

## Fenceline

by Jody G. Holthaus  
Meadowlark Extension District Agent  
Livestock-Natural Resources

## Fair Time-Algae

Ethel Ann King brought us a book, it's called "Under the 4-H Flag" and as close as we can tell it was written in 1927. I've read a few chapters, I'm thinking it was written about a Missouri farm family. The club work they referred to was "Pig clubs" and "sewing clubs". That's quite a change than we have in our current 4-H program, which once had a campaign, "4-H is more than Cows and Cookin".

This is fair season, which highlights all of the "club work" going on in the county. It was always encouraging that during or after fair week, people would come into the office and want to sign up their kids, must be doing something right.

As EA's books says "It is our privilege to impress upon young and plastic minds the importance and dignity of agriculture, to bring out its hidden beauties, to help make of the farm and home a year-round workshop which not only yields return for investment and labor but is the best place on earth to live"

Don't forget to visit the county fairs: Jackson County Fair July 25-29, Nemaha County Fair July 29-August 1 and Jefferson County fair, August 1-4.

I'm hearing rumor that there have been some livestock deaths due to Blue Green Algae in a pond. Supposedly, a dozen meat goats died in this area.

A pond containing a harmful algal bloom may be covered with a scum that looks like bright green paint, but other colors are possible, varying from blue-green to grey and occasionally red or brown. Some types are filamentous and may form slimy strands when many cling together. Duckweed is bright green, but to the naked eye can be seen as individual plants.

If you suspect Blue-Green algae, samples can be taken and sent to Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostics lab. The Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment has a do it yourself, test. You can collect a sample using a canning jar. You can find complete instructions at [www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/download/Jar\\_Test.pdf](http://www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/download/Jar_Test.pdf). While this test is not 100%, it can give an indication if further testing is needed.

Simply, take a clear jar and fill it  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of water, just below the pond's surface. Wipe off any scum, on the outside of the jar. Screw the lid onto the jar, place in cold refrigerator and leave completely undisturbed overnight. The next day, carefully remove the jar and look to see where the algal have accumulated. Do not shake or agitate the jar in any way. If the algal are all on the bottom, it's likely not to be Blue/Green algae. If the algae have formed a green ring around the top of the water, there is a strong possibility that the pond does have a blue-green algae community present.

David G. Hallauer  
Meadowlark Extension District Agent  
Crops & Soils/Horticulture  
Iris Division

Fairly easy to care for. Well adapted to Kansas. Multiply quickly! All those traits make the bearded iris easily one of the most popular of our landscape plants. They don't thrive without a little care once in a while, however, and now is one of those times for a little TLC...

If you've ever noticed the centers of your iris clumps becoming less vigorous with flowering only on the outside, it might be time to consider dividing them. Doing so every three to five years will help rejuvenate them and increase flowering. The optimum window for iris division is late July through August.

Start by digging up the entire clump. Their root system consists of thick rhizomes and smaller feeder roots. Use a sharp knife to cut rhizomes apart so each division consists of a fan of leaves and a section of rhizome. The best divisions are made from a double fan of two small rhizomes attached to a larger one, forming a Y-shaped division. Double fans are preferred as they produce more flowers the year after planting. Single fans take a year to build up strength.

If rhizomes show signs of damage, it could be from iris borer or soft rot. Unless you want to physically remove the borers or try to treat mild cases of soft rot, it is typically best to discard those damaged rhizomes.

Before replanting, cut the leaves back by two-thirds, then prepare the soil by removing weeds and applying fertilizer. If you have a soil test – great! If not, apply a complete fertilizer, such as a 10-10-10, at the rate of one pound per 100 square feet (avoid fertilizer if the area has been heavily fertilized in the past). Mix into the soil to a six inch depth.

Iris division not only helps the plant, but also offers a great opportunity to evaluate the health of the clump. Beyond that, sharing your favorite colors with a friend is a great way to spruce up yet another landscape with this popular plant!

## KSU Soybean Yield Calculator App

Soybean yield estimates prior to harvest are a great way to see how your crop has fared. The conventional approach has included determining the plant population, counting pods per plant and seeds per pod, and estimating a seed size. A few calculations later and you've got a yield estimate!

Smart phone users can also check out an Android application from K-State Research and Extension called KSUSoyYieldCalc. It helps with yield estimation of soybeans using plant population, pods per plant, seeds per pod, and seed size (if conditions until harvest will be favorable, the seed size component should be a lower number - e.g., 2,400 seeds/lb. If conditions are likely to be unfavorable, resulting in a short seed-fill period, this factor should be higher - e.g., 3,200 seeds/lb).

Downloads from Google Play for free: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ksu.tania90.soya1> or search for 'soybean yield' within the Google Play website and download the application.

Cindy Williams

Meadowlark Extension District Agent

Food & Nutrition, FNP

Christmas in July: Start Saving Now

It's summer—the season for cookouts, gardening, going to the pool and a time to begin setting aside money for the holidays. I have already seen some Christmas movies on T.V. already. Now is the time to continue to or to start saving so the holidays won't take a bite out of your budget. With some advance planning and shopping can help to reduce the stress when the holiday's season starts.

