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October 2017

It's State Fair Time!

Howdy, friends! It's that time of year again — time for fall, football and the State Fair of Texas! I was so excited to spend time in Dallas just over a week ago, as we opened up the GO TEXAN Pavilion for this year's fair. We have so many fun, educational and truly Texas things happening in the GO TEXAN Pavilion, you won't want to miss it. Inside the Pavilion, you'll experience all the ways Texas agriculture impacts our daily lives. The Pavilion is located near the famous Cotton Bowl Stadium in the center of Fair Park.

As always, the Pavilion is packed with some of the tastiest food and beverages around, as well as world-class entertainment and shopping. Sponsored by Southwest Dairy Farmers, the Pavilion is 25,000-square-feet of all things Texas agriculture, including the GO TEXAN Pioneer Brand General Store, which is stocked full of Texas-made products — everything you can think of from bug spray to candy and salsa to candles!

Our GO Texan Pavilion is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The State Fair runs through Oct. 22. I hope you'll take a swing by the GO TEXAN Pavilion, and be sure to say hi to your friends from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA).

Your servant,

Sid Miller



Talley Amusements Teams up With State Fair Visitors to Benefit STAR Fund

Are you headed to the State Fair of Texas this October? Plan to take a ride on the Texas Star Ferris wheel, and you'll help farmers and ranchers recover from Hurricane Harvey.

Talley Amusements, owners of the Ferris wheel, and Farm Credit Bank of Texas are teaming up to donate proceeds from rides at this year's State Fair to the State of Texas Agriculture Relief (STAR) Fund. Talley Amusements will donate 20 cents of every Ferris wheel ride purchased to the STAR Fund, and Farm Credit Bank of Texas is matching the donation.

The STAR Fund was created to collect monetary contributions from private individuals and businesses to assist farmers and ranchers in responding to and recovering from natural disasters. Funds may be used to rebuild perimeter fences, pay for livestock burial costs, restore operations and assist with other agricultural relief efforts. Agriculture producers in any of the governor's disaster declaration counties have until Dec. 27 to apply. For more information on the STAR Fund, click [here](#).



Read more about how these two businesses are making difference for Texas agriculture [here](#).

October is Texas Wine Month

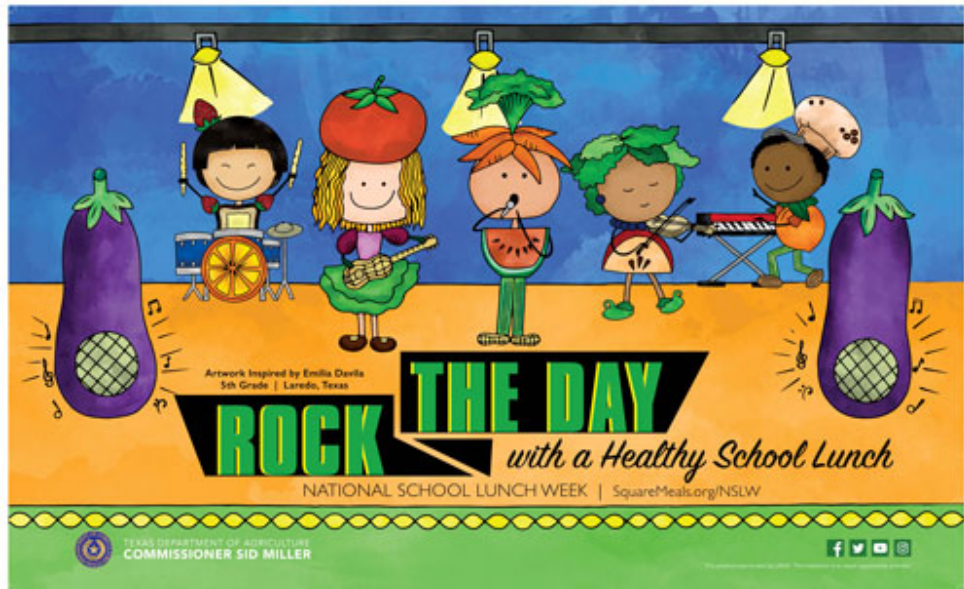


Join TDA as we celebrate Texas Wine Month this October — it's the ultimate way to savor and experience the bounty that Texas' wine industry has to offer. From special tastings to food and wine pairings to festivals and more, there's plenty to experience this month at the more than 400 wineries in Texas. [Find](#) events near you today!

