

October 29, 2024 | ISSUE 14

# THE GRAZE

*A quarterly newsletter with livestock and agronomy updates.*



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## LUNCH & LEARN

**Increasing The Value of Your Calf Crop  
With Dr. Jason Smith**

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**November 7, 2024 | 12 PM**

Hale County Extension Office  
225 Broadway, Ste. 6, Plainview, TX (West Side Entrance)

• RSVP - 806-291-5267 • Cost: \$10 • Lunch Provided

# SAVE THE DATE!

*Mark your calendars for the upcoming Mid-Plains Ag Expo on January 22, 2025!*



We're excited to feature an outstanding lineup of speakers and a panel of local producers. CEUs will be offered alongside the annual auxin training.

We'll also have vendor booth and sponsorship opportunities available.

Stay tuned for registration details and the agenda!

## NRCS Texas Announces 2025 Sign-Up Date for EQIP

*USDA NRCS TEXAS*

*Producers and landowners should apply by Nov. 8, 2024, to be considered for FY 2025 funding*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas announced fiscal year (FY) 2025 financial assistance opportunities for agricultural

producers and landowners through the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#). While NRCS accepts [conservation](#) program applications year-round, producers and landowners should apply by Nov. 8, 2024, to be considered for FY 2025 funding.



Additionally, Texas NRCS will use the ACT NOW process for some EQIP funding pools. Through ACT NOW, NRCS can immediately approve and obligate a ranked application when an eligible application meets or exceeds a determined minimum ranking score.

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns. NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines conservation practices and activities to

help solve on-farm resource issues. Producers implement practices and activities in their conservation plan that can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil, and better wildlife habitat, all while improving their agricultural operations.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)-EQIP will offer core [conservation](#) practices that directly improve soil carbon, reduce nitrogen losses, or that reduce, capture, avoid, or sequester carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions, associated with agricultural production.

EQIP-Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC) expands resource benefits for Texas producers through incentive conservation practices such as wildlife management, cover crops, nutrient management, conservation crop rotations, and prescribed grazing. Additionally, EQIP-CIC allows producers to target priority resource concerns on their property by offering incentive payments for a five-year contract without needing to enroll the entire operation into the program. EQIP-CIC is designed to be a stepping-stone between EQIP and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), to help producers improve their level of conservation and earn benefits of longer-term conservation enhancements.

Landowners can also choose to apply for financial assistance to get help installing the conservation practices outlined in their voluntary conservation plan through any one of the programs mentioned above. Through Farm Bill programs, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to help producers and landowners make conservation improvements on their land that benefit natural resources, build resiliency, and contribute to the nation's broader effort to combat the impacts of climate change.

### **Applying for Assistance**

Interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by Nov. 8, 2024, to be considered for the 2025 ranking funding period. Visit the [NRCS Texas Website](#) for more details about EQIP or other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

### **Historically Underserved Producer Benefits**

Special provisions are also available for historically underserved producers. For EQIP, historically underserved producers are eligible for advance payments to help offset costs related to purchasing materials or contracting services up front. In addition, historically underserved producers can receive higher EQIP payment rates (up to 90% of average cost). NRCS sets aside EQIP, CSP and ACEP funds for historically underserved producers.

## Conservation Practices and Climate

NRCS conservation programs play a critical role in USDA's commitment to partnering with farmers, ranchers, forest landowners and local communities to deliver climate solutions that strengthen agricultural operations and rural America. States may prioritize a variety of voluntary [conservation](#) practices through these NRCS programs, including those that support climate-smart agriculture and forestry (CSAF).

Additional information is available on the [NRCS Texas website](#) at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/Texas](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Texas) or by contacting your local [USDA Service Center](#).

# 3 Tips to estimate hay needs for your cattle

BY MARK JOHNSON, EXTEN BEEF CATTLE BREEDING SPECIALIST

Some basic rules of thumb to follow when determining the hay supplies you will need to sustain your cow herd over the next few months.

- 1. Determine your average mature cow size.** This can be done by weighing your 4 – 7 year old cows and calculating the average weight. From mature cow size, we can approximate the amount of forage dry matter cows will need to consume per year or per day. For example: a 1,000 pound cow will consume about 26 pounds of forage dry matter per day. A 1,400 pound cow will consume about 36.4 pounds of forage dry matter per day.
- 2. Determine your cow inventory**
- 3. Estimate the amount of time you expect to be feeding cows.** From this information you can calculate the total amount of hay needed. For example: 100 cows weighing 1,400 pounds will consume about 3640 pounds of hay per day. We should take into account that a certain amount of the hay fed will be wasted and there will be a certain amount of spoilage of each bale fed that won't be consumed. With this in mind we will add another 10% to the daily total to bump it up to about 4000 pounds (2 tons) per day.



