The Pesticide Periodical

Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit

January 2026

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agrilife.org/aes

Upcoming Programs

General Standards/Technician Training

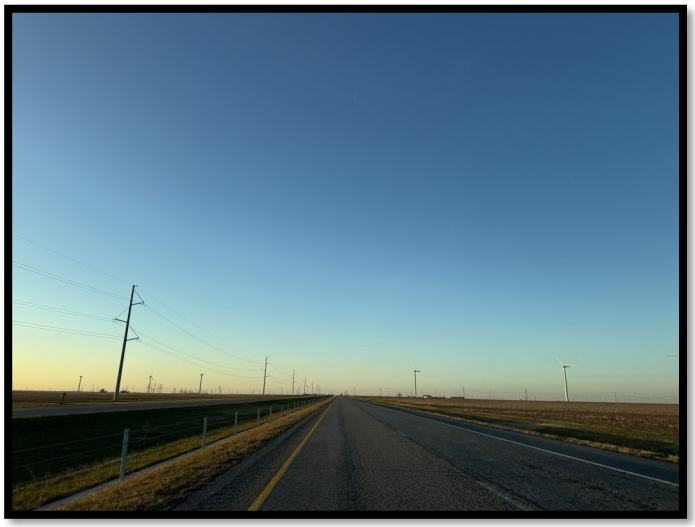
- January 22nd (Austin)
- February 17th (Dallas)

8-Hour Structural Pest Category Training

- January 23rd (Austin)
- February 18th (Dallas)

8-Hour Landscape Maintenance Category Training

- January 28th (Ft. Worth)
- February 4th (Austin)
- February 25th (Rosenberg)



Are You Ready?

Mr. Jacob Wightman, Extension Program Specialist

Welcome back, folks!

As everyone settles back into their normal routines, I would like to kick off 2026 in the same way I concluded 2025: talking about integrated pest management (IPM). A recent article in PCT got me thinking about **reliance** and **versatility**, two very important concepts in agricultural and structural pest management. In simple terms, which tools consistently work really well and does the successful program allow for modifications and/or substitutions to be made?

Successful pest management programs reckon with reliance and versatility in a meaningful way by relying on IPM's mixed-methods approach. Sure, if a treatment or technology works there is no reason to shelf it for no good reason, but an insistence on repetitive use can lead to increased pest issues. Just ask any experienced rodent or mosquito manager about resistance problems.

On the other side, sometimes it is not the applicator's choice to switch management methods as in the case of the PCT article where regulations are restricting the technology PCOs are able to use. When things like this happen, and a switch to the pest management plan is imminent, how easily can an established and successful plan be modified? A program that already utilizes a mixed methods approach will have no problem accommodating these new rules, a more rigid one will have trouble. Perhaps this is a good time to ask yourself and/or your technicians, "are we equipped for change?"

Pest Profile: Mexican Fruit Fly

Miss Avery Brooks '25, AES Student Coordinator

Commercial citrus producers in south Texas are battling a foreign invader: the Mexican Fruit Fly. This fly is native to southern and central Mexico, but each year the pest finds its way to the Lower Rio Grande Valley where it can infest more than 50 types of fruits and vegetables. This pest could be detrimental to citrus production in the state of Texas as there are around 27,000 acres of commercial citrus grown in the Lower Rio Grande Valley region. As of December 31, 2025, there are two quarantine regions located in Penitas, Texas (Hidalgo County) and La Feria, Texas (Cameron County). The female Mexican Fruit Fly has the ability to lay eggs within a fruit using a long, tube-like organ called an ovipositor. Those eggs hatch into larvae and make the fruit unmarketable and inedible. Affected fruit decays early and falls to the ground, which allows the larvae to feed on the pulp and develop into a mature adult.

Identification

Mexican Fruit Fly larvae (maggots) can be found inside the fruit feeding on the pulp. They are legless, white to yellowish-white and grow to around 0.4 inches in length. Adult Mexican Fruit Flies are typically larger than a house fly and have a pale orange-yellow color on their body. Their wings are clear with yellow and brown stripes.

