



**Bronte ISD**

**Breakfast**

**Monday, October 25**  
Pizza or Cinnamon Toast

Crunch, fruit, juice, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Donuts and sausage link or

Cheerios, fruit, juice, milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
PB&J or Lucky Charms, fruit,

juice, milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Taquito or french toast sticks,

fruit, juice, milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Pancake and sausage on a

stick or Froot Loops, fruit, juice,

milk

**Lunch**

**Monday, October 25**  
Drumsticks, garden salad,

carrots, roll, peaches, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Frito pie, pinto beans, veggie

cup, pineapple, chocolate chip

cookie, milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
Cheesy garlic pizza, marinara

sauce, broccoli, Tuscan veggies,

cinnamon applesauce, milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Boneless chicken wings, chips,

celery, carrots, mixed fruit,

frozen yogurt cup, milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Steak fingers, roll, green

beans, mashed potatoes, gravy,

fresh fruit, milk

**Robert Lee ISD**

**Breakfast**

**Monday, October 25**  
Cereal, toast, fruit, juice, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Breakfast sandwich, fruit,

juice, milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
Power breakfast, fruit, juice,

milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Strudel and cheese sticks,

fruit, juice, milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Breakfast round, yogurt, fruit,

juice, milk

**Lunch**

**Monday, October 25**  
Burger, chips or fries, oranges,

pudding, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Chicken-n-waffles, veggie cup,

fries, strawberries and bananas,

milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
Chicken nuggets, mac and

cheese, carrot coins, steamed

squash, grapes, milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Breaded mozzarella sticks,

marinara sauce, salad, tomato

cup, pears, milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Texas chicken basket, roll,

fries, corn, green beans, peaches,

milk

**Blackwell CISD**

**Breakfast**

**Monday, October 25**  
Poptarts, fruit, juice, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Mini pancakes, fruit, juice,

milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice,

milk

milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Biscuits, gravy, fruit, juice,

milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Donuts, fruit, juice, milk

**Lunch**

**Monday, October 25**  
Tangerine chicken or General

Tso's chicken, fried rice, chow

mein, egg roll, milk

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Fancy burrito (burrito, chili,

cheese, lettuce, tomato), tater

tots, milk

**Wednesday, October 27**  
Chicken strips, mashed

potatoes, gravy, green beans, hot

roll, milk

**Thursday, October 28**  
Chicken fajitas, cheese,

Spanish rice, refried beans, milk

**Friday, October 29**  
Sub sandwich, veggies, chips,

milk



**The Ecosystem of Place**

By James M. Decker

In recent months, I've been working to harmonize a lot of ideas that are in my head and that have appeared in these essays. Ultimately, these essays are about creating a better community for the future, one that is built to last, to sustain prosperity for multiple generations. It's impossible to do that without some form of economic development, but for years, I have viewed rural economic development as a "chicken or the egg" proposition - do you bring jobs and let the people follow or bring people and let the jobs follow? Of late, I've concluded that the answer might actually be "neither."

Last week, I quoted author and rural activist Wendell Berry, who spoke in 2013 of the sobering landscape of rural Kentucky. He remembered when all the towns in his area were thriving economic or social centers. Now, those towns are all dead or slowly dying. That's a harsh picture, but an accurate one that has been replicated all across the landscape of rural America. It does not serve any productive purpose to merely lament this decline. If we want to revitalize rural America, we should ask ourselves \*why\* it changed. By doing that, we can find a path to revitalization and bringing life and energy back to

rural communities across the land.

A couple of months ago, I introduced in these essays the concept of holistic management. Pioneered by ecologist Allan Savory, this management philosophy focuses on the interdependence between people, animals, plants, and the land within an ecosystem. Because each piece of ecosystem is affected by the other pieces, good management of one piece must consider the impact on all the rest of the pieces of the ecosystem. Otherwise, it leads to any number of unintended consequences and degradation of the larger ecosystem.

Which brings me back to the \*why\* of rural America's decline. If you study the history of how our communities developed, it is hard not to see them as ecosystems unto themselves. Communities sprung up from the dust of the plains. Each of the constituent parts - business, government, labor, churches and social clubs, etc. - grew with an interdependence on one another. The success of the whole community/ecosystem depended on the success of the individual constituent parts working in some semblance of harmony. To be clear, this not to say that everyone was harmonious with one another or that everyone succeeded. Just like in nature, there was strife and discord. Some of the constituent parts and individual participants thrived at the expense of the failure of others, while others mutually thrived together. But above all, it was an ecosystem that was more successful as a whole than as the sum of the individual parts.

