

## Introducing the Home Grown Podcast!

Thanks for joining us on our new endeavor! We are continuing to grow our educational outreach and have added another tool for you. The Home Grown Series is presented to you by the Agriculture & Natural Resources Unit.

### Why add a podcast?

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's mission is to improve the lives of all Texans. With the ANR unit, our focus is on all things Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Horticulture. Since we have improved the efficiency of our education through technology, we understand that people learn through various methods. The lecture combines auditory and visual learning styles, the newsletter is for visual learners, and now the podcast offers another auditory learning experience. Podcasts are easy to listen to while in the car or on the go and will allow us to speak to community members, A&M specialists, experts in their field, and other Extension Agents and volunteers.

### Is the same material covered as the lectures and newsletter?

No! At times, our newsletter articles reflect the topic for the lecture, but we try to provide different information and resources. The podcast will be even different and will vary according to the focus of the speaker we have during that week.

### How do you access the podcast?

Click anywhere on the image or logo below and it will take you directly to our Podcast page or search "Home Grown" where ever you search for podcasts.



### Our County Extension Agents

#### **Horticulture**

Paul Winski

Brandi Keller

#### **Ag/Natural Resources**

Shannon Dietz

### Available podcasts

#### **Episode #1**

Meet the Agents and learn about their passion for the Home Grown Series and Extension.

#### **Episode #2**

Paul interviews Bill Barr, mentor, friend, and plant propagator/plantsman extraordinaire. They discuss plant propagation and the nursery industry.

# Barklice: Not as bad as you think

by Paul Winski, Harris County Extension Agent, Horticulture

Walking through the neighborhood I noticed several trees with patches of webbing on their trunks. Barklice are back and doing what they do best; feeding on fungi, algae, dead bark and other organic materials.



## Description

Barklice are not true lice and are harmless to humans and pets. They are small, soft-bodied insects with two-pairs of well-developed wings in the adult stage, but the adults of some species can have reduced wings or none at all. Eggs are laid singly or in clusters and undergo simple metamorphosis (the young resemble the adults) and pass through six nymphal stages (instars) before becoming adults.



There are two species commonly found in the Texas Gulf-coast region.

- Web-spinning barklice: *Archipsocus nomas* less than 1/8 of an inch long, brownish in color and may or may not have wings. The actual insects are rarely seen, but their communal silken webs commonly found on the bark of trunks and branches are easy to identify. The webbing from barklice is rarely found on the foliage, which differs, from mites and caterpillars.
- Aggregating barklice: *Cerastipsocus venosus* adults can reach 1/4 of an inch in length, are winged and black in color. This species does not produce a web and the clusters of barklice move slowly together like a herd of cattle on the bark.

## Management Considerations

These insects pose no threat to the health or vigor of the tree. The presence of barklice indicates that a suitable habitat for them exists. They are viewed as beneficial insects since they eat fungus and other organic debris. The control of barklice is not necessary; however if a customer/homeowner considers the webbing unsightly a high-pressure stream of water will remove the webbing and dislodge the insects from the tree (no insecticide treatments are required).



# Art From Your Garden

by Brandi Keller, Harris County Extension Agent, Horticulture



Plants can be grown for artistic and craft purposes. Gardening has many health benefits related to exercise, sunlight and routine, but art is just as important for our wellbeing. It channels our attention to a product that is a record of ourselves, our knowledge, and in this case, of our home and gardens. The plants we grow not only provide nutrition, they can be used for numerous other purposes, and have been for decades or centuries, but have fallen by the wayside for easily replicated methods. You can create a garden specifically to utilize for art or you can use what you already have. What a way to honor those plants... by allowing them to live on as an impression of their former selves!



Some plants have pigments that can be extracted to be used for dyes. Using eggs is a good way to get started as each experience can yield different results. Dyes used with plants tend to be softer, muted tones. In addition, some plants yield different colors from flowers, fruit, bark and leaves.



To create a cyanotype, an object is placed on light-sensitized paper/cloth and exposed to sunlight. The more solid the object, the whiter the outline. Delicate flowers and leaves like fennel, poppies, and ferns will provide sharp outlines around all the edges making for a more dramatic showing.

