

Master Marketer Newsletter

<http://mastermarketer.tamu.edu>

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2017 Castroville Master Marketer Course

Online registration will open July 1 at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/MasterMarketer> for the 2017 Master Marketer Program to be held in Castroville at the Medina County J.P. Court - Precinct 2 (8366 FM 4715 South) Dates for the 2017 program include: September 18 - Leveling Workshop; September 19 & 20 – Session I; October 2 & 3 – Session II; October 16 & 17 – Session III; and October 30 & 31 – Session IV.

The program has a \$350 registration fee and will be available to the first 60 participants or until September 15. Registration is also available by phone at (979) 845-2604. More information can be found on <http://mastermarketer.tamu.edu/> or by contacting Mark Welch at (979) 845-8011 and Rob Hogan at (830) 278-9151 ext 288.

Master Marketer Highlights

Beef Cattle Short Course

The 2017 Beef Cattle Short Course will be held August 7-9 on the Texas A&M University Campus in College Station, Texas. Featuring more than 20 concurrent sessions and opportunities to receive pesticide CEUs and veterinarian CECs and BQA credits, trade show exhibitors will also be in attendance. For registration and more information on this beef cattle educational program, visit <http://beefcattleshortcourse.com/>

Texas Sheep and Goat Expo

Addressing the Texas area and the Southwest part of the United States, the 2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo is set for August 18-19 in San Angelo. The statewide Texas A&M AgriLife event is one of the largest sheep and goat programs in the world addressing many different segments of the industry. By following the Sheep and Goat

Field Day, concurrent sessions will address wool sheep, Angora goats, meat goats, club lambs, and hair sheep. New sessions have been added this year to include a youth component, sheep performance data instruction, and a sale of performance-tested rams.

Early expo registration by August 15 is \$40 for adults, while student registration is \$15 per day. Late registration after August 15 is \$60. The final expo agenda and online registration is available at <http://agrilife.org/westresults/registration>

QuickBooks Pro Short Course

A two day QuickBooks Pro Short Course will be held in Amarillo at the District 1 Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center (6500 W Amarillo Blvd) during August 30-31 and a second one will be held in Lubbock at the District 2 Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center (1102 E FM 1294) during September 12-13. The two programs will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. both days. The training will be conducted by DeDe Jones of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's FARM Assistance Program. No prior computer experience is necessary to participate in the course and participants will learn to enter transactions and analyze costs and profits in this accounting program often used by agricultural lenders and producers.

Registration is \$150 and includes computer use and teaching materials. Class size is limited to 15 and those planning to attend should RSVP by August 24 for the Amarillo program and by September 8 for the Lubbock program. For more information or to RSVP, contact DeDe Jones or Kim Garcia at (806) 677-5600.

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Featured Article

A Deeper Look into the USDA.gov Website Redesign

Taken from the USDA.gov Blog

We hope you are finding it easier to get the information you need on USDA.gov following the launch of our site redesign in March. We've already welcomed over 1 million visitors to the new site and we are pleased with the positive feedback we've received thus far.

Our redesign makes it easier for you to get the news you care about quickly and get on with your busy life. Now, you can explore "USDA in Action," an area designed to quickly share what's happening across the department. And another friendly feature is being able to sign up for email updates with the click of a button from any page on the site. It's all part of our strategic efforts to improve upon digital communications across USDA, strengthen collaboration with all of our USDA agencies, and expand our digital capabilities.

Through our redesign, we were able to introduce new design elements from the U.S. Federal Web Design Standards that help to make the site more intuitive. Our primary goals for the redesign included highlighting more social and engaging information and placing it right at your fingertips; making better use of real estate on our homepage; enhancing our site search to help you get to information faster; improving the site's information architecture; and implementing responsive design across the entire site to provide a better viewing experience from any device.

For those who'd like to learn what's behind it all, you might enjoy this deeper look at our plan. As part of our initial planning efforts and project kick-off, we developed a simple roadmap that provided a high-level outline of deliverables and requirements for the site. Throughout the project we worked within a system that allowed us to track hundreds of individual tasks specifically tailored to the redesign. We completed content mapping tasks, archived outdated content, and established new taxonomy, metadata, and keywords for the site, supported by our site analytics.

And as part of our continued effort to ensure the new site is user and mobile-friendly, we leveraged industry-based tools, including Google and Bing, to test the site across multiple devices and platforms. We also worked to ensure the new site is fully accessible using the WCAG 2.0 guidelines outlined in the U.S Access Board's Section 508 Refresh—a new mandate that updates the standards for accessibility requirements for information and communication technology. We're not stopping there as we will continue to make improvements moving forward.