In the 20th century, America continued its rapid shift from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy and ultimately to a service and technology-based economy. I could write an entire essay on this history, but prior to modern highways, each community was far more dependent on itself than it is today. Almost all of a person or family's shopping and professional needs came locally. It was simply not realistic (or even possible for many people) to travel to "the city" to shop for groceries, buy new clothes, or see a doctor or lawyer. In many cases, if it was not available locally, you simply did without.

Now, in many ways, life is better because more goods and services are more readily available. Only a fool who has never read of the hardships of pioneer life on the plains of West Texas would root for us to revert back to that life. But along the way, for reasons I will

explain, we lost that sense of local community as a local ecosystem. And as I will further explain, if our communities will again thrive (they can!), it will be because we once again treated our communities as an ecosystem that was greater together than the sum of its individual parts.

*James Decker is the Mayor of Stamford, Texas and the creator of the West of 98 website and podcast. Contact James and subscribe to these essays at westof98.substack.com and subscribe to West of 98 wherever podcasts are found.*

**Agriculture continues to feel impact of COVID-19 pandemic**

By Jennifer Whitlock  
Field Editor,  
Texas Farm Bureau

As supply chain disruptions and labor shortages have become the new norm during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, retail prices have skyrocketed with no sign of slowing down anytime soon.

In agriculture, input costs, product shortages and rising inflation are compressing margins considerably, according to the latest Quarterly from CoBank.

"Supply chain snarls are likely to persist well into 2022, and so will elevated inflation. The latest producer price index data for August was up 20% year-over-year, while the consumer price index increased just 5.2%," Dan Kowalski, vice president of CoBank's Knowledge Exchange division, said. "So, it's clear that many businesses are passing only a small portion of those cost increases on to the final consumer. We expect that will change in the months ahead, and many businesses will raise prices."

The issues plaguing the economy affect every link of a supply chain, noted Kenneth Zuckerberg, CoBank lead grain and farm supply economist.

Agricultural retailers are no exception. With a steady need for crop inputs like seed and chemicals, farm suppliers are well positioned for a strong fourth consecutive season, Zuckerberg wrote.

But the raw inputs for many fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and insecticides are

manufactured overseas. If those are unavailable or in short supply, agricultural retailer and farm cooperative profits could decrease considerably.

Animal protein sectors like beef, pork and poultry have not escaped post-pandemic issues either.

"Domestic supply chains continue to deal with disruptions as food service and retail outlets contend for availability," CoBank Lead Animal Protein Economist Brian Earnest said. "The pressure has been twofold, as elevated domestic consumption conflicted with both rising international opportunity and tight beginning stocks."

On dairy farms, rising feed and construction costs and labor shortages will keep the dairy cow herd constrained, even though domestic and export demand continues to be strong, CoBank analysts said.

"Farmers, ranchers and businesses across agriculture were beginning to get back on their feet after the nosedive in profits at the start of COVID-19 pandemic," Texas Farm Bureau (TFB) Associate Director of Commodity and Regulatory Activities Brant Wilbourn said. "But now we're starting to see some of the ramifications of factory closures across our supply chains, and analysts are predicting these issues will continue throughout 2022. So, we're not out of the woods yet."

Consumers generally believe that when food and clothing prices go up, it's because farmers and ranchers have raised their prices, Wilbourn said. But farmers and ranchers are more likely to see their profit margins shrink even more during these times.

"I'd caution people to remember when they see higher prices at the grocery store in coming months that farmers and ranchers are price-takers. They don't direct the prices they receive for their crops and livestock. Those are directed by market factors like labor or material shortages at the packaging plant and what processors are willing to pay them," he said. "So, just know that farmers and ranchers are suffering along with you right now. They're facing higher input costs and lower prices for their products, and they're stuck in the middle."

**Emergency Siren Signals**  
*Cities of both Bronte and Robert Lee*  
1 Long Ring - Wind Advisory over 60 mph  
2 Rings - Fire or VFD Meeting  
Another 2 Ring - Call for Additional Firefighters  
3 Rings - Tornado Warning  
1 Long Continuous Ring - All Clear for Tornado

**Please Pray for our Communities,  
Our County, Our State and Our Country**

**And Don't Forget to Pray for Rain!**