

“Ag Happenings”

brought to you by

Farley Farm Supply

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Jim's Thoughts

by Jim Farley

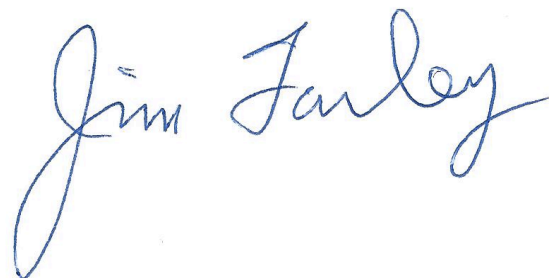
I am trying to figure out how to say something positive when it's dry, grasshoppers are everywhere, and forage production continues to suffer. Our chances for a July 4th rain came and went!



The good news is that guar is off to a good start and looks like a crop that we can grow and maybe make a profit.

Another bit of good news is that fertilizer prices are slowly dropping and are less than they have been in 3 years. Nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium have all decreased in price in the last few weeks.

Lastly, let me add that it is great to live in this great country and to work with you, our customers. You allow Farley Farm Supply to support you in your agriculture business, and we appreciate your trust and confidence. Know that we are here, ready to help you anytime.





Stable Flies

Beef and Dairy producers have a common enemy this spring that is costing hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost income - Stable Flies. They can reduce beef weight gain as much as 25% and they can decrease milk production between 10 and 20%. Stable flies are considered the most important pest of livestock because of their painful bites and blood sucking ability. As you can see from the picture they have a long proboscis that is carried in front of their head until they pierce the skin for a blood meal. Adult stable flies take one bloodmeal a day from the legs, sides, back and belly of large animals and the legs, head and ears of small animals. They are only in contact with the host for 2-5 minutes and then rest on surrounding buildings or vegetation.

The eggs and larvae are found in wet, decomposing straw found around round hay bales. The larvae occur in decaying fibrous substrates: straw bedding, wet hay, algal mats and wet grass clippings, accumulations of manure from dairy and beef cattle, mixtures of soil and partially composted bedding and animal manure and crop by products. Animals that are being attacked will stamp and kick their legs, as well as bunch together.

Dairy producers in Comanche and Erath county have a time trying to control this insect and we are working with producers to make sure they have the right tools. Because they feed and then go to knee high vegetation we are controlling vegetation growth along with applying a contact insecticide to knock down adults. This in combination with dairy sanitation and fly trapping is having a marked effect.

<http://livestockvetento.tamu.edu/insectspests/stable-fly/>



Cotton Variety Trials

It is very important for producers to be able to choose crop varieties that are adapted and perform well in our area. Because many of the crop seeds we grow can cost many hundreds of dollars per bag and contain a multitude of genetic traits it can be hard to choose the best available. In order to help producers know more about the cotton varieties sold we work to have variety trials that can be evaluated throughout the season. This year we are planting both an irrigated trial featuring the following varieties: Bayer - ST 6448 GLB2, BX 1347 GLB2, FM 1944 GLB2, ST 4946 GLB2, and FM 2989 GLB2.

Phytogen - PHY 367 WRF, PHY 375 WRF, PHY 499 WRF, and PHY 339 WRF.
Deltapine - DP 1321 B2RF, DP 1359 B2RF, DP 1219 B2RF, and DP 1044 B2RF.



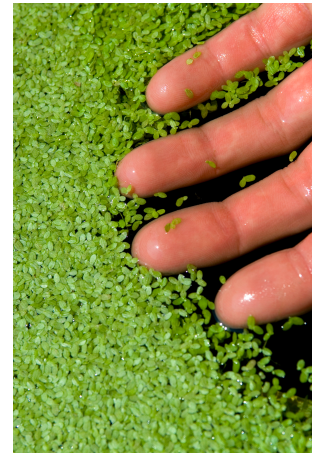
Pond Weeds

This is certainly the time of year that pond weeds are most visible. I usually get a number of calls about all this “junk” on or in our tanks and ponds with the question, “what can I do about it?” That can be a difficult question to ever answer but maybe an explanation about the categories of pond weeds and some control measures might be helpful.

The first group of pond weeds are algae including plankton which makes the green color in water, filamentous algae or pond scum, and branched algae which includes chara or muskgrass that looks like underwater hay. This is probably the number one problem in tanks and causes the most aggravation. Pond scum usually begins growing near the bottom or edges of a pond and later floats to the surface where it then looks like a mass of wet, green wool. This type algae is best controlled by pond fertilization back in February. Since it starts at the bottom we

can encourage the growth of plankton, which is a good algae, it will shade out the pond scum and keep it from growing. There is nothing worse than a clear pond because plankton is part of the food chain which eventually feeds fish. Chemically we control algae easily with copper or copper complex chemicals.