In addition to adopting new Federal guidelines, the site is now built on a Drupal platform, which allows us more flexibility in our approach to content management and the ability to quickly edit and publish content. It also provides us with a centralized location to host all of our content, including the USDA blog. On top of that, the platform provides easier onboarding and training, and a simplified approach to analytics and engagement, with improved methods for digital media and social sharing integration. We also have the ability to monitor and maintain a more reliable and usable infrastructure compared to our legacy content management system.

Our digital team worked diligently alongside a team of contractors to meet many deadlines and complete a successful launch. Using agile project management methods, strategic planning, workshops and user testing, and a combination of web development and accessibility tools, the new USDA.gov embodies the best of government and industry expertise with our audience—you—in mind. By working closely with our stakeholders, agencies and offices, and federal partners, we were able to not only meet our goals for the new website, we were able to reestablish our digital processes and the way we deliver and receive information online.

By sharing the efforts that went into our redesign, we hope it provides you with a better understanding of the site and the steps we've taken to provide an improved experience. We want you to continue to explore the new site and continue to share feedback with us at feedback@oc.usda.gov

Farm Assistance Update

Steven Kloze,

Professor and Extension Economist,
Department of Agricultural Economics,
Texas A&M University

In addition to the strategic analysis we conduct for individuals, I wanted to highlight another product that comes out of our FARM Assistance group. Extension Agricultural Economics has traditionally published budgets for common enterprises around the state. For several years now, Jerry Cornforth has been coordinating the development and publishing of the state Extension Budgets. Using local knowledge, data, and expertise, each of our Extension District Economists annually prepares district specific budget information. Jerry and our staff make the budgets available early each spring.

Extension budgets are published to serve several purposes. First, is simply to provide examples of common practices used to raise a crop or livestock enterprise in specific area. The budgets also illustrate a possible set of price and cost expectations for that coming crop year. Most importantly, the budgets serve as a template the farm/ranch manager can use to produce a budget plan specific to their operation. Directly supporting the last purpose, we now have available downloadable spreadsheets you can use to build your own budgets. Using the template provided, you can enter costs, yields, and prices specific to your operation and analyze your own profit potential, break-even prices, and break-even yields. Jerry also has a help video that explains how to use the spreadsheets.

The budgets can be found at <http://agecoext.tamu.edu/> Follow the "Resources" menu to "Crop and Livestock Budgets." You can search the budgets by district or by commodity. To find the downloadable spreadsheets, search the budgets by district, and the spreadsheet link is at the bottom of each district page.

Need help with budgets, or need a more comprehensive evaluation of your whole farm/ranch, as always, we look forward to helping you. Contact FARM Assistance toll free at 1-877-TAMRISK or online at: farmassistance.tamu.edu

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Texas Agriculture Law

Tiffany Dowell Lashmet is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist specializing in Agricultural Law with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Licensed to practice law in both New Mexico and Texas, she is offering Ranchers Leasing Workshops in College Station on September 1, Pearsall on September 19, and San Angelo on October 19. The free half-day programs will focus on grazing, hunting, and livestock lease agreements and participants will receive a copy of the Ranchers Leasing Handbook. To RSVP, contact Tiffany at tdowell@tamu.edu

Annie's Project

With a mission to empower farm women to be better business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information, Annie's Project is coming to Stephenville beginning in September. Annie's Project is a nationally awarded workshop series for women focusing on farm/ranch management. Program topics include decision-making in areas of production, marketing, financial, legal, and human resources risk management along with information on estate planning.

Classes will be held in Stephenville at the District 8 Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center (1229 N US Hwy 281) on September 7, 14, and 21 and October 5, 12, and 19 from 6:00PM to 9:00PM. Registration is limited to 30 participants and the \$50 registration fee covers meals and materials for all six sessions. For more information, please contact Jason Johnson at (254) 968-4144 or Lonnie Jenschke and Donna White at (254) 965-1460. Program Support is being provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Farm Credit.

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

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If you would like to receive this newsletter by mail,
or have any other questions about the Master Marketer System,
please contact Emmy Kiphen at emmykiphen@tamu.edu or (979) 847-6143.

An archive of newsletters can be found online by visiting
<http://agecoext.tamu.edu/programs/marketing-programs/master-marketer-program/newsletters/>

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disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

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