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You can find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/agrilife.tarrant

The success of Texas AgriLife Extension Service lies in our ability to respond to a community’s most important and critical issues. Since the early 1900’s, the grass roots involvement in identifying issues and assisting in program development has been crucial in our ability to maintain relevance during changing times.

The involvement and input of community leaders on the Leadership Advisory Board and Program Area Committees enable Extension agents to develop, implement, and evaluate educational programs that meet the needs of the people who reside in the communities in which we serve. Extension’s contribution to life long learning is as important today as it was 100 years ago and it’s the grass roots involvement that keeps us grounded in the communities and allows us to continue to provide educational programs that help people.

In this issue of Extension in the City, we acknowledge the contribution of our community members who serve on the Leadership Advisory Board and Program Area Committees for Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Tarrant County and we say THANK YOU for your involvement. Please see page 2 for a listing of committees and members.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; it’s the only thing that ever has.”

~Margaret Meade

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.
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A disaster is considered an incident that is beyond the scope where individual, local and community resources can deal with the event as an emergency. This usually indicates the event either happens very rapidly, there is no mitigating control, or both.

**Before The Disaster**

- **PLAN AHEAD.** Determine the best place for animal confinement in case of a disaster. Find alternate water sources in case power is lost. You should have a minimum of three days feed and water on hand.

- **EVACUATION.** Decide where to take animals if evacuation is necessary. Contact fairgrounds, other producers, and stockyards about their policies and ability to take livestock temporarily in an emergency. Have several sites in mind. Familiarize yourself with several evacuation routes to your destination.

- **IDENTIFICATION.** This is critical! Photograph, identify, and inventory your animals. Permanent identification such as brands, tattoos, ear tags, or microchips are best. Temporary identification, such as tags on halters, livestock markers, paint, and duct tape with permanent writing will also work. Include your name and phone number. Keep identification information with you to verify ownership.

- **MEDICAL RECORDS AND VACCINATIONS.** Your animals need to have current vaccinations. Keep medical histories and record special dosing instructions and dietary requirements. Write down contact information for your veterinarian.

- **VEHICLES.** Keep trailers and vans well-maintained, full of gas, and ready to move at all times. Be sure your animals will load. If you don’t have your own vehicles, make arrangements with local haulers or neighbors before disaster strikes.

- **Fire Preparation.** In high risk areas, clear fire breaks around your house, barns, and property lines. Keep fire fighting tools in one location.

- **Flood Preparation.** Identify available high ground on your property or other nearby evacuation sites. Be familiar with road availability during flood conditions.

**During The Disaster**

Listen to the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) on the TV or radio. Evacuate your livestock early, if possible, to ensure their safety and ease your stress. Take all vaccination and medical records, the disaster preparedness kit, and enough hay, feed, and water for three days. Call your destination to make sure space is still available. Use roads not in use for human evacuation when you transport your animals to your sheltering site. If you must leave your animals, leave them in the preselected area appropriate for disaster type. Leave enough hay for 48 to 72 hours. Do not rely on automatic watering systems. Power may be lost.

The leading causes of death in large animals during disasters are:

1. Collapsed barns
2. Kidney failure due to dehydration
3. Electrocution from downed power lines
4. Fencing failures

**After The Disaster**

Check pastures and fences for sharp objects that could injure livestock. Be aware of downed power lines, fallen trees, and debris. Beware of local wildlife, including raccoons and skunks, that may have entered the area and could pose a danger to your animals. Familiar scents and landmarks may have changed, and animals can easily become confused and lost. If you find someone else’s animal, call the County Office of Emergency Services or any emergency phone number set up after the disaster. Isolate it from your animals until it is returned to its owner or can be examined by a veterinarian. Always use caution when approaching and handling strange or frightened horses or livestock.

**Basic Livestock Disaster Preparedness Kit**

- Portable radio and extra batteries
- Plastic trash barrel with a lid
- Water buckets
- Stored feeds
- Animal restraint equipment (leads, ropes and halters)
- First Aid items
- Tarps
- Portable Generators
- Flashlights
- Lime or Bleach
- Wire cutters
- Sharp knife

**Just The Facts ......**

- Adrenalin, panic and confusion affect both humans and animals.
- The survival instincts of livestock can make normal handling techniques ineffective.
- The proper disaster management approach needs to vary with each type of disaster.
- Livestock management priorities during a disaster should focus on immediate safety.

