

Fenceline

by Jody G. Holthaus

Meadowlark Extension District Agent

Livestock-Natural Resources

YUCKY WATER

It's that time of year when ponds and stock tanks are looking pretty gross! If you think the pool water in Rio is bad, look around. There are some tricks to aiding in the abolishment of algae.

In stock watering tanks you can add some goldfish, the cheap kind. You can add 4-6 goldfish per 100 gallons of tank capacity. Water temperature should be at least 60 degrees for the fish survival. If they are just small this fall, you can take them inside and overwinter. Larger fish can survive the winter. I like to provide a piece of PVC pipe or milk crate for them to hide in from predators.

Chlorine bleach can work if you add 2-3 ounces of 5.25% sodium hypochlorite use the unscented laundry bleach per 100 gallons of water. Once you start this, it will need to be continued each week. The chlorine will dissipate quicker in really hot weather. Do not use the chlorine sanitizer made for swimming pools. Copper sulfate has been a cure forever, use at the rate of 1/8 teaspoon per 100 gallons. Remove the dead plant material. Shading the tank can slow algae growth.

Zinc sulfate can be used at the rate of 1 cup in 1 gallon of warm water, then put ½ cup of this solution in your tank per 100 gallons, you can do this as often as necessary.

Control in ponds and lakes is tricky. The first thought is to not feed the algae, so if you fertilize the surrounding land, stay back at least 100 feet. Try to keep a grass buffer around the pond to catch runoff. Excluding animals from the water, will also aid in the algae control, but might defeat the whole purpose of the pond. There are plans for limited access points for watering. I have those available if you are interested, give me a call.

Copper sulfate crystals can be added at a rate of 2-3 pounds per acre foot of water. An acre foot is 43,560 square feet in area X 1 foot deep. Put the crystals in a porous bag, tie the bag to an empty milk jug as a float to keep the bag near the surface, drag this through the water until the crystals dissolve. Avoid treating when the water temperature is above 80 degrees, treat only ¼ or 1/3 of the vegetation at a time, to avoid a possible fish kill.

Barley straw is touted on the internet as a solution, good luck finding any of this, in a large enough quantity. We have a publication entitled "Aquatic Weeds and Their Control" it will help you determine the type of algae or weeds you are fighting. It also has some guidelines on how to determine the acre feet of your pond. It can be downloaded from the KSRE website.