Healthy Lifestyles Take Center Stage in October

October is an exciting time for TDA and our school nutrition partners. All month long, schools across the Lone Star State will take the Local Products Challenge and earn TDA recognition for incorporating more Texas products into school meals.

During National School Lunch Week, which takes place Oct. 9-13, students will celebrate school nutrition as they “Rock the Day with a Healthy School Lunch.” TDA posters, decals, selfie stations and the materials found in the [online toolkit](#) will support schools as they use these events to teach students about healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and Texas agriculture.



The fun and educational TDA activities in October don't stop when school's out for the day. In the GO TEXAN Pavilion at the State Fair of Texas, TDA's highly interactive exhibit will encourage visitors to “Discover the Great Plate of Texas.” A visit to the exhibit will include a real taste of Texas — fresh apples from a Texas orchard will be available, while supplies last. The State Fair of Texas also will feature a special rock 'n' roll nutrition education experience when the [“Farm Fresh Jump with Jill Live Tour”](#) performs live in the GO TEXAN Pavilion this Friday, Oct. 13.

Even those who can't make it out to any of these TDA events can share in the Farm Fresh excitement. Billboards, TV, radio and digital ads and events will be highlighting [Farm Fresh Fridays](#) all month. This October, everyone has an opportunity to see TDA's Food and Nutrition Division in action. Please join us in celebrating healthy lifestyles and Texas agriculture across the Lone Star State all month long.

Trade Program Helps Small Businesses in Global Marketplace

TDA is excited to be a part of a joint effort between the Office of the Governor's Economic Development and Tourism Division (OOG) and the U.S. Department of Commerce to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting through the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grant program from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The program's objective is to not only increase the number of Eligible Small Businesses Concerns (ESBCs) that are exporting but to also increase the value of exports for those ESBCs that are currently exporting. TDA's STEP program will encompass recruitment, execution of export trade activities and getting businesses involved in trade shows around the globe.

Additionally, eligible business will be able to take advantage of an export stipend program that's designed to provide flexibility and encourage the innovative use of funds to meet the specific export needs of Texas companies. Events and activities that are eligible and may qualify include, but are not limited to, participating in foreign trade missions, design of marketing materials, participating in training workshops and so much more.

For more information and to find out how this program can help your small business, contact TDA's [Grants Office](#) or click [here](#).

Mark Your Calendars: National Rural Health Day

Did you know that National Rural Health Day is set for Thursday, Nov. 16? The day is all about recognizing the unique health care needs of rural communities, while celebrating the fact that rural towns all across Texas are wonderful places to live and work. Stay tuned for more from TDA's Office of Rural Health about how we're celebrating National Rural Health Day.

Surplus Ag Grant Award Given to Feeding Texas

TDA is excited to announce the *Texans Feeding Texans - Surplus Agricultural Products Grant* award for 2018-2019 was recently given to Feeding Texas, a statewide association that represents 21 food banks and supports a network of more than 3,000 volunteer-run, faith-based private charities throughout Texas. This grant program was established to provide surplus agricultural products to food banks and other charitable organizations that serve needy or low-income individuals. TDA awards grant funding to help offset the costs of harvesting, gleaning and transporting Texas products to Texas food banks.

Feeding Texas works to provide needy Texans with meals, leads the conversation about how to solve hunger and works towards food security for all Texans. Through this grant, Feeding Texas buys surplus produce from Texas farmers, which would otherwise go to waste, to create a larger market for farmers to sell their goods. Then, Texas food banks distribute nearly 400 million pounds of donated or surplus food to counties across the state.

This is just one way TDA and our partners are working to build a healthier Texas and make sure the neediest Texans do not go hungry. For more information about this program and how it works, click [here](#).

Listen to The Latest *Texas Agriculture Matters* Episodes

Each week, Commissioner Miller and TDA are proud to bring the listeners of KRFE AM 580 in Lubbock a new episode of *Texas Agriculture Matters*. For those of you not in the Lubbock area, don't worry — we got you covered!

[Check out](#) the latest episodes of *Texas Agriculture Matters*. Whether you want to know about the Hay Hotline, STAR Fund or Local Products Challenge, you'll find it all in the latest episodes of *Texas Agriculture Matters*!