**PRACTICE YOUR PLAN!**
With the start of school just around the corner, many families are planning to get back on their “school” routine. As you make plans to get back into the swing of things, put family meals into your schedule. Survey results show that parents think family meals are important, but aren’t happening as often as parents would like.

When it comes to family meal times, parents use the following skills: consistency with patience, tolerance, and understanding. This is also an opportunity to incorporate setting boundaries and limits.

Why do family meals matter? Studies show that mealtime conversations helps to increase a child’s vocabulary and leads to better readers; better readers do better in ALL subjects. Family meals strengthen and encourage a sense of belonging and improves communication between family members. Some additional positives include teaching children to take turns, be good listeners and be responsible.

Follow these tips:

1. Make mealtime a priority. Eat at least 5 meals a week together. Who said it has to be dinner? What about breakfast? Eat slow and give everyone a chance to share.

2. Remember that parents decide what, where, and when to eat. The child decides how much. Refrain from phrases like “you need to clean your plate, there are starving children” or “one more bite and you can have dessert.” Your child knows when they are full and it won’t be an adult size serving.

3. Include family members in the planning. Make it fun, write down a menu, use cookbooks or recipes to build meals, keep foods on hand that can be easily prepared, choose a different color vegetable for each day of the week, and use convenience foods wisely.

4. Who says it has to be dinner? What about preparing breakfast for dinner? Make pancakes or waffles and top with fruit (instead of syrup) and include scrambled eggs or Canadian or turkey bacon. Make sandwiches and have carrot sticks or a salad with low-fat milk on the side.

5. Build family spirit. O.K., here it is - focus on each other, which means eliminate distractions. Turn off the T.V., phones (landlines and cell phones should not be answered) and radio.

The end goal is to build self-reliant children and build a positive self image.

Refrain from:

- Using food as a reward, using food as a discipline technique by withholding food, allowing kids to snack in front of the computer, in front of the T.V. or when playing video games.

- Be a good role model! Your children are watching. Mark on your calendar to have dinner on Monday, September 27, 2010, which is Family Day, “A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children ™”.

One financial reminder: More than a decade of research by the National Center of Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University has consistently found that kids who eat dinner with their families are less likely to smoke, drink, or use drugs.

Adapted from: Visions Newsletter, Rutgers, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station: Rochford M, 2009
The past year has brought quite a number of unexpected conditions and occurrences that have made it quite clear that we cannot always prepare for everything. However, there are many things we can do to prepare for the unexpected before it actually happens! Waiting until the unexpected happens only increases the stress of an undesirable situation when we are not properly prepared to address some of our most basic needs during a time of turmoil or uncertainty.

In the past, we have addressed emergency preparedness for small businesses, and we have also addressed providing various workshops on preparing an emergency disaster kit for individuals of a family. What we fail to consider, however, is what we will do in the event we are in need of assistance to evacuate when an evacuation is in effect. This is a consideration for individuals with various illnesses, disabilities, and mobility challenges, including lack of reliable transportation. If we depend on public transportation for daily needs, these may not be available to us in the case of an evacuation. If we have mobility limitations and live alone or require the assistance of a caregiver who may or may not be able to reach us in an emergency situation, we have to consider what we will be able to do in the event that no one is available to help us properly evacuate. If you rely on special medical equipment (oxygen tanks, scooters, wheelchairs, dialysis equipment, etc.), you need to consider these items in your evacuation plans.

It may seem a bit overwhelming to consider all of these possible challenges as we seek to prepare ourselves during this fall season (September marks Emergency Preparedness Month and reminds us to do the necessary advance planning for our needs in the case of an emergency or unexpected disaster), but it is much more desirable to prepare before it happens, rather than wait until the chaos of the moment. Here is a great step to take in preparing for this type of special consideration.

2-1-1 maintains a registry of individuals and families that need evacuation assistance in the event of an evacuation. It is free to register and simple to do. This registry closes 72 hours in advance of a storm or expected evacuation. Therefore, register now if you know that you would need this special assistance. Simply call 2-1-1 (1 for English, 2 for Spanish, 0 for over 90 other languages) and then choose option 4. This registry will maintain a listing of where you live, how many household members need assistance during an evacuation, and the type of assistance that will be needed. You will be asked to provide your name, address, phone number, emergency contact information, pets or service animals that will also need to be evacuated, and specific information on your medical and transportation needs. You can register for yourself or a loved one, with their permission.

