



December 2017

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

Friends, my favorite time of year is here! It seems like just yesterday we were starting 2017, and here we are staring 2018 in the face. This joyous season, keep your loved ones close and reflect on the many blessings we've all enjoyed this year. I feel extremely honored to be a part of the team here at the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) working for all Texans. It is such a privilege to protect our farmers, ranchers and consumers all year long and especially during the Christmas holiday.

Christmas time is for both giving and receiving, and I encourage all of you to do a little something extra for those in your community. Whether it's lending a helping hand at your local food pantry or providing presents for those families who usually go without, I hope you can make a real difference in someone's life this Christmas season.

I want to wish you and your loved ones all the best this Christmas season. Remember, today and always, *Texas Agriculture Matters*. Merry Christmas, Texas!

Your servant,

Sid Miller

Agriculture Memorial Day Honors Fallen Farmers and Ranchers

On Nov. 21, Commissioner Miller honored the men and women who have lost their lives in ag industry in a solemn ceremony at the State Capitol. Members of the ag community came together to remember Texas farmers and ranchers who died in the previous year. The event was created by John Paul Dineen III, who lost his young son in an agriculture-related accident.

“This is a day of reflection, but it’s also a day that strengthens and lifts up our ag family,” Commissioner Miller said. “Today is an important reminder that for generations Texas farmers and ranchers have given their lives to produce the food and fiber the world needs. Here at the Texas Department of Agriculture, we remember their sacrifice every day, and we hope that all Texans take a moment to do the same.”

Commissioner Miller honored several young Texans who died in the Panhandle wildfires, among others, at this year’s ceremony. The list includes:

- William “Billy” Meissner
- Randy Bullard
- Maurice Buchholz
- Gladys Ann Nay
- Dayton R. Crenwelge
- Johnny Callan
- Sydney Alyssa Wallace
- Cody Crockett
- John Paul Dineen IV
- John Walter Ayers
- Coke Hopping
- Joel B. Hughes
- Zelda Peveto
- Frances Freeman
- Gretchen Hartmann
- Winnie Grace Tanner
- Jeanette Hendrixson Loftis



To read more, click [here](#).

Gift of Produce Gives Back to Texans in Need This Holiday

This year, the Houston Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association (HFFVA) is celebrating 31 years of the Gift of Produce, an event that benefits the Houston Food Bank. The food bank serves 18 Southeast Texas counties, and this year’s event takes on new significance as the food bank continues to be instrumental in recovery efforts following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey. Right now, the food bank is distributing two-to-three times its normal capacity, and these efforts will continue for many months.

The Gift of Produce brings together HFFVA’s retailers, wholesalers, brokers, growers and shippers to provide valuable donations to the Houston Food Bank. This year’s goal is to donate the equivalent of 2.5–3 million pounds of produce. Because of an increased demand for produce to assist in hurricane recovery, this year’s Gift of Produce will include cash donations. One dollar can provide three meals thanks to the food bank’s relationship with multiple organizations like TDA.

TDA partners with food banks across Texas in a variety of programs including the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the Emergency Food Assistance Program. These enable food banks to connect low-income Texans with U.S. Department of Agriculture foods they can take home. In the week’s following Hurricane Harvey, TDA and food banks in presidentially declared disaster areas also used the Disaster Household Distribution Program to connect families with food packages.

Please join TDA and organizations like HFFVA in supporting local food banks. Anything you can give — time, money or food — will help them serve more Texans. Just contact your local food bank or food pantry to see how you can help. This is something we can all do this holiday season and, more importantly, throughout the year.

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* today!

“TEXAS
AGRICULTURE
Matters!”

Stock Show Season Around the Corner

It's that time of year, friends — stock show is right around the corner. With the new year just about here, it's time to mark your calendars and plan ahead to visit stock shows in your area. Our GO TEXAN team will be at many of these shows, and some of our GO TEXAN members will even be sampling their great made-in-Texas products! So, get ready ... it's almost rodeo season!

- Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo: Jan. 12 – Feb. 3
- San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo: Feb. 2 – 18
- San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo: Feb. 8 – 25
- Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo: Feb. 27 – March 18
- Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show: March 8 – 18
- Rodeo Austin: March 10 – 24

