplish red color and are collected then when fallen off the tree to produce the jams and jellies.

Mexican plum trees bark is a tight and metallic greyish color when young, older trees have a brown papery exfoliating or scaly bark to them. The mature bark becomes very rough and deeply furrowed. Leaves are alternate along the branches which have thorns on them and are deciduous. Its fall color ranging from a yellow to an orange color to them. These leaves are 2 to 4 inches in length, smooth dark green on top, and lighter beneath. They can sometimes be folded and can look like they are drooping from lack of water.

The culture of the Mexican plum is an easy to grow ornamental tree that is drought tolerant, it requires little fertilizer and does well in either sun or shade. It can be grown in either acidic or alkaline soils, loamy moist sandy, silt loams, well drained and clay soils with a pH greater of 7.

Wildlife value can be beneficial to several species of birds that eat the fruit. Its blossoms provide food for pollinators such as bees, butterflies and humming birds. The tree itself provides value for nesting sites and material for birds as well.