You and your family are important. Don't allow your special needs to go unaddressed and register today! Call 2-1-1. For additional information, go to the Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) web site at http://TexasHelp.tamu.edu.
Nutrition facts labels are placed on food products to protect and inform the consumer. The information on the food label is sometimes not easily understood or overlooked on many occasions. Once you get an understanding of what's listed on the food labels you can begin to make healthier choices and also encourage family and friends to do the same. Listed below are the steps to understanding the nutrition facts label.

1. **Check the serving size and the servings per container.** A serving is the amount of food that is recommended for you to consume. This is important because everything listed below will only be based on that one serving.

2. **Check the calories.** Calories are a measurement of the energy that we receive from the foods that we eat. Also listed on the label will be the calories from fat. Calories from fat measure the amount of calories that we get from the fat in that food. The calories listed on the label are based on a 2,000 calorie diet meaning you only consume 2,000 calories for the day.
   - If there are 40 calories in a serving, this is considered a low amount.
   - If there are 100 calories in a serving, this is considered a moderate amount.
   - If there are 400 calories in a serving, this is considered a high amount.

3 & 4. **Check the nutrients.** There are some nutrients that need to be limited and there are some nutrients that should be consumed in higher amounts.

   **Nutrients that need to be limited:**
   - Total Fat
   - Saturated Fat
   - Trans Fat
   - Cholesterol
   - Sodium

   **Nutrients that need to be consumed in higher amounts:**
   - Fiber
   - Vitamin A
   - Vitamin C
   - Calcium
   - Iron

5. **Check the footnotes on the bottom of the label.** The footnote tells you the daily recommended amount for some nutrients based on a 2,000 calorie and 2,500 calorie diet. Some food labels will not list the footnote if the label is too small. The footnote will be the same on all food labels.

6. **Check the Percent Daily Values (% DV).** The %DV is based on a 2,000 calorie diet. If a nutrient is listed to have a %DV of 20% or more, this is considered a high amount. If a nutrient is listed to have %DV of 5% or less, this is considered a low amount. It does not matter if this is a nutrient that is needed or not. The same is true for all nutrients.

Sources: FDA.gov and squaremeals.org
6. How many cups of fruit should a person eat daily at the 2,000 calorie level?
   A. 1 cup
   B. 1½ cups
   C. 2 cups
   D. 2½ cups
   E. 3 cups

7. Which of the following are equivalent to 1 cup of fruit?
   A. ½ cup dried fruit
   B. 1 cup juice
   C. Both of the above
   D. Neither of the above

Bonus Point: Are YOU eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables daily?

ANSWERS:
1. F. All of the above.
2. F. All of the above. Phytochemicals usually are related to the color of fruits and vegetables. There are hundreds of phytochemicals – eating colorful fruits and veggies daily helps us benefit from all of them.
3. F. All of the above. Here’s another question for which the answer is “all of the above.” You may be surprised to learn how healthy it is to eat colorful fruits and vegetables.; however, some studies also show an association between high fruit and vegetable consumption and reduced risk of cataracts, diverticulosis, lung disease and bone loss.
4. D. 2½ cups. For more specifics about how many cups of vegetables you need at other calorie levels, check www.mypyramid.gov
5. E. Both A and B are correct. While 2 cups of “raw” spinach are equivalent to 1 cup of vegetables, once spinach is cooked, 1 cup of cooked spinach counts as 1 cup.
6. C. 2 cups. For more specifics about how many cups of fruit you need at other calorie levels, check www.mypyramid.gov
7. C. Both of the above. Make sure to select 100% fruit juice. Whole or cut-up fruits are sources of dietary fiber; fruit juices contain little or no fiber. Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides.

Whether you answered all the questions correctly or missed a few, the following websites can serve as your “play books” of credible sources to help plan YOUR fruit and vegetable bowl strategy for maintaining a more healthy, well-thy lifestyle!

▸ www.mypyramid.gov
▸ www.5aday.gov
▸ www.5aday.org

*Reference: FOOD Reflections
The plants around the front should need little maintenance, with minimal pruning. Basic landscapes have entirely too many evergreen shrubs, most of which demand pruning several times a season. At the corners, place a shrub or shrubs that, upon maturity, will only reach about a third, no more than a half the height of the house. Then, accent the entrance with an unusual plant or unique accessory. A few low maintenance borders here and there will go a long way toward filling any gaps left. Add a nice tree or group of trees no closer than 15 feet to help frame it and all the basics are done. Avoid the most common mistake homeowners make of cluttering the front of your home with too many plants. The problem will only worsen with time as the plants mature.