*Remember the amount of hay wasted or spoiled could be higher. If we are feeding hay from last year expect a higher percentage spoiled in each bale.*

If we are expecting to feed hay from mid-October to mid-May, that is approximately 200 days of hay feeding. 4000 pounds of hay needed per day x 200 days equals a total of 800,000 pounds (400 ton) of forage dry matter that cows will consume over this time. If we are feeding or buying large rounds with an average weight of 1,250 pounds that equates to 640 (800,000 divided by 1,250) big bales needed to sustain the 100 cows.

If possible, purchase hay by the ton. It leads to less error in securing the amount of hay you will need to purchase or have on inventory. If buying hay by the bale is your only option, make sure to weigh enough of the bales to have an accurate representation of bale weight. Also, take into account the amount of spoilage of each bale. One of the upsides of hay baled this summer (and the drought we are dealing with now) is less spoilage of warm season grass hay baled in the summer of 2024.

Other factors such as weather, stage of gestation or lactating versus dry cows will obviously impact nutritional requirements of cows from day to day. Provide hay and other nutritional supplementation accordingly.

## Deadline approaching for Corporate Transparency Act

### TEXAS FARM BUREAU

Time is running out for thousands of farmers who may face steep fines and possible jail time for failing to file their businesses with the federal government.

Jan. 1, 2025, is the deadline to file [Beneficial Ownership Information](#) (BOI) with the U.S. Department of Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

New analysis in a [Market Intel](#) by American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) economists shows more than 230,000 farms are required to file, but government data indicates less than 11% of all eligible businesses nationwide have done so.

The [Corporate Transparency Act of 2021](#) required businesses to register any "beneficial owner" of a company in an effort to combat money laundering. Many farms are structured as either a c-corporation, s-corporation or limited liability company (LLC), which are now required to be registered if they employ fewer than 20 employees or receive under \$5 million in cash receipts—which covers the vast majority of farms.



"The use of LLCs is an important tool for many farms to keep personal and business assets separated, but small businesses often lack the staff to track and stay in compliance with changing rules and regulations," AFBF President Zippy Duvall said. "It's clear that many farmers aren't aware of the new filing requirement. Unclear guidance and lack of public outreach are now putting thousands of America's farmers at risk of violating federal law."

Businesses that fail to file, or do not update records when needed, could face criminal fines up to \$10,000 and additional civil penalties of up to \$591 per day.

Failure to file could also lead to felony charges and up to two years in prison.

“The greater farm economy will also be impacted by CTA requirements,” AFBF economists wrote. “Many feed and supply stores, crop marketers like grain elevators and the greater rural business community are also likely required to file their BOI and subject to penalties if they do not comply. The regulatory burdens and potential enforcement crackdowns could have ripple effects throughout the entire food, fiber and fuel supply chains.”

Farmers are encouraged to contact an accountant or attorney if they are unsure whether they are required to file their business’s BOI with FinCEN.

Read the [Market Intel](#) report.

## 10 Regenerative Practitioners: Jeremy Brown

By [Green Cover Seed](#)

You’ve got to have a “Why”



Jeremy Brown farms in the southern panhandle of Texas. His main crop is cotton, but he also raises a little wheat, rye, and grain sorghum. 70% of his acres are certified organic and the rest soon will be.

*“You know, when you look at the six soil health principles, we’re really trying to implement those as much as possible. Of course, mostly being an organic farm, we are doing some disturbance, but we try to mitigate that with the use of our multi-species cover crops. We try to disturb only during the growing season. And if we’re not growing a cash crop, we try to leave the ground as undisturbed as possible using the cover crops.”*

Jeremy is farming in an arid environment with 12-14 inches of rainfall and drought years often mean that he won’t have a crop at all. While limited irrigation capacity on about a third of the acres helps, the water pumping capacity is limited, and it isn’t enough to support a crop on its own if it doesn’t rain.

