



2025

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Rolling Prairie Extension Upcoming Events

July

4 Independence Day—Extension Offices Closed

16-19 Elk County Fair—Howard

23-26 Chautauqua County Fair

August

1-2 Elk County Free Fair—Longton

10-16 Interstate Fair & Rodeo in Coffeyville

September

1 Labor Day—Extension Offices Closed

5-14 Kansas State Fair—Hutchinson

22 First day of Fall

October



This will be the last paper copy sent by mail. The seasonal Extension Newsletter will be available 1) by email, 2)

on the Rolling Prairie Extension website (<https://www.rollingprairie.k-state.edu>) or 3) you can pick up a paper copy at either of the Extension Offices (addresses in the left column).

Rabbits in the garden?

K-State horticulture expert gives methods for effective protection

At a glance: K-State horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini shares tips on how to prevent rabbits from feasting on garden plants

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Rabbits are a common invader of home gardens, especially when plants flower in spring. Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini said there are many common-sense ways to keep the hungry critters out.

“This time of year, rabbits gravitate to young vegetables and flowers,” Domenghini said. “But there are some vegetables that are rarely bothered, including potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers and some peppers.”

Cynthia Domenghini said some methods for keeping rabbits away include:

Fencing

Fencing is often the quickest and easiest method of control. Domenghini recommended the fence be at least two feet tall with a fine mesh of one inch or less. Fencing support can be provided by a variety of products, including electric fence posts. However, fencing may not be a viable choice based on the desired appearance of the garden.

Floating Row Cover

Floating row cover is a light woven material that can be placed over plants yet still allows light, water and air to come through.

“Though most often used to promote early growth by keeping plants warmer than normal, it can also help protect young plants from insects and wildlife,” Domenghini said.

Repellants

Although commonly suggested for rabbit control, repellants must be re-applied frequently. Some can also be poisonous and cannot be used on plants intended for human consumption, Domenghini warned.



Trapping

Domenghini said live traps are usually recommended when the rabbit can be moved to a rural area several miles away from where they were initially caught.

“A number of baits can be used to entice the rabbit to enter the trap, including a tightly rolled cabbage leaf held together by a toothpick. However, rabbits often avoid baits if other attractive food is available.”

Sprinkler

A motion-activated sprinkler can be attached to a garden hose, releasing a short burst of water upon motion. Domenghini suggests picking a product that advertises it can protect at least 1000 square feet: “Such products are available from Contech, Orbit and Havahart,” she said.

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly [Horticulture Newsletter](#) with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to [view online](#) or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Domenghini at cdom@ksu.edu, or contact your [local K-State Research and Extension office](#).

Brand names mentioned in this article are for identification purposes only and are not intended to be an endorsement of any product.

Weed Management in Ponds

This time every year, we get questions on pond weeds and how to kill them. The **first** thing a pond owner needs to do is identify what kind of weed they have and do they need to be controlled. Ponds need to have some aquatic vegetation to support healthy fish populations. Aquatic plants that cause weed problems may be placed into four groups: algae, floating weeds, emersed weeds (foliage above water), and submersed weeds (majority of foliage below water). All require different approaches for control.

Aquatic weed control is a management plan that incorporates preventive methods such as proper pond construction and maintenance, biological methods such as the grass carp and the use of labeled aquatic herbicides. The development of an aquatic weed management plan is dependent upon correctly identifying the problem weed(s) and selecting control methods that are compatible with efficient fish culture procedures.

Basic methods used to control weeds include preventive, biological and chemical techniques. Determining which of these techniques to use involves consideration of the target weed species, fish production objectives for the pond, secondary water uses, and the cost of treatment options. The first

step in controlling any aquatic weeds is proper identification. If weeds are causing a problem with your pond, come by the office and ask us for the publication C667Aquatic Plants and Their Control. This publication will help you identify various weeds and suggested methods of control. You can also go to a Texas A&M website that has lots of photos and information to help identify ponds weeds. The website is: <https://aquaplant.tamu.edu/plant-identification/>. One rule of thumb to remember: never kill more than 1/3 of the vegetation at one time. As the vegetation decays, it causes oxygen deficiency. This causes odor problems and can kill fish.