Control & Prevention

These pests utilize ripe fruit to reproduce, so eliminating their access to ripe fruit is the easiest way to prevent their presence. It is important to remove all citrus fruit as soon as it ripens and do not leave any ripe fruit hanging on the tree or laying on the ground. If you need to dispose of any uneaten or unused fruit, be sure to double bag it and properly dispose of it in a trash bin. Additionally, do not compost any fruit or vegetables within a quarantine area. This pest is spread through infested fruits and vegetables, so USDA recommends not bringing or mailing fresh fruits, vegetables, or plants into the state unless they have been cleared by agricultural inspectors. Prevention is the first step to ensuring these pests are not spread, but eradication tactics have also been used, which include surveillance, bait sprays, and Sterile Insect Techniques (SIT).

Miss an issue of The Pesticide Periodical? Find all of volume 1 on the AES website here: https://www-aes.tamu.edu/the-pesticide-periodical/

Send Announcements to

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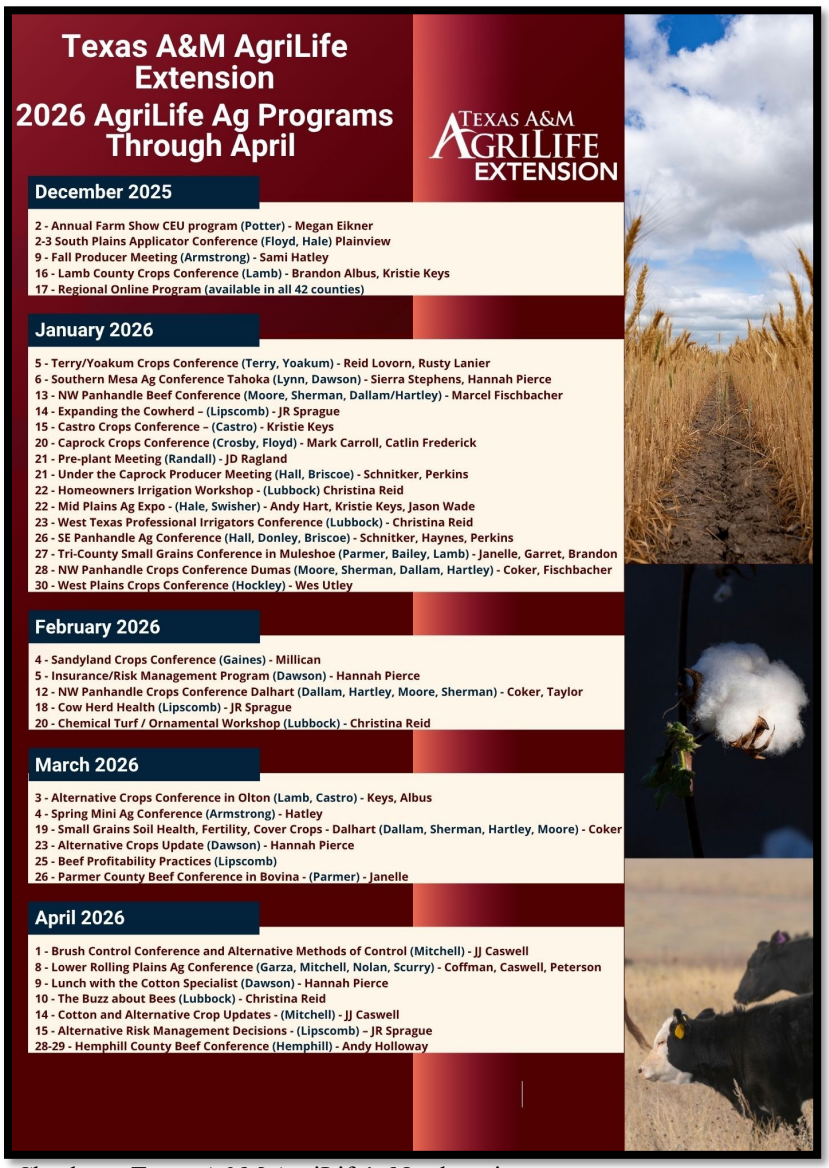

Check out Texas A&M AgriLife's North region programs, looking into 2026! Events, locations, and folks to contact can be found on the flyer above!

"A rolling stone gathers no moss."

2026 School IPM Coordinator Training Dates

1 Day and 2 Day Trainings

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension– Hidalgo County

- February 12th

Region 8 Educational Service Center

- March 4th

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center– El Paso

- March 26th

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center– Amarillo

- March 30th

Del Valle ISD

- April 22nd & 23rd (2 Day Training)

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center– Dallas

- May 6th & 7th (2 Day Training)

Register by visiting this link: https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/website/54443/home/

Search for School IPM Coordinator Training!

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