Yellow	Bay leaves, marigold, goldenrod
Green	Spinach, chamomile leaves
Blue	Blueberry, cornflower
Purple	Mulberry, red cabbage
Red	Radish, beetroot, hibiscus flower
Orange	Onion skin, eucalyptus

## Monoprints

Monoprinting is a form of printmaking that will only create one copy. They can be made by the method above, using paints and other mediums, or by pounding the pigments out. For a simple project to get started printing parts of your garden onto paper, click [HERE](#). This is a process that improves with practice, so have fun discovering what works and what does not.

The video below introduces various art and craft techniques that can be used with what is already growing in our own gardens. It covers dyes, monoprints, drying, pressing, edible art, and more.

**To view "Art From the Garden" - Click [HERE](#).**

# Marketing Cull Cows: Understanding What Determines Value

by Ron Gill, Ph.D., Extension Livestock Specialist, Texas A&M University

*Shannon Dietz, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Harris County Extension Agent - Ag & Natural Resources, is sharing a timely publication written by Dr. Ron Gill, Extension Livestock Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Dr. Gill is a nationally recognized beef cattle livestock specialist and in this article he shares with cattle producers how and when to market culled cows and the factors affecting market price.*

Under drought conditions it is likely many operations will experience lower conception rates than normal. Feed costs and uncertainty about growing seasons next year make culling of these open cows appear to be the correct management decision. In an average year, cull cows will represent 10-20% of gross revenue on a cow-calf operation.

Informed marketing, rather than simply selling, can add to income from cull cow and bull sales. When factors affecting value are understood, culls can be marketed to take advantage of seasonal trends and fluctuations in cow condition. Factors affecting value are sale weight, body condition, muscling, quality, and blemishes, all of which can be managed at the ranch to add value to the culls. Cull cow value is based on percent lean meat yield and live weight.

Cows are graded into four broad categories, Canner, Cutter, Utility, and Commercial. Canners are thin, emaciated cows which have lost muscle mass due to poor nutrition or health. Cutters are thin to moderate in flesh. Little muscle mass has been lost but no excess condition is being carried. Cows grading Utility carry higher levels of condition. (It is a fat cow grade.) Utility is further divided into Boning and Breaking classifications as well. Cow tenders, strips and top rounds can be, and often are, pulled from cows grading Boning Utility.

Breaking Utility cows have sufficient intramuscular fat (marbling) and muscling for the primals (particularly cuts from the rib and loin) to be used outside the ground meat trade. This greatly increases the carcass value of these cows.



Cows that will grade Breaking Utility are very difficult, if not impossible, to determine before processing. It is not practical to manage cows with the goal of producing Breaking Utility grade.

Carcasses grading Commercial are normally from younger cows that fall into C maturity (approximately 42 months old or older). Primal cuts are routinely pulled from these cattle and use in restaurant trade.

Canner cows bring a lower price per pound than Cutter, Utility or Commercial cows. Cutters normally have a higher price per pound than Canner or Utility. Recently, Utility cows are selling for more per pound than Cutter cows. Utility cows bring a price per pound that is usually intermediate to Cutters and Canners but will often have more total dollar income due to extra live. Producers should target cows for the high yielding Cutter or Boning Utility grade.



# Marketing Cull Cows: Understanding What Determines Value

## continued

Caution should be exercised when marketing cows directly to a packing plant. Cows that grade high Cutter and Utility will probably be discounted if they have too much external fat. Packers discount what they classify as fat cows. Unlike processing facilities for feedlot cattle, cow processors sort cow carcasses according to the described criteria. They are not graded by a USDA grader or stamped with the packer grades.

When selling cows directly to the packer another discount to be aware of is for light carcasses. Carcasses weighing less than 350 pounds receive up to \$15/cwt discount. The Canner grade is most likely to produce light carcasses. Thin, emaciated cows are discounted at the sale barn to compensate for the probability of light carcasses. For example, a cow with a body condition score (BCS) of 3, weighing 800 pounds and dressing 40%, would hang up a 320-pound carcass. A \$15/cwt discount equals \$48 per head, or \$6/cwt on a live-weight basis. This is in addition to the lower price per pound for Canner cows.

Cows are inspected by USDA inspectors at processing. Condemnations are the result of the USDA inspector, not plant management. Condemnation is due to pathological conditions only, most commonly due to cancerous conditions which have spread out of a localized organ such as an eye.

