



SOIL AND PLANT SCIENCE DIVISION

Technical Soil Services

South Central Soil Survey Region

Southern High Plains, Breaks, Major Land Resource Area (MLRA)

South Central Perryton, Texas, 4-H and National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Organization Land Judging Contest

Purpose

During the third week of March 2024, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff prepared contest sites for the 4-H and National FFA Organization Land Judging Contest hosted by the Ochiltree Soil Water Conservation Service (SWCD) in Perryton, Texas (fig. 1).

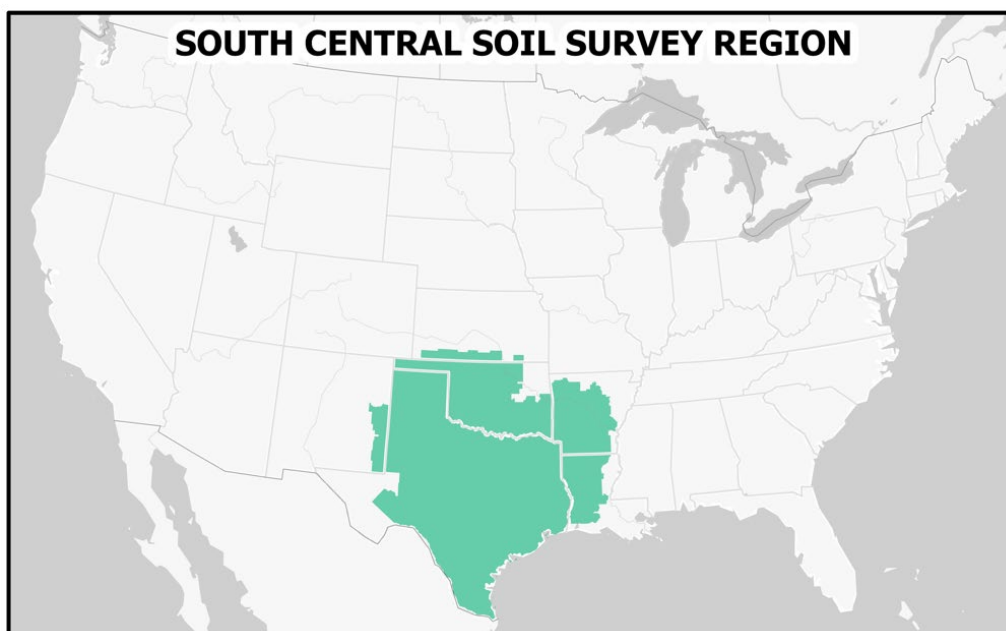


Figure 1.—A map of the South Central Soil Survey Region.

Background

Resource Soil Scientist Kelly Attebury from the Texas NRCS in Lubbock, District Conservationist Meagan Riley from the Lubbock Field Office, MLRA Leader Todd Carr and Soil Scientist Emma Schmidt from the Lubbock Soil Survey Office (SSO), and Soil Scientist Brandon Vaverka and Soil Scientist Yanuel Charriez from the Woodward SSO in Oklahoma assisted the Ochiltree County SWCD in setting up the annual land judging contest (fig. 2). The assistance included prescreening sites, marking the land judging area perimeters, marking the control areas in the soil pits, filling the buckets with soil from the surface and subsurface, and filling out the official contest score card (fig. 3).



Figure 2.—Kelly Attebury, Meagan Riley, Todd Carr, and Brandon Vaverka prepare a contest site.



Figure 3.—Brandon Vaverka (left), Yanuel Charriez (center), and Todd Carr (right) prepare a pit for the judging contest.

Key Outcomes

Contestants determined surface and subsoil texture, soil depth, slope, and degree of soil erosion. From this information, they determined permeability, runoff, and land capability class. They also rated suitability and limitations for use, as well as interpretive judgments for plant nutrients and soil amendments.

There were 115 students from 14 schools participating in 5 different contests: land, homesite, range, wildlife, and plant identification. Each student could only participate in one contest. Many NRCS staff received their first exposure to a career in the field through 4-H and National FFA Organization contests, and these events are important outreach and educational opportunities.