Rolling Prairie Extension District

The new year tends to bring on some changes and it is no different at Rolling Prairie District. Chautauqua and Elk County will remain an Extension District Unit, but beginning in January, there will be some programming changes in regards to the 4-H and Agriculture programs. In Chautauqua County, Jenny McDaniel will be administering the 4-H and Agriculture programs and will be at the Sedan Office full time. Richard Fechter will be administering the Elk County 4-H and Agriculture Programs and will be at the Howard Office full time. There will still be some shared programing in these areas. Jill Morgan will continue as the Family and Consumer Sciences District Extension Agent and will work in both Chautauqua and Elk Counties.

We would ask for your support and positive thoughts as we make this transition. We are hoping that through this change we might better serve each community better. Thank you in advance for your help.

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Kansas Agricultural Leases

It is estimated that more than 50 percent of Kansas farmland and pastureland is rented. In some areas of the state, this figure is higher. Many producers cannot maintain a viable business without operating through lease arrangements. Leases are growing in prominence and will play an increasingly important role in production agriculture as fewer and fewer producers manage and operate our state’s agricultural resources. Some leases are simple oral arrangements, while others are complex, lengthy written documents. An oral agreement may be legally enforceable, but it is much more desirable to spell out the agreement’s details in writing.

By definition, a lease is a contract for the exclusive use of land for a specific period. There are at least two parties to any lease: 1) the landowner who owns the land, also known as the lessor; and 2) the tenant who farms or operates the land, also known as the lessee. Certain rights and obligations binding both parties arise from the relationship. When land is leased, the lease is equivalent to a sale of the premises for the length of the lease. The tenant essentially becomes the owner for a time and has the responsibilities of one who is in possession of the land.

Parties to a lease are presumed to know of laws existing at the time the lease is entered. Provisions of statutes, ordinances, and regulations are read into and become a part of the contract by implication as though they were expressly written into the contract, except where the parties have shown a contrary intention. For example, if a written lease says the lease will terminate December 31 and Kansas law states oral leases on farm and pastureland will terminate March 1, the lease will terminate December 31 under the written agreement.
A written lease does not have to be a detailed contract. A memorandum or note concerning the lease may be sufficient if the party against whom it will be enforced signs it. A written lease is a contract and should be approached with the same careful and thorough consideration given when entering into any binding contractual agreement. Though an oral lease is unenforceable if it cannot be performed within one year, a written lease may cover any period of time. Thus, any beginning and ending dates may be used in the lease. For all leases, except written leases signed by the parties that provide otherwise, Kansas law provides that notice to terminate farm and pastureland leases must be given as follows:

1. in writing
2. at least 30 days prior to March 1, and
3. must fix March 1 as the termination date of the tenancy.
Any notice to terminate which does not comply with the above requirements is inadequate and the tenancy will continue. The law previously applied to “farm” leases which includes cropland and pastureland.

A lease is a contract for the exclusive possession of land for a definite period, and the landowner cannot use the land for his own purposes while it is leased. For example, the landowner cannot hunt on the leased ground without the permission of the tenant unless the landowner retained these rights in a written lease. A landowner, however, may enter the premises to: 1) make reasonable inspection; 2) make repairs and/or installations; 3) show the premises to prospective buyers; 4) collect rent; and 5) deliver a notice to terminate the tenancy.

The Extension Office has lease packets for both cropland and pastureland. The packets contain copies of the Kansas Agriculture Lease Law, information about pasture and crop leases, a frequently asked questions document, sample lease forms and other information about ag leases. Stop by the offices and pickup one of the packets.

Provide Cold Cows More Energy

As we all know there is no typical weather pattern in Kansas. We experienced a mild fall this year and thus far winter has been interesting in the Sunflower State with record high temperatures followed by cold and windy days. The downside is that we don’t know what might happen tomorrow, yet alone the next few months as we approach what are typically the coldest months of the year. Most cattle producers know and appreciate that cold weather increases nutrient requirements. However, the obvious questions that come to mind are “What is cold to a cow?” and “What increases (energy, protein etc.) and by how much?”.

