

## Annual Western Rice Belt Conference-El Campo, Texas - January 15, 2020

The annual Western Rice Belt Production Conference will be held on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at the El Campo Civic Center. Registration for the conference will begin at 7:30 a.m., with the main program to begin at 8:10 a.m. After a catered lunch, provided by area agribusiness sponsors, the program will conclude around 2:00 p.m.

This joint effort of our Western Rice Belt planning committee, The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, U.S. Rice Producers Association, and Texas A&M AgriLife Research will offer growers and others the opportunity to hear presentations from the top Extension and Research scientists from Texas as well as respected individuals from the rice industry. Topics and speakers will include Auxin Herbicide Application in Rice - Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan; Timing of Disease Applications - Dr. Shane Zhou; Insect Management - Dr. Mo Way; Pesticide Laws and Regulations Update, Melissa Barton; 2018 Farm Bill Update - presenter TBA; Rice Market Outlook – Thomas Wynn; and a presentation on Conservation and Working Lands Programs. The Conservation and Working Lands Programs presentation will introduce producers to the different conservation programs that provide financial assistance to farmers who adopt practices that reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters on land in agricultural production. Rice producers will have an opportunity at the conclusion of the conference to discuss conservation programs, individually, with USDA-NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, and Texas Soil and Water Conservation Board.

The Texas Rice Council will also conduct their Annual Meeting in conjunction with the 2020 Western Rice Belt Conference.

At 2:00 p.m., the USDA-NRCS and the Wharton County Soil and Water Conservation District will conduct their annual Local Working Group (LWG) meeting. The meetings' purpose is to collect input from farmers, ranchers, federal, state and local agencies, agricultural leaders, organizations, businesses and other individuals who have an interest in natural resource conservation. Input allows a LWG to identify and prioritize a county's resource concerns that need to be addressed through eligible Farm Bill conservation practices and also aids in establishing ranking criteria for county based funding.

For more information, contact the Texas AgriLife Extension office in Colorado County at 979-732-2082; in Matagorda County at 979-245-4100; or Wharton County at 979-532-3310; or go to <http://wharton.agrilife.org> and click on Events to view a flyer for the Rice Conference. 3 CEU's (1 L&R, 1 IPM, and 1 GEN hour) for TDA Pesticide Applicators will be awarded at this event. CCA hours have been applied for and will be offered pending approval. Pesticide Applicators are reminded to provide their Pesticide Applicator License number at registration.

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