Hedges and fences will often help hide the garbage cans, the old car, the tool shed, the woodpile, and the dog’s yard. People frequently fail to consider such camouflage, but a simple wooden lattice on posts with a vine or two can go a long way toward concealing the work area and anything else that lacks aesthetic appeal.

The last big use area of the landscape is the private area; the patio or deck with its bird feeder, swing, grill, pool, sandbox, vegetable garden and everything else you enjoy. You probably have these things near a window (so that you can keep an eye on the kids and the flowers) and a door, through which guests and food may flow freely. You should be able to breathe easily, or even to rant and rave, in the privacy of your own backyard without wondering who is peeking in.

The private area should visually pull you outdoors when you view it through a door or window. As you gaze across the backyard in the wintertime, the birds should seem nearby as if they were in the kitchen or den. A small salad garden or bed for herbs or cut flowers should be handy and visible. The private area should be inviting and fun! Enjoy your planning this Fall and harvest the benefits the rest of your life!
How to Choose a Landscape Service Provider

Laura M. Miller
County Extension Agent - Horticulture

Many people enjoy doing their own “yard work.” Do-It-Yourself landscapers benefit from fresh air, exercise, and the satisfaction of seeing the results of their own labors. However, there are times when even those who love mowing their own lawns may find themselves in need of a little professional help. This could be due to limitations in time or mobility, or because the job is just a bit too complicated (installing a new irrigation system) or even dangerous (removing a storm-damaged tree) for the average DIY’er. You might just decide that you’d rather spend time relaxing in your landscape on Saturday evenings instead of sweating in your landscape on Saturday mornings.

Which Services Do You Need?

The first step in finding a landscape service provider is always the same: decide what you want the provider to do. The most basic landscape service is often called “mow and blow.” Almost anyone from the teenager next door to a national landscape company can provide this kind of service, but a good company will be able to do this much more efficiently than you can. Ian MacLean of Highland Landscaping in Southlake says that new customers are always impressed with how quickly his crews can mow and edge. “While it might take them a few hours, we can do it in 20 minutes.”

Sometimes you need more than regular maintenance, and when you do you’ll want to find someone who is well qualified to handle the job. That doesn’t always mean that they will be licensed. In the State of Texas, a license is required to:

- Apply pesticides. The Texas Department of Agriculture, [www.texasagriculture.gov](http://www.texasagriculture.gov), regulates the commercial application of all pesticides and requires that individuals who apply pesticides for hire be licensed. This license is not required to apply fertilizers.
- Sell plant materials. The Texas Department of Agriculture also inspects plant materials to prevent the movement of plant pests and requires that anyone who sells plants have a license and provide access to those plants to inspectors. This is not required to install plants that you purchase from a licensed retailer.
- Install or modify an irrigation system. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, [www.tceq.state.tx.us](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us), regulates landscape irrigation to prevent contamination of public water supplies and to encourage water conservation.

Landscape Architects, but not Landscape Designers, are also required to have a professional license issued by the state. When landscape services can be provided by individuals who are not licensed, consider looking at certifications. Certifications can help you determine which providers have proven that they have met certain professional qualifications, usually by providing proof of education and experience and by passing a standard examination.

Certifications to look for include:

- Certified Arborist. The International Society of Arboriculture, [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com), offers some of the most widely recognized certifications due to the scope and history of the organization and its programs. Trees are the largest, most valuable components of a landscape and their care often requires special skills and equipment. While no one has ever been injured by an improperly pruned Nandina, in 2009 in the United States 44 people were injured and there were 59 tree-related fatalities that were non-work related. These statistics were compiled by a worldwide news-clipping service, so the real numbers are probably higher.
- Texas Certified Nursery and Landscape Professionals. The Texas Nursery and Landscape Association’s consumer website, [www.landscapetexas.org](http://www.landscapetexas.org), can help you find a certified professional in your area.

Where Do You Find a Good Provider?

In addition to checking the lists of licensed and certified individuals as described above, another great way to start is by asking friends and neighbors whose landscapes you admire for recommendations. Many companies have good websites with photographs of their work and information about the services they provide as well as additional information about the company.

