

Challenges Facing Texas High Plains Livestock Producers

- Hemphill County is located in the Texas High Plains, an area that contributes more than \$3.2 billion annually to the state's \$9 billion beef cattle industry.
- Concerns over variable prices, uncertain weather conditions, threats from pervasive and invasive animal diseases, and increasing production expenses have many beef cattle operations seeking ways to optimize production efficiency and maintain competitiveness.

AgriLife Extension's Response

- The Hemphill County Beef Conference began in 2015, bringing together the top beef cattle researchers, educators, and industry leaders to address current issues, as well as to provide producers with innovative information to use in their beef cattle operations.
- In 2019, the two-day conference featured sessions on matching cattle production to the environment, planning and managing prescribed burns during a dry year, managing beef cattle and forage availability, profitability, and sustainability; matching beef cattle genetics to forage resources,



managing cattle production cycles, forage quality, and quantity; and drought management strategies.

- Since its inception, the conference has grown to more than 270 beef cattle producers, with 64 agribusinesses participating in the tradeshow.
- Participants in the 2019 conference came from 46 Texas counties and 12 states; and representing more than 1.8 million acres of pasture and cropland, and 98,000 head of beef cattle.

Economic Impacts

- The economic benefits of the Hemphill County Beef Conference were measured in terms of the anticipated increase in net returns resulting from producer adoption and implementation of selected forage and beef cattle management practices taught in the conference.
- Participants indicated an average anticipated economic benefit of \$8 per acre and \$11 per head resulting from adoption of practices related to increasing production, marketing strategies, and production cost efficiency. The anticipated annual increase in net returns is \$13.8 million for producers who adopt selected management practices.
- The economic benefits are considered a conservative estimate, as all practices detailed in the course are not included.