

Texas crop, weather Rain good news for wheat planters

By Robert Burns

COLLEGE STATION – All of Texas received some rain in the last week, with north central parts of the state getting 5 to 6 inches, while the Panhandle and points west saw only light showers to about 1 inch, according to the National Weather Service.

The Southwest got more rain in the last week than it had in the past year, but coming this late in the season, producers were still culling herds for lack of forage.

The rain was welcomed by agricultural producers

waiting to plant small grains, including winter wheat, but a bit late for some dryland cotton. What irrigated cotton and sorghum really need is more heat units, according to Texas AgriLife Extension Service personnel.

"As for a lot of the irrigated cotton, we'd already stopped watering," said Dr. Todd Baughman, AgriLife Extension agronomist based at Vernon.

The rain won't make much difference for the dryland cotton, either, Baughman said. "Two weeks in the middle of August with

100-plus degree temperatures pretty much finished out our dryland crop for us," he said.

Baughman said he expected dryland cotton yields to be about average.

"When we went into the first of August, it looked like we had the potential for an outstanding crop," he said. "And it's going to be average at best, now."

Parts of the Rolling Plains got rain, with the better rains east of Lubbock, said Dr. Randy Boman, AgriLife Extension cotton agronomist. Though more rains would be welcome, the limiting factor

for cotton in his region is a shortage of heat units.

"We really are at the point that we don't have a lot of time to waste in terms of maturing the crop," he said. "We really need to make some fiber as soon as possible."

Baughman said the high on Sept. 13 was only 67 degrees, compared to the long-term average of 83 degrees.

"We're just on a slow down-trend to going to something like zero heat units by the middle of October," he said.

Though irrigated cotton remains good overall, Boman said there's going to be "a sizeable acreage" of dryland cotton with disappointing yields as a result of the drought.

In the Panhandle, Dr. Brent Bean, AgriLife Extension agronomist based in Amarillo, said the rain won't make much difference for the region's corn crop, which is either drying down or being already harvested.

"The rain is not really affecting the corn crop, other than just finishing it out," Bean said. "Overall, it's been a good year for corn."

Panhandle sorghum and cotton are both progressing well. Cotton is a little late, though, he said.

"Those that got their cotton planted early enough and got some heat units in late May should be in pretty good shape," he said.



The Great Pumpkin Patch Express rolls in October

Palestine, TX – This October the Texas State Railroad will host PEANUTS™ - The Great Pumpkin Patch Express. Join Snoopy for a train excursion themed after Charles M. Schulz's classic story "It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" departing the Palestine Depot on October 4, 9, 10, 11, 30, & 31, 2009. Friday and Sunday the train departs at 11:00am and Saturdays at 11:00am and 1:45pm.

This special event will take you on a journey to the Pumpkin Patch. On board the train, guests will listen to a live reading of the classic story. Upon arrival at the Pumpkin Patch, guests will be greeted and have a photo opportunity with Snoopy. During the 1 1/2 hour layover enjoy picking a pumpkin from The Great Pumpkin Patch,

decorate the pumpkin at our decoration station, and trick-or-treat on "Trick or Treat Street". Other activities include a hayride, video viewing, petting zoo, live musical entertainment, bouncy house, coloring station, apple bobbing & other activities. Hamburgers, hotdogs, and snacks will be sold at the Pumpkin Patch or guests may bring a picnic lunch.

Tickets may be purchased by calling the reservation office at 1-888-987-2461 or by booking online at www.TexasStateRR.com. Tickets are \$19 for Children (ages 2-11) & \$36.50 for Adults in Coach and Open-Air seating and \$21 for Children (ages 2-11) and \$39.50 for Adults in Climate Controlled seating. Children 2 & under ride free.



Cotton in many areas needs more heat units to mature, according to Texas AgriLife Extension Service personnel. (U.S. Department of Agriculture - ARS photo by David Nance)

Bell-Ringing Ceremony at the elementary school

To commemorate the 222nd anniversary of the Signing of the Constitution of the United States of America, the Colonel George Dashiell Chapter, NSDAR, hosted a Bell-Ringing Ceremony in the library of Normangee Elementary School. After a short program on the importance of Constitution Week, especially September 17th, the actual date of the signing, the students all participated in ringing, with gusto! Over eighty students in the 4th and 5th grade classes were ready to join in. Elementary Principal Ms Lee joined in as the students, teachers and Chapter members all joined together reading the Preamble to the Constitution. Each student received a bookmark with the preamble printed on it.

By National Law, the week of September 17-23 is "Constitution Week" and is to be celebrated by all. Schools are to emphasize teaching the Constitution during that week. At least one city mayor in Leon County, Normangee, signed a Proclamation declaring the "Constitution Week"

in that city. Posters were provided to one school library.

Preceding the school ceremony, the chapter held its first regular meeting of the new year, meeting in the Normangee Church of Christ. Members first shared a salad lunch, then began the business. Past Regent Shirley Bland was presented with the NSDAR Certificate for Level I Chapter Achievement. This is in recognition of her leadership, and the chapter's accomplishments during the 2008-2009 year. It is worth noting that the entire community across Leon County supports this chapter in their many endeavors, and it is appreciated.

Member Neva Jo Brooks presented a program on her ancestor, Reverend John Lothrop. This Lothrop family is documented back to the early sixteenth century. The first of this line to come to America was Rev John Lothrop, arriving here in 1634. This followed much religious persecution in England, his serving time in prison. Ms Brooks has toured

the area of Barnstable, Massachusetts where he lived and preached, and was able to tour the museum which has been built to include his home.

NSDAR National Day of Prayer is October 10 and all members are encouraged to observe this day in some manner.

The next regular meeting is on October 15, and will be in the Leon County Courthouse Annex I, where members will be able to view the painting "Prayer at Valley Forge" recently presented and dedicated by this Chapter. The program will be presented by Ms Geneice Morris, Sarah Maples Chapter in Mabank, and will be a review of the book "God and Country".



The 4th and 5th grade students in the Normangee Elementary Library. Member Faye Andrews is speaking to the students. Contributed photo

Pvt. Kreider graduates from combat training

Army National Guard Pvt. Juanita L. Kreider has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission, history, tradition and core values, physical fitness, and received instruction and practice in basic combat skills, military

weapons, chemical warfare and bayonet training, drill and ceremony, marching, rifle marksmanship, armed and unarmed combat, map reading, field tactics, military courtesy, military justice system, basic first aid, foot marches, and field training exercises.

She is the daughter of Robert Trevino of Jewett, Texas.

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