

Reference Guide for Leon County Landowners

This document is meant to help guide new landowners towards topics, concepts, and information that are pertinent to new landowners in Leon County, Texas. While we make every effort to be thorough and cover all pertinent topics, this document is not meant to cover every publication or resource over all topics. Rather, we hope that this guide will be a starting point for gathering information, and where to go with any questions. If there are land management topics that are not included in this document, please contact the Leon County Extension Office and let us know.



Document found at <https://leon.agrilife.org/agriculture-natural-resources/>

Richard Parrish
County Extension Agent, Ag/NR
Leon County



Texas A&M Agrilife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identify. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

05/26/22

Table of Contents

Information for Leon County Residents

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Leon County	3
Texas A&M Forest Service	3
Bedias Soil and Water Conservation District	3
United States Department of Agriculture	4
Farm Service Agency (FSA)	4
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	4
Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)	4
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)	5
Leon County Appraisal District	5
Mid-East Texas Groundwater Conservation District	5
Leon County Government	5

Publications and Topics of Interest on Property Management

Soil	6
Soil Properties and Quality	6
Soil Conservation	6
Water	6
Wells and Drinking Water	6
Wastewater and Septic Systems	6
Ponds and Pond Management	7
Vegetation	7
Pasture Management	7
Brush and Weed Control	7
Fruits and Vegetables	7
Livestock	8
Choosing Livestock Operations and Stocking Rates	8
Livestock Management, Nutrition, and Health	8
Cattle	8
Sheep & Goats	8
Horses	8
Poultry	8
Swine	8
Beekeeping	8
Wildlife	9
Feral Hogs	9
Ranch Maintenance and Operations	9
Infrastructure, Fences, and Structures	9
Operating a Farm/Ranch Business	9
Property Taxes	9
Other	9

Information for Leon County Residents

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Leon County

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has offices that cover all 254 counties in Texas, and provides relevant, research-based information to landowners and residents across the state. In Leon County, our office provides educational programs on a variety of topics covering 4-H, family and community health, and agriculture and natural resources.

Website: <https://leon.agrilife.org/>

Phone: (903) 536-2531

Mailing Address: PO Boxes 188, Centerville, Texas 75833

Physical Address: 113 W. Main, 3rd floor, Centerville, Texas 75833

Texas A&M Forest Service

The Texas A&M Forest Service is responsible for conserving and protecting the resources and lands of Texas. They help property owners maintain forests and natural resources for the future and are one of the lead wildfire agencies in Texas. They offer funding, technical guidance, and information for landowners across Texas.

Website: <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/>

Funding Programs: <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/landownerassistance/Stewardship/>

Plan My Land Webtool: <https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/pmla/>

Phone: (936) 544-7798

Mailing Address: 1605 West Loop 304, Crockett, Texas 75835

Physical Address: 1605 West Loop 304, Crockett, Texas 75835

Bedias Creek Soil and Water Conservation District

The Bedias Creek Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD #428) is a subdivision of the State dedicated to combating soil and water erosion to improve water quality and quantity.

Website: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcnds/428>

Funding Opportunities: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/water-quality-management-plan>

Phone: (936) 348-2173

Mailing Address: 120 S. Elm St., Ste 110, Madisonville, Texas 77864

Physical Address: 120 S. Elm St., Ste 110, Madisonville, Texas 77864

United States Department of Agriculture

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

The Farm Service Agency works to provide farmers, ranchers, and landowners access to technical assistance, funding, and programs to improve their operations. Their programs include low-interest loans, commodity price support, disaster assistance, and conservation incentives. These programs are available to all eligible producers, including beginning or underserved farmers and ranchers, veterans, and other groups in the county.

Website: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Texas/index>

Phone: (936) 544-3857 ext 2

Mailing Address: 1030 South 4th Street, Crockett, Texas 75835

Physical Address: 1030 South 4th Street, Crockett, Texas 75835

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The NRCS works with landowners to improve and protect soil, water, and other natural resources. Their specialists partner with landowners to provide technical assistance and implement conservation programs to reduce erosion, improve water quality, and promote sustainable agriculture. They do this through a variety of programs.

Website: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/tx/home/>

Funding Opportunities:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/?cid=stelprdb1048817>

Phone: (903) 536-2940 ext 3

Mailing Address: PO Box 217, Centerville, Texas 75833

Physical Address: 1028 E. Frontage S., Centerville, Texas 75833

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)

The Texas Department of Agriculture is responsible for managing pesticide licenses, supporting Texas agriculture, and has grand and loan programs for new and established farms and ranches. Their offices are regional, and the nearest one to Leon County is in Houston.