Biological Control

The grass carp is a practical and economical way to control certain types of pond weeds. Grass carp effectively control weeds with tender succulent vegetation such as filamentous algae and duckweed, but are ineffective in controlling weeds that have tough, woody vegetation such as waterlily and cattail.

Chemical Control

Herbicides may be used to control weeds in commercial fish ponds. The first step in successful chemical control is accurate identification of the problem weed.



Check this out



LIVING WELL WEDNESDAY

K-State Research and Extension Webinar Series



Living Well Wednesdays Webinars

Living Well Wednesday is a virtual learning series hosted by K-State Research and Extension, Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals from across the state of Kansas. The Spring 2025 series kicks off in February and we invite you to join us!

Webinars will be offered the **second Wednesday of each month, from 12:10-1 pm**. There is no charge to participate, however, registration is required. All webinars are recorded and posted on the webpage along with supporting resources.

Register for all webinars in this series here: <https://tinyurl.com/4hed9rfz>

Some samples of previous topics are:

Pinchin' Pennies in the Kitchen

52 Ways to Climate Proof Your Finances

Money Habitudes

Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?

Fall Proof Your Life: A Guide to Better Balance

K-State Garden Hour

K-State Garden Hour is hosted by K-State Research and Extension horticulture staff across the state of Kansas. We hope you'll join us on the **first Wednesday of each month at noon** for some horticultural refreshment and training. Sessions are recorded and posted here after each event.

Register for all Garden Hour webinars here:
<https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour>

Here are videos for this summer:

May: Heat Loving Perennials

June: Native & Ornamental Grasses of Kansas

July: Cutting-Edge Efforts in Kansas Demo Gardens

August: Innovations in Horticulture Research at Kansas State University

September: Shrubs that thrive in Kansas

You can also find all recorded episodes on YouTube by typing **KSU Living Well Wednesday** or **KSU Garden Hour** in the search bar.

K-State Podcasts



KSU Sound Living

KSU Sound Living is a weekly public affairs program that addresses issues related to families and consumers. It is hosted by Jeff Wichman and features expertise from K-State specialists in areas like child nutrition, food safety, and more. The program is distributed to radio stations throughout the area and offers a range of topics aimed at educating and supporting Kansans.

Plantorama

Plantorama is a weekly five-minute interview with horticultural specialists at Kansas State University, covering timely topics in: home lawn care; vegetable, fruit and flower gardening; landscape design and ornamental plant care; indoor plant care; and horticultural pest control.

Agriculture Today

K-State agricultural specialists and other experts examine agricultural issues facing Kansas and the nation. Agriculture Today is a daily program hosted by Shelby Varner and distributed to radio stations throughout the state and region.

These and other K-State podcasts and Statewide KSRE events can be found at <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/news-and-publications/podcasts-radio/>

KSU podcasts are available in various formats, including podcasts on [Spotify](#), [Libsyn](#), Apple and captioned episodes on YouTube, ensuring broad accessibility.

Elk County 4-H Fair—Howard

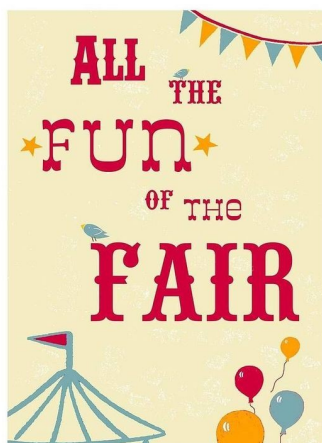
July 16-19

CQ County Fair & Rodeo

July 23-26

Elk County Free Fair—Longton

August 1-2



Interstate Fair & Rodeo in Coffeyville

August 10-16

Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson

September 6-15

Kansas Junior Livestock Show

September 27-29

Healthy Grasslands

(Information from Reducing Woody Encroachment in Grasslands: A Pocket Guide for Planning & Design)

Are we at risk of losing our grasslands? Maybe! Healthy grasslands have diverse native plant communities, primarily grasses with a mixture of forbs and small shrubs. Trees are generally not part of a grassland system, although they may be found in canyons or draws or along rivers.

With prairie plants, there is as much or more below the ground as above. The plant roots provide rich micro-environments that support insects and mammals, which in turn sustain other wildlife above the ground, and play an essential role in providing clean air and water through carbon sequestration and water filtration.