Cattle are most comfortable within the thermonuetral zone when temperatures are neither too warm nor too cold. During the winter months cattle experience cold stress anytime the effective ambient temperature, which takes into account wind chill, humidity, etc., drops below the lower critical temperature. The lower critical temperature is influenced by both environmental and animal factors including hair coat and tissue insulation (body condition). The table below lists the estimated lower critical temperatures of cattle in good body condition with different hair coats. In wet conditions cattle can begin experiencing cold stress at 59°F, which would be a relatively mild winter day. However, if cattle have time to develop a sufficient winter coat the estimated lower critical temperature under dry conditions is 18°F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coat Condition</th>
<th>Critical Temperature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wet or Summer Coat</td>
<td>59°F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry Fall Coat</td>
<td>45°F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry Winter Coat</td>
<td>32°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Heavy Winter Coat</td>
<td>18°F</td>
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Cold stress increases maintenance energy requirements but does not impact protein, mineral or vitamin requirements. The general rule of thumb (for a cow in good body condition, BCS = 5 or greater) is to increase the energy density of the ration by 1% for each degree (Fahrenheit) below the lower critical temperature. The classic response to cold stress in confinement situations is an increase in voluntary intake. However, it has been documented that grazing beef cows may spend less time grazing as temperatures decline below freezing, which reduces forage intake and makes the challenge of meeting the cow’s nutrient requirements even greater. In many cases feeding a greater amount of low-quality hay may not provide sufficient energy. Therefore providing additional energy by feeding a relatively higher-quality hay or grain may be required. More information on cold stress and nutrition may be found in “Beef Cow Nutrition Guide”, Publication C-735 which may be accessed online at [http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/C735.pdf](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/C735.pdf).

**Upcoming Extension Agriculture Meetings**

Many upcoming Extension agriculture meetings are happening in the area. Here is a list of those that may be of interest to you. For more information about any of these, contact the Extension Office.

**Wednesday, January 27 - Veterinary Feed Directive**
6:00 p.m. at the Eureka Senior Center
The new feed regulation called a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) goes into effect January 1, 2017. To help producers get a better understanding of what this ruling could mean, Greenwood County Extension and Droge Animal Health, of Eureka, are teaming up to bring you an informational meeting on VFD’s. Dr. Michael Apley, a Professor of Production Medicine at Kansas State University, will be the featured speaker and will discuss: Why VFD’s are Important; Antibiotic Resistance; What Drugs are on the Medically Important List; What Regulatory Changes are coming with the VFD; and Importance of having a Veterinary/Client /Patient Relationship. This will be a great opportunity to learn what will be expected of the producer, the veterinarian, and the feed mill, starting January 2017. Please RSVP for the meal and handouts by calling the Greenwood County Extension Office at 620-583-7455 by January 25. The evenings meal is sponsored by Ranch Aid, Sowder Seed Co/Min Mix Minerals, and Severy Co-op/Flint Hills Feeds.

**Tuesday, February 9 - Ag Lease Meeting**
7:00 p.m. at Butler County Community Building, El Dorado
This meeting will provide both landlords and tenants with information that will be useful in negotiating lease arrangements. Both crop and pasture leases will be covered. Pre-registration is requested by February 4 and can be done by calling 316-321-9660. Cost is $5.00

**Wednesday, February 17 - Prescribed Burning Workshop**
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Butler County Community Building, El Dorado
Pre-registration is requested by February 10 and can be done by calling 316-321-9660. Cost is $15.00.

**Tuesday, February 23 - Heifer and Cow Breeding Meeting**
6:00 p.m. at the Southeast Research and Extension Center, Parsons
Topics covered: Managing cow synchronization with a real-life cow herd, Overview of synchronization protocols and heifer breeding tools, and Using calving records to determine herd management. RSVP by February 19 at 620-784-5337.

**Thursday, February 25 - Talking Crops and Forages**
8:30 - 11:00 a.m. at Edwin and Jan Bowman’s - 901 Road 26
Opportunity to visit with Doug Shoup, Southeast Area Crops and Soils Extension Specialist about your crops and forages questions.

**Thursday, February 25 - Weed and Brush Control in Crops and Pastureland and Q & A**
1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at the Extension Meeting Room in Howard
Doug will give an update on weed control in cropland as well as an update on weed and brush control in pastureland. There will be time for you to visit with Doug about your other crop and forage questions.
Earthworms - An Indicator of Soil Health

Earthworms play an important role in soil as they redistribute organic matter, influence soil fertility, and affect soil physical properties. While earthworms are not essential for the formation of well aggregated soil, their presence can contribute significantly to the formation and stabilization of aggregates and improve soil structure. Earthworm casts -- the excreted mixture of soil and organic matter -- can develop into stable soil aggregates. Depending on the species the cast material may be deposited in the burrow or on the soil surface.

The activity of earthworms accelerates decomposition of plant material and mineralization of soil organic matter, increasing the availability of plant available nutrients. A complex relationship exists between earthworms and microorganisms. Bacteria have been found to proliferate in the earthworm gut and be excreted in cast material. Thus, enhanced microbial decomposition of organic matter fueled by the presence of nutrient rich secretions begins in the earthworm gut and continues in earthworm casts.

What effects do cultivation and soil health practices have on earthworm populations? Earthworm populations generally become reduced in cultivated agricultural fields. Several explanations for the decline and loss of earthworms have been proposed:

1) Tillage implements cause physical injury to earthworms resulting in mortality.
2) Reductions in residue and soil organic matter associated with long-term tillage restrict food supplies.
3) A change in soil temperature resulting from the loss of insulation provided by the vegetation.
4) Increased predation from birds when the soil is turned over.

