

## SOIL AND PLANT SCIENCE DIVISION

# Technical Soil Services

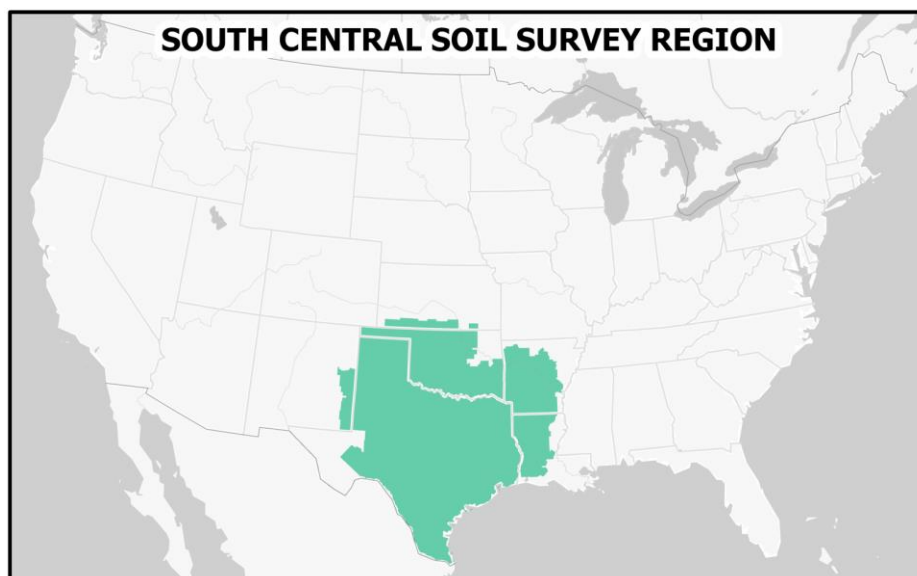
## South Central Region

### **Lubbock, Texas Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Office (SSO) Assists Texas Tech University with Hosting of the Region IV Collegiate Soil Judging Contest**

### **Assistance With the Set-up of the Region IV Collegiate Soil Judging Contest**

#### **Purpose**

Dr. Daniel Hirmas of Texas Tech University (TTU) hosted the Region IV Collegiate Soil Judging Contest. New to his position at TTU, he requested assistance from the Lubbock, Texas, MLRA Soil Survey office in site selection, 811 excavation safety protocols, pit excavation, and pedon descriptions.





## Background

The MLRA Soil Survey office in Lubbock has assisted the TTU Plant and Soil Sciences Department with several Region IV Soil Judging Contests over the years. Assistance this year came in the form of locating contest pits and practice pits for the contest. The pits were located on June 22-23. The practice pits located on TTU property were dug on July 19-20. Those pits were described and sampled during the week of July 24. The contest pits were dug, described, and sampled on August 10-11. Additional practice pits were dug, described, and sampled on August 17-18. Soil samples were delivered to a third-party laboratory for analyses of particle size, calcium carbonate percentage, pH, and organic carbon.

## Key Outcomes

The Region IV Collegiate Soil Judging Contest occurred on October 19, with the awards ceremony held on the morning of October 20. Several universities participated, including Oklahoma State University, Tarleton State University, Texas A&M University-College Station, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, University of Arkansas, and West Texas A&M University. The contest day was a beautiful day, and the contest went very well. The University of Arkansas took first place overall, with first and second place individuals as well. The University of Arkansas took first place in the team pit as well. West Texas A&M University took second place overall and had the fourth and fifth place individuals as well. West Texas A&M University took second place at the team pit as well. Texas A&M University-College Station took third place overall. Congratulations to University of Arkansas, West Texas A&M University, and Texas A&M University-College Station, as they will be headed to the National Soil Judging Contest in the spring of 2024. Texas A&M University-Kingsville took third place at the team pit, and Tarleton State University had the highest scoring individual for the contest. Dr. Hirmas and the staff of the MLRA 77 Soil Survey office extended thanks to all the participants in the Region IV Contest this year. These soil judging contests are, and will continue to be, important outreach and educational opportunities for students in soil science and natural resources management.



Figure 1.—Contest participants study the pit exposure, looking for clues to help them make horizon



Figure 2.—Todd Carr of the Lubbock MLRA 77 Soil Survey Office operates a backhoe to dig a soil pit for the Region IV Soil Judging Contest.



Figure 3.—Contest participants study the characteristics of the soil they gathered from the pit exposure. They are making observations on soil color, texture, and structure.

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