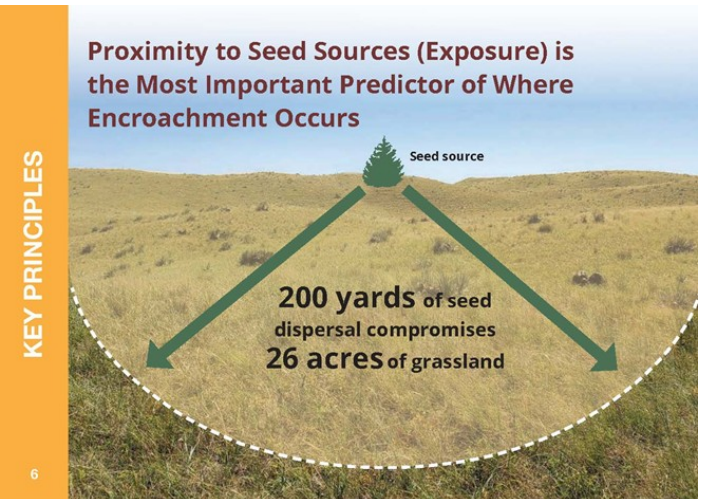
Here are some facts about the loss of grassland production due to woody encroachment. The Great Plains region loses 22.4 million tons of forage production yearly to woody encroachment. That is the yearly forage need of 4.7 million cows. Some other consequences of woody encroachment are: collapse of grassland wildlife, reduced water quantity and quality, wildfire risk, and vector-borne disease risk.

Today, our grasslands are more vulnerable to woody encroachment than ever. See the image below to see how woody encroachment has changed in the Great Plains area in the last 30 years.

One reason for this invasion of weedy species is the

proximity to the seed source. See the images below about how this has impacted woody encroachment.

Seed production and a high seed germination rate significantly affect the invasion of woody species. If we can control seed production, we can lower the cost of maintaining the brush on our grasslands be-



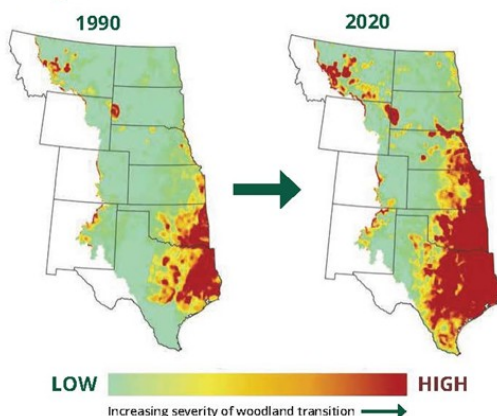
fore it becomes a big problem. The diagram below shows how seed production and germination rate impact our grasslands.



The booklet

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

The Great Plains Biome is Collapsing Due to Woody Encroachment



It's Going to Be a Hot One!

Here are some "cool" ideas for those of you who work or play outside.

- ♦ Wear lightweight, long-sleeved, light-colored clothing or a cooling vest (pictured).
- ♦ Take short, frequent breaks in a shaded or cool area to stay cool while working outdoors.
- ♦ Use equipment with a canopy, such as a Rollover Protection Structure, known as ROPS, with a sunshade.
- ♦ Equipment with a cab often comes with air conditioning and has a built-in ROPS.
- ♦ Take frequent breaks and stay inside during the hottest part of the day (usually between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. in Kansas).
- ♦ Drink 1 cup of water every 15-20 minutes, and before becoming thirsty. Keep sugary, caffeinated, and alcoholic drinks to a minimum.
- ♦ Replace your body's salt and minerals with snacks or a sports drink.



BEAT THE HEAT: Extreme Heat

Heat-related deaths are preventable

WHAT:

Extreme heat or heat waves occur when the temperature reaches extremely high levels or when the combination of heat and humidity causes the air to become oppressive.

WHO:



Children

More males than females are affected



Older adults



Outside workers



People with disabilities

WHERE:



Houses with little to no AC



Construction work sites



Cars

HOW to AVOID:



Stay hydrated with water, avoid sugary beverages



Stay cool in an air conditioned area



Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes



During extreme heat the temperature in your car could be deadly!