It is likely a combination of these factors that leads to reduced earthworm populations. When tillage practices are reduced or eliminated as a result of conversion to a minimal or no-till system, earthworm populations generally begin to increase. Earthworms play an important role in no-till systems as they redistribute organic matter. Earthworms are important in soil fertility, and their burrows play an important role in soil aeration and drainage.

The addition of cover crops can further benefit earthworm populations. In a long-term cover crop study conducted at the former K-State Harvey County Experiment Field in Hesston from 2002 to 2008, more earthworms were counted in the plots with either late-maturing soybean or sunn hemp cover crops. Improved cumulative water infiltration was also observed in the cover crop treatments of the study and followed the same pattern as the earthworm populations. The greatest levels of cumulative water infiltration and earthworm populations were in the sunn hemp treatment while the “no cover crop” treatment had the lowest cumulative water infiltration and earthworm populations.

How do you assess earthworms as an indicator of changing soil health? It is important to understand that you will not see changes in earthworm populations immediately after a change in management practices. In fact it will likely take many years to observe a change in earthworm populations. The key is to collect base line population information before you make a management change and then repeat the measurements every few years, being consistent in your sampling date.
The recommended time of year to count earthworms is the late spring (April-May) or mid-fall (Oct-Nov). It is best to identify at least four locations that are representative of the field and which will provide an indication of the spatial variability of the earthworms. Over time you will want to be able to go back to the same general sampling location. To assess your earthworm population, dig a cubic foot of soil and hand sort the soil, keeping track of how many earthworms you find. The typical range for earthworm numbers in a cubic foot of soil in an agricultural field is 5 to 30 but may be higher depending on tillage and soil organic matter.

Mark Your Calendars

Chautauqua County Fair and Rodeo
July 21-23

July 8  4-H Entries Due
July 20  4-H Market Weigh-In
July 21  Open Class Entries Check-In

Elk County Free Fair and 4-H Fair
August 4-6

July 20  4-H Entries Due
Aug. 3  4-H Market Weigh-In
Aug. 4  Open Class Entries Check-In
Make Healthy Choices In the New Year!

A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don’t forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate. Here are 10 tips to help you complete your plate!

1. **Make Half Your Plate Veggies and Fruits**
   Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

2. **Add Lean Protein**
   Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

3. **Include Whole Grains**
   Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

4. **Don’t Forget the Dairy**
   Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don’t drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.

5. **Avoid Extra Fat**
   Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

6. **Take Your Time**
   Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

7. **Use a Smaller Plate**
   Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

8. **Take Control of Your Food**
   Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

9. **Try New Foods**
   Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you’ve never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.

10. **Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth**
    Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.
Walk Kansas

March 20th—May 14th 2016

Walk Kansas is a team-based program that will help you and others lead a healthier life. Join this program and be more active with:

- friends and family,
- make better nutrition choices,
- and walk away your stress.

www.walkkansas.org

Or Visit the Rolling Prairie Webpage

Get the Facts!

- Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, killing nearly 130,000 Americans each year—that’s 1 of every 20 deaths.
- A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, occurs when a clot blocks the blood supply to the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts.
- Someone in the United States has a stroke every 40 seconds. Every four minutes, someone dies of stroke.
- Every year, about 800,000 people in the United States have a stroke. About 610,000 of these are first or new strokes; 185,000 are recurrent strokes.
- Stroke is an important cause of disability. Stroke reduces mobility in more than half of stroke survivors age 65 and over.
- Stroke costs the nation $34 billion annually, including the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.
- You can’t control some stroke risk factors, like heredity, age, gender, and ethnicity. Some medical conditions—including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes, overweight or obesity, and previous stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)—can also raise your stroke risk. Avoiding smoking and drinking too much alcohol, eating a balanced diet, and getting exercise are all choices you can make to reduce your risk.

For more information visit www.CDC.gov or contact your primary care physician.

Can I Sell My Canned Foods?

Many people sell home-canned foods at places such as farmers markets and craft fairs, but is it legal? It depends on the type of product and where and how it is sold. In Kansas, any canned goods sold to grocery stores or other distributors require a food processors license and cannot be produced in a regular home kitchen. Also, if selling products across state lines, FDA or USDA regulations need to be followed, which will not allow for production in a normal home kitchen.

In Kansas, fruit jams, jellies and canned fruits sold directly to consumers, such as through a farmers market, do not require a license and so can be made in a home kitchen. Selling other products such as sauerkraut, pickles, canned vegetables and most salsas will require a license, so cannot be made at home. However, check with your local public health inspector as regulations may vary in different localities.

Rolling Prairie Extension District #8, Chautauqua and Elk Counties

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