A second group of weeds are the floating plants. Duckweed is one that we have in abundance in our area and it is a small, floating plant, green in color and about ½ inch across with usually 3 leaves and below the leaves you can see a root.



Diquat is a good, relatively inexpensive chemical control or you can rake this plant off the surface.

The third group is submersed plants. These plants are rooted to the bottom but generally don't have plant parts above the water surface. The most common submersed weed is bushy pondweed which resembles coastal hay growing underwater. Another similar weed is coontail and it too can fill up a pond in short order. Diquat, endothall and floridone are all chemical controls or you may want to check into stocking your tank with triploid grass carp which do an excellent job of long term control of these problem weeds and do not cause a problem with other fish.

The last category includes our emerged weeds which includes all shoreline, marginal and shallow water plants with plant parts that extending above the water line. These include many species but most commonly we are

dealing with cattails, willow, rushes, buttonbush, water primrose and frogbit. Most of the emerged weeds are easily controlled with glyphosate products which we commonly call Roundup although Roundup itself is not labeled for aquatic weed control. There are several name brand products that do contain glyphosate and are labeled for aquatics. Another excellent product for emerged weeds is 2,4-D.

Now the last question I usually get when talking about weed control in ponds is, “will it hurt my fish?” The chemicals themselves are harmless to fish but the dead vegetation they leave behind may not be. A lot of decaying vegetation will suck a lot of oxygen from the water and could leave your fish starving for a breath. It is best to control pond weeds a little at a time so that you don’t set yourself up for a problem one morning watching all your fish floating on the surface.

Close Call on Pecans!

This has been a year for the record books although most Ag producers would like to never have to remember it again. Pecan growers woke up several mornings this spring wondering if their entire crop was gone because of a late freeze but fortunately they made it through with little damage. At this point most trees look healthy and the crop is light in natives and most varieties except Wichita which seems to have a respectable crop.

Most producers are using our new Chempoly Zinc (similar to NZN) and CNI 20-20-20 Foliar Feed to stimulate stem and leaf development. I am seeing great



results with over 12 inch stem lengths in most cases.

I just wish the Peach Crop was doing as well as pecans!!



Bermudagrass Production

There are not many days that someone doesn’t complain about having to fertilize their bermudagrass. Certainly the cost of fertilizer combined with the amount bermudagrass can use are the reasons people complain.

But, before you get too quick to criticize realize that this grass can make

rapid growth producing many tons per acre. It is very drought tolerant and even can be abused and still come back. Stocking rates can be high both winter and summer and cattle generally do well grazing it. Bermudagrass hay is sought out by all livestock classes and the hay is easy to cut, bale and store.

If you choose not to fertilize bermuda it still will produce a respectable yield and then if you do fertilize it responds by producing high yields, more than most grasses. It can essentially go dormant in drought but comes out of a drought quicker than anything but maybe weeds. I have looked at many pastures left on their own for over 30 years and still coastal is down there waiting on a weedkiller and some fertilizer to start again.

The rule of thumb for fertilizing bermudagrass for hay or pasture is 50#'s of Nitrogen for every ton of expected production. 50#'s of N would be about 150#'s of 32-0-0 fertilizer. BUT, if you don't fertilize expect about 5,000 lbs of forage and if you do yields will jump to 10,000 lbs. And, properly fed bermudagrass is 5 times more efficient with the rain it gets than non-fertilized. Something to think about when you consider that next fertilizer bill.



Forage Sorghum Production

There is always a lot of forage sorghum and sorghum sudangrass planted each year for hay or silage. These forages are drought tolerant, and can produce high quality forage for dairy and beef.

Farley Farm Supply is now the distributor of Alta Seeds, one of the world leaders in sorghum genetics and developer of the Brachytic Dwarf trait.

Guar



Guar is not a new crop to this area but it has been a long time since anyone grew guar - about 30 years! There will be several hundred acres grown around the DeLeon area as producers take advantage of contracts paying 45 cents a lb. We have two varieties, Kinman and Judd 69.



Treating Yucca

Over the past few years many plants like yucca, prickly pear, mesquite, nightshades, etc., have had ample opportunity to invade our rangelands. It is possible with some of the new rangeland chemicals to do a good job controlling weeds and many of these invasive species.

For yucca we use Dupont's Cimarron Plus along with 2,4-D LV6 as a broadcast spray. This is applied when the yucca is in bloom and control is really good and the weeds are gone and grass returns.



Thanks for all your business.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "B. Blumenthal". The signature is stylized and fluid.

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