Outside Temperature 80°



Time Elapsed: 20 minutes



Time Elapsed: 40 minutes



Time Elapsed: 60 minutes

HEAT ALERTS: Know the difference.

HEAT OUTLOOK

Minor

Excessive heat event in 3 to 7 days

HEAT WATCHES

Excessive heat event in 12 to 48 hours

HEAT WARNING/ADVISORY

Major

Excessive heat event in next 36 hours

Heat Exhaustion

ACT FAST

- Move to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing
- Sip cool water
- Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve

Dizziness

Thirst

Heavy Sweating

Nausea

Weakness



Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.

Heat Stroke

ACT FAST

CALL 911

- Move person to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing and remove extra layers
- Cool with water or ice

Confusion

Dizziness

Becomes Unconscious

Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.



Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!



Safety tips at the market

| Food type/category | What to look for |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Fresh produce | Clean, looks fresh, no cuts or nicks |
| Cut or peeled produce | Surrounded by ice Looks fresh and cold |
| Meats, eggs, cheeses | Product is in cooler or on ice |
| Milk | Must be pasteurized (KS/MO regulation) |
| Home canned foods | Ask how it was prepared and handled |
| Booth, personal cleanliness | Vendors have clean clothes, hands, no wiping nose, etc. |
| All products | Ask vendors about their food safety practices |

Safety tips on the way home

- Keep raw meat separate from other foods
- Make the market your last stop
- Use cooler/insulated bags, especially if it takes more than 1 hour to get home

Safety tips at home

- Wash produce under running water even if you are not eating the peel as dirt can transfer outside to inside
- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs below and separate from all other foods in the refrigerator
- Refrigerate or freeze perishables within 2 hours to prevent microbial growth

All foods should be cooked thoroughly to kill microorganisms

Beef, pork, lamb, and veal steaks, chops and roasts, seafood: **145°F** with a 3 minute rest time after cooking

Ground beef, pork, lamb and veal; egg dishes: **160°F**

All poultry products, all reheated foods: **165°F**

Sources:

Food Safety on the Move. The Partnership for Food Safety Education 2013. Available from: www.fightbac.org

Check your steps. FoodSafety.gov 2013. Available from www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics

Adapted by: Priscilla Bloom, Aramark Dietetic intern

Prepared by: Londa Nwadike, PhD, Kansas State University/ University of Missouri Extension Consumer Food Safety Specialist



Storing Fresh Produce

Eating fresh local produce is always a treat and one of the best things about summer!
Here are a few tips on maintaining their quality and safety until you are ready to eat them.

| Storage location | Fruits and melons | Vegetables |
|--|---|--|
| Store in refrigerator (<40F) | Apples (>7 days) Apricots Berries Cherries Cut fruits Grapes | Herbs Mushrooms Green beans Beets Broccoli Cabbage Carrots Cauliflower Cut veggies Leafy greens Summer squash Sweet corn |
| Ripen on the counter, then store in refrigerator | Peaches, Pears | |
| Store at room temperature | Apples (<7 days) Citrus fruits Watermelon | Bananas Muskmelon Basil (in water) Cucumbers + Dry onions* Eggplant + Garlic* Peppers + Potatoes * Pumpkins Sweet potatoes* Tomatoes Winter Squash |
| + Cucumbers, eggplant and peppers can be kept refrigerated for 1 to 3 days if they are used soon after removal from the refrigerator *Store garlic, onions, potatoes, and sweet potatoes in a well-ventilated area in the pantry. | | |

Further tips:

Once any produce is cut or peeled, it must be stored in the refrigerator for safety

Refrigerated fruits and vegetables should be stored in moisture-proof bags with a few holes in them to retain moisture but also to allow air circulation and prevent condensation.

Wash all whole produce under running water just before preparation for eating.

No need to use soap or produce washes- clean running water is enough

Wash even if peeling the produce so you don't transfer "dirt" from outside to the inside

Use a clean scrub brush to wash produce such as potatoes and melons.

References:

Storing Fresh Vegetables for Better Taste. 2012. University of California Davis Post Harvest Technology Program. Available from: <http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/datastore/234-1920.pdf>

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