Always ask questions about both the business itself and about the practices and products that will be used. Ask to see any required licenses and require proof of insurance. Educate yourself about environmentally appropriate lawn care practices and remember that you want to pay for expertise in addition to services provided. A good landscape service provider will allow you to have a more beautiful and valuable landscape without breaking a sweat.
Many loving, good-hearted pet owners spend a lot of time and energy making sure their pet has a healthy diet; considering brands, comparing labels, debating moist-versus-dry, and consulting their veterinarian. In all the hubbub, they sometimes forget that an ever-present bowl of clean water may be the most important part of their pet’s diet.

**Why is it important?**

In pets, as in people, water makes up the majority of the body; about 70 - 80 percent. By allowing substances to dissolve and be carried through the body, it provides a basis for nearly all of the processes and chemical reactions that keep the body running, including digestion and circulation. It helps the body to filter out waste, and it regulates body temperature through evaporation. Dehydration, a lack of water in the body, can cause serious problems, including kidney and heart damage.

**How can I help?**

As vital as water is, it’s relatively easy to provide. Just make sure your pet has a clean bowl (or bottle, in the case of some smaller animals) of fresh water at all times. Most healthy animals that have access to clean water will drink enough to keep them hydrated. If you’re worried that your pet isn’t drinking enough, or you see signs of dehydration like depression, sunken eyes or dry gums, take your pet to the veterinarian.

**Do’s and Don’ts**

Though water seems like a simple enough subject, a few common problems can leave pets high and dry:

- The water bowl or bottle needs cleaning every day. Bacteria that you can’t see can grow in a bottle or bowl, giving the water a funny taste and discouraging your pet from drinking. Even worse, some kinds of bacteria can make animals sick. Develop the habit of properly cleaning the water bowl or bottle before filling it up.
- Dogs and cats that are left alone for long periods can easily knock over their water bowls. Try buying a bowl with a wide, weighted bottom. You may also want to leave more than one bowl around the house.
- Water evaporates faster than you may realize, particularly on warm days. Check water bowls a few times a day, especially in the summer. If your pet’s outside on a very hot day, check the water every hour.
- Before using a big water bucket, make sure your pet is large enough not to fall in while drinking and that it can reach the water at the bottom if necessary.
- Do not use the toilet as a water source. The bacteria that are present can make the pet sick and there is a chance small animals may fall in and not be able to get out. Also, some of the chemicals used to clean the toilet may be toxic.
- Some exotic animals require special care with regard to watering. Consult your veterinarian.

Just like you, pets need more water when they’re exercising. If you take your dog out for a long walk or run, bring along some water for him.

As long as you keep an eye on your pet and make sure his water is fresh and plentiful, you shouldn’t have a problem. If you have any concerns about providing water for your pet, consult your veterinarian.

Pet Care: “Water’s Essential” retrieved on July 21, 2010 from [http://www.healthypet.com/PetCare/PetCareArticle](http://www.healthypet.com/PetCare/PetCareArticle)
Just mention the word "toddler" and an instant picture comes to mind. Perhaps it is simply a sweet smile or giggle, but usually it is attached to a bundle of energy, running from place to place........ touching...sniffing...tasting...squealing...and listening. Utilizing all of his senses, he is exploring his magnificent world.....a world filled with excitement and wonder.

As the child grows, each day is filled with experiences that provide opportunities for learning and growth. How does a parent capture that sense of youthful discovery and instill a life-long love for learning?

Parents are the most important teachers in their child's life. Spending time with your child provides great opportunities to talk, listen, and share experiences that will become treasured memories as the time passes. Daily activities such as going to the market, shopping for clothes, taking the car for an oil change, doing the laundry, or preparing a meal provide a wealth of "teachable moments". For example, encourage your child to help you prepare dinner. Explain the importance of choosing nutritious foods, washing hands thoroughly, and kitchen safety. As the child grows, he will be able to build upon the previously acquired knowledge and skills as he meets the challenges of each phase of development.

Answering questions, sharing experiences, and discussion ideas are vital components in demonstrating the importance of communication. The ability to express oneself effectively in a variety of situations enhances a youth's confidence.

Youth who maintain their love of learning grow into adults who have a zeal for life... for their world will always be filled with excitement and wonder.

**Tips**

- Be enthusiastic
- Answer questions
- Look for teachable moments
- Work on projects together
- Encourage reflection
- Ask the child’s opinion
- Model positive behavior
- Encourage the importance of communication
Visit our website: http://tarrant.tamu.edu