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April 2018

Agriculture Trade at the Forefront

Agriculture is the backbone of our society; it provides the food and fiber that sustains our lives. Many of you have been hearing about tariffs, trade with China and how it's going to impact Texas agriculture producers. As I said on a recent appearance on Gov. Mike Huckabee's show, this is like smack talk between two fighters before entering the ring. We're still early in this process. The ink hasn't dried, and there is nothing set in stone yet. However, I am confident that our nation — and Texas — will benefit in the long run.

As Texas Agriculture Commissioner, I am committed to ensuring that Texas farmers and ranchers have a healthy, competitive market to sell their goods. Thanks to our Global Outreach Initiative at the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), we have traveled to almost every continent on the globe to help open markets to Texas products. In fact, one of those countries was China where I helped open the door to Texas beef for the first time in a long while.

I will continue to work to make sure that Texas ag producers are protected and have the best access to markets all across the globe to sell their products. That's my duty, and I promise to serve you to the best of my ability.

Remember friends, *Texas agriculture matters.*

Your servant,

Sid Miller

Family Land Heritage Applications Due May 1

Commissioner Miller is proud to invite Texas farmers and ranchers to apply for TDA's Family Land Heritage (FLH) program, which pays tribute to families who have kept their land in continuous agricultural production for at least 100 years. As TDA continues this proud tradition of honoring true Lone Star pioneers, Texas families are asked to submit their applications for recognition in the 2018 FLH registry by **Tuesday, May 1.**

Eligible farms and ranches must be owned and operated by the descendants of the founder, either through blood, marriage or adoption. At least 10 acres of the land must have been in continuous agricultural production for the past 100 years or more.



This fall, Commissioner Miller will honor farms and ranches established in 1918 or earlier at the FLH ceremony at the Texas Capitol.

“As a longtime rancher myself, I am proud to pay tribute to the men and women who nurture our land, and I encourage future generations to keep the legacy going,” Commissioner Miller said.

Click [here](#) to learn more about FLH and download an application.

Commissioner Miller Calls For Action on Temporary Worker Program

In a letter addressed to federal officials, Commissioner Miller asked for an opening of the program that affects the availability of temporary workers like those needed by the Texas shrimp and other agriculture industries.

“As Commissioner of Agriculture for the state of Texas, I am encouraging the Trump Administration to take immediate action and open the petition process under the H-2B Nonimmigrant Temporary Worker Program,” Commissioner Miller said. “This is critical for our agricultural economy, as well as the small and seasonal businesses that rely on the temporary workers provided through the H-2B program in Texas.”

The letter from Commissioner Miller simply requests that the federal agencies implement the number of temporary worker visas already approved by Congress — not an expansion of the program.

Read the full statement and view copies of Commissioner Miller’s letters [here](#).

TDA to Hold Statewide Meetings to Discuss Produce Safety Rule

We’re pleased to announce that TDA will hold a series of community meetings across the state to collect input on implementing the new federal law to promote the safety of fruits and vegetables grown across the country. The meetings will serve as a forum to gather public input as TDA develops the rules to administer this comprehensive new federal mandate.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), specifically the Produce Rule, establishes science-based minimum standards for the safe growing, harvesting, packing and holding of fruits and vegetables grown for human consumption. This is the first time such standards have been implemented. That’s why TDA is hosting these meetings across the state — we want to give producers an opportunity to discuss the development of the administrative rules as they pertain to farm verification, inspection and enforcement.

Meetings will be held in Lubbock, Ft. Worth, Tyler, Weslaco, Uvalde, San Marcos and Rosenberg. Click [here](#) for a list of dates and times, as well as information on how to RSVP.

TDA Grant Funds Get Little Texans Off to a Healthy Start

TDA's Establishing the 3E's grants help child care centers and community organizations provide the youngest Texans with the tools to establish healthy, good habits that will last a lifetime. Texas child care centers use the grant allocations to reinforce TDA's *3E's of Healthy Living* — *Education, Exercise and Eating Right*.

TDA is accepting applications for this year's grant funding right now, and eligible Texas child care centers can apply now through **May 2, 2018**. For more information and the Request for Application, click [here](#).



Recently, TDA visited a grant recipient in El Paso to see how they are using the grant funds and found an amazing program. The Armed Services YMCA Child Development Center in El Paso is teaching preschool kids about gardens, offering an educational family-style meal service and increasing physical activity. The child care center is also a partner in TDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and they're using the grant funds to earn gold status for TDA's Healthier CACFP Recognition Award.

To read more grant recipient success stories, 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*.

“TEXAS
AGRICULTURE
Matters!”

Art Contest Deadline Approaching; Entries Due Friday, April 20

Don't miss out on your chance to submit entries for TDA's annual *You Art What You Eat* art contest. We're excited for this year's themes — *Level up to a Healthy School Lunch* and *Level up to a Healthy School Breakfast*. Inspired by video games, these themes connect students' interests with the nutritious meals served by dedicated school nutrition professionals in Texas. All contest participants earn TDA recognition, and the winning entries are featured in schools statewide and other TDA forums.

Entries will be accepted until 5 p.m. on April 20, 2018.

TDA's *You Art What You Eat* statewide student art contest is open to all Texas students attending a school participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program. Click [here](#) to learn more about submitting your entry today!

A promotional poster for the "You Art What You Eat" art contest. The poster has a blue border and features a yellow pencil at the top left, a pink paintbrush at the top right, and a white paint tube at the bottom right. The text "YOU ART WHAT YOU EAT" is written in large, pink, stylized letters. Below it, "ART CONTEST" is written in white on a pink banner. A small white box says "ENTER FEBRUARY 12, 2018". At the bottom, it says "THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS 5P.M. CENTRAL STANDARD TIME APRIL 20, 2018" and "www.SquareMeals.org/artcontest". The Texas Department of Agriculture logo and Commissioner Sid Miller's name are at the bottom left. Social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are at the bottom right.