Website: <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/>

Funding Opportunities:

<http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/GrantsandServices.aspx>

Phone: (713) 921-8200

Mailing Address: 5425 Polk Street, Suite G-20, Houston, Texas 77023

Physical Address: 5425 Polk Street, Suite G-20, Houston, Texas 77023

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provides a number of services in Leon County. Aside from their law enforcement functions, they have landowner assistance programs that help private landowners implement Wildlife Management Plans, conduct prescribed fire, and other habitat management operations. They also have grants and other funding that may be applied for if the landowner qualifies.

Website: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/habitats/county/?county=Leon>

Game Wardens: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/warden/warden-by-county.phtml?county=Leon>

Leon County Appraisal District

The Leon County Appraisal District is the agency responsible for determining property values and qualifications for 1-D-1 Open Space Valuation (aka: Ag and Wildlife Exemptions). They make the final determinations for agricultural intensity of use and qualifying activities.

Website: <http://www.leoncad.org/>

Phone: (903) 536-2252

Mailing Address: PO Box 536, Centerville, Texas 75833

Physical Address: 141 W. Saint Marys Street, Centerville, Texas 75833

Mid-East Texas Groundwater Conservation District

The Mid-East Texas Groundwater Conservation District manages the water in the aquifers under Leon County so that allowed production will not have the effect of depleting the aquifers to the extent that wells currently operating go dry or have to be deepened in order to get water. They also protect existing wells against the adverse impact of a large well or series of well in the immediate vicinity.

Website: <http://www.mideasttexasgcd.com/>

Phone: (936) 348-3212

Mailing Address: PO Box 477, Madisonville, Texas 77864

Physical Address: 101 W. Main, Suite 115, Madisonville, Texas 77864

Leon County Government

Leon County provides a variety of services to the residents of Leon County. On the Leon County website, you can find out about local elected officials, where to pay your taxes, and services provided by Leon County.

Website: <https://www.co.leon.tx.us/>

Publications and Topics of Interest on Property Management

Purchasing a tract of land, regardless of size, is making a commitment to being a good steward of your property. This section will provide free, publicly available literature recommendations to help improve your understanding on topics you may be interested in. This is not an exhaustive list of every publication or topic but is rather a list of publications that target common questions and agricultural operations for the county. These publications may be found free at <https://leon.agrilife.org/agriculture-natural-resources/> or by calling the Leon County Extension Office at (903) 536-2531.

Soil

Soil Properties and Quality

- [Testing Your Soil: How to Collect and Send Samples](#)
- [Soil Acidity and Liming](#)
- [Introduction to Soils: Managing Soils](#)
- [Introduction to Soils: Soil Quality](#)
- [Texas A&M Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory](#)

Soil Conservation

- [Improving Water Quality with Grassed Waterways](#)
- [Baumhardt, R., Stewart, B., & Sainju, U. \(2015\). North American soil degradation: Processes, practices, and mitigating strategies. Sustainability, 7\(3\), 2936-2960.](#)

Water

- [Texas Watershed Steward Handbook](#)
- [Rainwater Harvesting](#)
- [Keep Pesticides Out of Texas Water Supplies](#)
- [Basics of Texas Water Law](#)

Wells and Drinking Water

- [Texas Well Owner Network: Well Owner's Guide to Water Supply](#)
- [Disinfecting Your Private Well](#)
- [How to Sample Your Well Water and Understand the Results](#)

Wastewater and Septic Systems

- [On-Site Water Treatment Systems: Homeowner's Guide to Evaluating Service Contracts](#)
- [On-Site Water Treatment Systems: Operation and Maintenance](#)
- Additional information on septic and other on-site sewage treatment systems may be found at <https://ossf.tamu.edu/educational-materials-2/>

Ponds and Pond Management

- [Texas Farm Pond Management Calendar](#)
- [Aquatic Herbicide Selection Tables](#)
- [Determining the Size of Your Pond](#)
- [My Fish are Dying](#)
- [A Pond to Call My Own: Understanding Water Law in Texas](#)
- [Ponds – Planning, Design, Construction](#)
- The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension AquaPlant website has an easy to use Pond Weed ID and control information. <https://aquaplant.tamu.edu/>

Vegetation

Pasture Management

- [Forage Species for Texas](#)
- [Forage Bermudagrass - Selection, Establishment, and Management](#)
- [Establishing Cool Season Annual Grasses](#)
- [Hay Production in Texas](#)
- [Restoring Native Grasslands](#)
- [Know Your Grasses](#)
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has a great website with a wide variety of resources for forage producers. <https://foragefax.tamu.edu/>

Brush and Weed Control

- [Know Your Grasses](#)
- [Weed Identification](#)
- [Brush Control for Small Acreages](#)
- [Weed Control in Pastures and Forages](#)
- [Managing Grassy Weeds in a Grass Pasture or Hay Meadow](#)
- [Chemical Weed and Brush Control](#)
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has a great website for their Brush Busters program: <https://texnat.tamu.edu/about/brush-busters/>. This resource covers a multitude of methods to control brush and other noxious species of plants.

