

RURAL TEXAS TRENDS

The Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council attended a meeting of the Texas Agriculture Council on August 5 via Zoom. As part of this meeting, **Evan Smith**, the CEO and co-founder of the Texas Tribune spoke about the 2022 Rural Texas Symposium, to be held November 17-18 at Texas Tech University. He also spoke on issues facing Rural Texans and the potential for developing solutions.

The following list includes some of the takeaways presented about the state of Rural Texas:

- In the last calendar year, Texas grew by 310,000 people and of that amount 50% were from out of state and 88% of this group moved to Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Austin.
- 90% of today's Texas population is east of I-35.
- 3 million people live in rural Texas (10% of the population) and that amount is larger than the entire population of 18 other states.
- Texas has 5 of the 12 largest cities in the U.S. (Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth).
- Texas has 3 of the top 4 fastest growing metropolitan areas in the U.S.
- 74 counties in Texas have no hospital, and 32 counties have no primary care doctor.
- Nearly 60% of rural Texas schools do not offer AP courses, putting rural students at a disadvantage in universities.
- 33% of rural Texas does not have high-speed internet service, costing the state \$5 billion annually in lost revenue.