### How he got started

Jeremy’s journey in regenerative agriculture started in 2013 by reading the parable of the sower in the Bible. As he was reading through the passage, he stopped when it talked about the seed landing in the “good soil” and he asked himself, “What is good soil?” That question led him to start looking for better ways to farm and he began to research regenerative farm practices.

In Jeremy’s part of Texas, it is fairly common to plant wheat for a cover crop. But Jeremy wanted to go a step further, so in the fall of 2013 he planted a mix of rye and hairy vetch from Green Cover as an experiment. Jeremy recalls, *“I really liked the results I saw, and I began to take a deeper dive into learning about regenerative agriculture practices. I reached out to Green Cover to learn more about different cover crops and how to implement them in my operation and over the next 10 years, I have tried many different ideas. Many failed, but a few ended up being very successful practices for me.”*

## Cotton and Cover Crops

Today, Jeremy plants his cotton on 80 inch row spacings. While this cuts the production acres in half compared to conventional cotton production, it allows each plant more water to use and gives the cotton plants more growing space. The plants respond by branching out more and putting on an increased number of fruiting positions. This enables the wide row cotton to be more efficient with moisture and fertility while limiting the potential yield drags that come with reduced per acre plant populations.



A major benefit of the wide rows is that it allows Jeremy to inter-seed his cover crops into the cotton in September, instead of waiting till after harvest finishes in December. Jeremy explains, *“In our part of Texas, September is historically the 4th wettest month of the year, giving my inter-seeded covers a good opportunity to get established. The extra three months of growing season my covers get in the fall means they are farther ahead come spring time. In order to conserve spring moisture, I am ready to terminate the covers earlier in the spring if needed.”*

## Economic Impact

Over the years one of the most important realizations for Jeremy was to stop trying to out perform his dry environment. Rather than focusing on producing the maximum amount of cotton per acre, he now focuses on producing the most profitable cotton per acre. He achieves this by limiting his inputs and only spending money on things that will bring him a good return. *“We cut all these inputs like synthetic fertilizers, chemicals, and I don’t even do composting, and instead we just focus on the soil health principles.”* The economics of Jeremy’s farm have improved thanks to his regenerative and organic practices. By combining the higher market premiums for organic cotton with his low input approach to farming, Jeremy has improved his bottom line. He has also greatly limited his downside risk when droughts come, since he doesn’t have as much money invested in each crop.



## Advice for Others

10 years into his regenerative journey Jeremy still believes he has a long way to go. Jeremy encourages people to start small and try a few new ideas on a limited number of acres. He encourages others to get connected to a network of regenerative farmers for support and learning. Most importantly Jeremy thinks you need to have the proper motivation since this will drive you and keep you going when things don’t go well. *“I think you have to have a why and for me my why is my faith. I’m a steward of God’s land. This is not mine. This is His, He created this to function and He declared it to be good. My job is to figure out a way to get back to the way He designed it.” One day I will be gone, and unless Christ returns before that, this land will still be here and I will leave it better than how I found it”*

Tune In For The

*The*  
**GRAZE**



ALL THINGS LIVESTOCK AND RANCHING  
Educational Series



**900 AM**


**1st Friday Of  
The Month  
11 AM**

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 [All Ag, All Day  
900 AM KFLP](#)

 **Subscribe!**

## Upcoming Programs/Events:

Please call (806) 291-5267 to sign-up or if you have any questions.

### **Lunch & Learn: Increasing the Value of Your Calf Crop**

November 7, 2024 (12PM) RSVP – 806-291-5267  
Hale County Extension Office (West Side Entrance)  
225 Broadway, Ste. 6  
Plainview, TX 79072

### **The Mid-Plains Ag Expo – Great Speakers, Lunch, CEUs, Auxin Training**

January 22, 2025  
Hale County Justice Center Assembly Room (Main Entr.)  
225 Broadway  
Plainview, TX 79072

### **Grazing School**

Dates To Be Decided  
Hale County Extension Office  
225 Broadway, Ste. 6  
Plainview, Texas 79072

### **AM Radio – The GRAZE Educational Series**

First Friday of Every Month @ 11:00 AM  
Aired on Radio: All Ag, All Day – 900AM

## **Hale County Ag Committee:**

<b>Shane Berry</b>	<b>Mark Mahagan</b>
<b>Greg Cronholm</b>	<b>Joe Mustian</b>
<b>Chance Crossland</b>	<b>Leo Ruijne</b>
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