Fruits and Vegetables

- [Texas Home Vegetable Gardening Guide](#)
- [Fruit and Nut Varieties for Leon County](#)
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Horticulture Department has a great website with a wealth of information: <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>. This resource contains information on planting and harvesting a wide variety of fruit and vegetable crops. It also contains information on garden preparation, disease management, and landscaping.

Livestock

Choosing Livestock Operations and Stocking Rates

- [Livestock for Small Acreage Landowners](#)
- [Stocking Rate Decisions](#)
- [Reference Guide for Texas Ranchers](#)

Livestock Management, Nutrition, and Health

Cattle

- [Buying vs Raising Replacement Heifers](#)
- [Recognizing and Managing Common Health Problems for Beef Cattle](#)
- [Managing External Parasites of Texas Cattle](#)
- [Keeping Cattle Hydrated and Healthy During a Drought](#)
- [Seven Management Techniques That Move Cow-Calf Producers Toward Profitability](#)

Sheep & Goats

- [Monitoring Internal Parasite Infection in Small Ruminants](#)
- [Biosecurity for Sheep and Goat Producers](#)
- [Getting Started in the Meat Goat Business](#)
- [Texas Breeding Goat Guide](#)

Horses

- [Nutrition and Feeding Management of Broodmares](#)
- [Care and Management of Horses on the Ranch](#)
- [Best Management Practices for Equine Disease Prevention](#)
- [Selection and Use of Hay and Processed Roughage in Horse Feeding](#)
- [Mature, Senior, and Geriatric Horses: Management, Care, and Use](#)
- [Horse Theft Awareness and Prevention](#)

Poultry

- [Poultry Pest Management](#)
- [Poultry Facility Biosecurity](#)
- [The Small Laying Flock](#)

Swine

- [Artificial Insemination in Swine](#)
- [Biosecurity for Swine Producers](#)

Beekeeping

- [Beekeeping Basics](#)
- [Honeybees and Beekeeping](#)
- [What Beekeepers Should Know About Bee Mites](#)
- [Using Honeybees in Pollination](#)
- [How to Minimize Pesticide Risks to Honeybees](#)

- [Protecting Honeybees from Pesticides](#)

Wildlife

- [Texas Comptroller - Guidelines for Qualification of Agricultural Land in Wildlife Management Use](#)
- [TPWD -Agricultural Tax Appraisal Based on Wildlife Management](#)
- [Wildlife Management Activities and Practices](#)
- The Wildlife and Fisheries Science Department at Texas A&M have a great website with information on wildlife management at <https://wildlife.tamu.edu/new-landowners/>

Feral Hogs

- [Recognizing Feral Hog Signs](#)
- [Feral Swine Hunters: Protect Yourself and Your Family From Brucellosis](#)
- [Feral Hog Diseases](#)
- AgriLife Extension Feral Hogs Website: <https://feralhogs.tamu.edu/>

Ranch Maintenance and Operations

Infrastructure, Fences, and Structures

- [Five Strands: A Landowner's Guide to Fence Laws in Texas](#)
- [NRCS Conservation Practice General Specification - Fence](#)
- [Planning and Building Fences of the Farm](#)

Operating a Farm/Ranch Business

- [Business Entity Planning](#)
- [Basic Business Structures: Sole Proprietor, Joint Operating Agreements and Partnerships](#)
- [Business Plans for Agricultural Producers](#)
- [Limited Liability Companies and Corporate Business Structures](#)
- [Developing a Marketing Plan](#)
- [Texas Comptroller - Agricultural and Timber Exemptions](#)

Property Taxes

- [Texas Property Taxes](#)
- [Understanding Texas Taxes](#)
- [Agriculture Taxes in Texas](#)
- [Appraisal of Agricultural Land](#)

Other

- [Owning Your Piece of Texas: Key Laws Texas Landowners Need To Know](#)
- [Ranchers' Agricultural Leasing Handbook: Grazing, Hunting, and Livestock Leases](#)