The most competitive environment for selling cull cows is still the local auction facility. Unless a prearranged price is agreed upon and conditions for determining carcass value are set, it is risky to sell directly to a processing plant.

To maximize value of cull cows, consider some or all of the following changes in management if they appear to be profitable.

1. Add weight to thin cull cows before selling. This is particularly valuable when cows are BCS 3 or lower at culling. High quality forage efficiently replenishes muscle mass on cows. Extremely old cows may not gain as efficient as younger cows. Target a BCS of 5 for light muscled cows and BCS 5-6 for heavier muscled cows.
2. Cull old cows before they lose their teeth, decline in body condition, and fail to breed. Besides having lower cull weight and value, such cows have also weaned lighter calves than the younger cows for probably at least two years.
3. Explore selling directly to a packer on a prearranged price. Caution should be exercised! Bids are more competitive at local auctions. Only a knowledgeable producer should attempt to market good quality cows directly to a packer.
4. Market crippled cattle directly to a packer, without going through usual marketing channels. Cows with other blemishes, such as bad eyes, probably should also be sold directly to a packer.
5. Sell cows before they become fat (BCS 8-9). Fat cows are discounted for low lean yield regardless of their potential to classify as Breaking Utility.
6. Sell cows outside seasonal marketing trends. Cull cow prices are normally lowest in October and November. If possible, consider marketing between February and September when slaughter rates are lower.
7. Consider cull cows as a valuable asset and handle them as such. Bruising is a major problem with cull cows. Most bruises are caused by rough handling and hauling from the time they are sorted at the ranch until they are processed at the cow plant.
8. Be cautious and concerned about withdrawal times when marketing cows which have been treated with animal health products.

# Upcoming Home Grown Lecture Series



## HOME GROWN LECTURE SERIES

JULY - AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2021

### THE LATEST & GREATEST IN BEDDING PLANTS FOR 2022

Paul Winski - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Horticulture

July 1, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

### GARDEN HUMMINGBIRD SAFETY

Brandi Keller - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Horticulture

July 15, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

### COOKING SAFELY OUTDOORS

Shannon Dietz - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural  
Resources

August 5, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

### FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING

Paul Winski - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Horticulture

August 19, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

### ENHANCING YOUR DISHES WITH FLAVORED BUTTERS

Shannon Dietz - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural  
Resources

September 2, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

### GROWING MICROGREENS AT THE WINDOWSILL

Brandi Keller - Texas A&M AgriLife County  
Extension Agent-Horticulture

September 16, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

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**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION

TO REGISTER FOR THIS FREE ONLINE SERIES,  
PLEASE VISIT  
[HTTPS://HOMEGROWN2021Q3.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://homegrown2021q3.eventbrite.com)

THE MEMBERS OF TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE WILL PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, EDUCATION, AND EMPLOYMENT TO ALL PERSONS REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR, SEX, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, DISABILITY, GENETIC INFORMATION, VETERAN STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY AND WILL STRIVE TO ACHIEVE FULL AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY THROUGHOUT TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE..



# Upcoming: 2021 Ag Summit

You won't want to miss the 2021 Southeast Texas Ag Summit. Registration will be available soon on Eventbrite.com.

This event will include a Welcome BBQ on Thursday evening with agriculture and natural resources industry leaders. The schedule for Friday includes educational classes with CEUs available, door prizes, catered lunch, and more.



**SAVE THE DATE!**

## **2021 Ag Summit**

**State of Southeast Texas Agriculture**

*Don't Miss Your Opportunity To Meet Industry Leaders*

**September 30, 2021 - October 01, 2021**

**Baytown Community Center**

***Interested Vendors and/or Sponsorships please contact:  
Shannon Dietz, ANR County Extension Agent, Harris County  
shannon.dietz@ag.tamu.edu***



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office prior to the meeting to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.

# Contact Us

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## **Social Media/Webistes**

Harris County Horticulture Facebook

Horticulture YouTube Channel

Harris County Master Gardeners Facebook

Harris County Ag & Natural Resources Facebook

Harris County AgriLife Website



If you would like to **unsubscribe** from the Home Grown newsletter, please email Susan Hubert at [susan.hubert@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:susan.hubert@ag.tamu.edu)

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