As with many things in life, preparing and planning before you begin makes things easier. It is no different with financially preparing for the holidays. The holidays are a time to gather with family and friends and often we find ourselves getting caught up in the excitement and spending more than anticipated. Planning ahead of time can save you financial and emotional strain.

Budgeting for parties and gift giving in advance is vital. We want to help Kansans control their money rather than the money or the season controlling them. Summer time is not too late to start planning.

Begin by creating a budget specifically for gifts by making a list of all of the people who you want to give a gift to. Assign a sum of money and slowly start saving by putting money in an envelope that says the name of that person.

Observe what your children and others like. Or ask them now. If someone gave you \$30.00, what would you buy with it? By asking months ahead of time, the surprise effect could still work since the holidays are so far away. Shop throughout the year and take advantage of sales in stores or online.

Remember that not all gifts have to be purchased. One of the benefits of starting now is that you can create some of your gifts. Some gift suggestions she shares are:

\*For a child who likes to cook, gradually buy a cook book with simple recipes and the dry ingredients for one recipe, put them in a mixing bowl and wrap it with cellophane;

\*For budding artists, gradually buy brushes; paint, and a canvas, and put them into a decorative bag;

\*A good gift for grandparents or a neighbor is for children to create coupons of volunteer time: shoveling snow twice, wash the car three times; yard cleanup twice or a plate of something you can cook twice are some examples;

\*If you or your children like photography, grandparents often appreciate receiving framed photos;

\*Another gift idea is to use a clear jar and put the mixture of dry ingredients of a soup recipe in a decorative ways. Don't forget to include the recipe and any other necessary instructions.

Another way to save money on gifts is to only purchase gifts for your children or partner and have a gift exchange with other family and friends. This way, price limits can be set for gifts and removes the stress of having to find the perfect gift for multiple people. When suggesting this to your family and friends now, explain that you're proposing exchanging names in July so everyone has time to shop or make gifts ahead of the holiday rush.

The holidays are also characterized by a lot of spending on food. Start making a plan in July to ask family members to bring different items to holiday dinners rather than any one person assuming all the work and cost. You might even consider preserving some extra garden produce for your special holiday meals.

If there are five siblings, have one responsible for the drinks, another being responsible for desserts and another being responsible for the salad. This way the load is distributed and a more relaxed atmosphere is created.

When planning for the holidays, try to avoid buying at the last minute. This will help to avoid impulse purchases. Start shopping early enough to avoid feeling pressured to buy whatever shows first. This allows you to compare similar items and take advantage of sales.

Planning now for the festivities will save you time, money and energy, while at the same time, bringing peace of mind, good relations and happiness to you and those around you.

Nancy C. Nelson  
Meadowlark District Agent  
Family Life

## Advice for Older People on Staying Safe in Hot Weather

When its county fair time the hot days of summer are here and it is important to be aware of the health risks that higher temperatures can bring. Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are particularly susceptible to hyperthermia and other heat-related illnesses.

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) offers advice to help combat the dangers of hot weather. Heat fatigue, heat syncope (sudden dizziness after prolonged exposure to the heat), heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are forms of hyperthermia, which is caused by a failure of the body's heat-regulating mechanisms to deal with a hot environment. The combination of individual lifestyle, general health, and high temperatures can increase older adults' risk for heat-related problems.

Lifestyle factors can include not drinking enough fluids, living in housing without air conditioning, lack of mobility and access to transportation, overdressing, visiting overcrowded places, and not understanding how to respond to hot weather conditions. On hot and humid days, older people, particularly those with chronic medical conditions like heart disease and diabetes, should stay indoors in cooler spaces. People without air conditioners should go to places that do have air conditioning, such as senior centers and libraries.

There are many things that can increase risk for hyperthermia, including: dehydration; Age-related changes to the skin such as poor blood circulation and inefficient sweat production; and use of multiple medications-it is important, however, to continue to take prescribed medication and discuss possible problems with a physician. Other things that can increase risk for hyperthermia include reduced sweating caused by medications such as diuretics, sedatives, tranquilizers and certain heart and blood pressure drugs; high blood pressure or other health conditions that require changes in diet- people on salt-restricted diets may be at increased risk, however, salt pills should not be used without first consulting a doctor. Other things that increase risk are heart, lung and kidney diseases, as well as any illness that causes general weakness or fever; being substantially overweight or underweight; and alcohol use.

Heat stroke is a life-threatening form of hyperthermia. It occurs when the body is overwhelmed by heat and unable to control its temperature. Signs and symptoms of heat stroke include a significant increase in body temperature (generally above 104 degrees Fahrenheit), mental status changes (like confusion or combativeness), strong rapid pulse, dry flushed skin, lack of sweating, feeling faint, staggering or coma. It is critical to seek immediate emergency medical attention for a person with heat stroke symptoms, especially an older adult.