

MEADOWLARK EXTENT DISTRICT WEEKLY NEWS FROM AGENTS

Jody G Holthaus
Meadowlark Extension District Agent
Livestock-Natural Resources

KSU Calving School

When it comes to calving, timely assistance can cut calf death losses by half and help boost the cow's reproductive health after delivery, according to a Kansas State University animal scientist.

"Timely, correct obstetrical assistance has been estimated to reduce calf death losses by over 50 percent," said Sandy Johnson, K-State Research and Extension livestock specialist. "Prolonged duration of labor or late calving assistance delays the cow's return to estrus after calving and decreases subsequent pregnancy rates."

The topic is the focus of 9 calving schools to be hosted in different locations around the state during December and January. The local school will be held December 15 in Holton. Time and place will be confirmed later.

"Producers can do several things to minimize potential losses related to calving," Johnson said. "Adequate nutrition for the cow and developing fetus before calving is the foundation. Timely and correct obstetrical assistance when needed increases calf survival and speeds the cow's ability to rebreed."

Veterinarian AJ Tarpoff, KSU Beef Extension Veterinarian, will give the keynote address at each school, including a review of the normal calving process, how and when to intervene, and how to manage a difficult birth. Cow nutrition and real life examples of the effect of nutrition during pregnancy on calving management, as well as the lifetime health and performance of the calf, will be part of the program.

Also on the program is a presentation on the importance of Body Condition on the reproductive performance.

Spaces are limited, please call the local Extension office or email jholthau@ksu.edu.

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David Hallauer

Meadowlark Extension District Agent

Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Beekeeping School

If you've ever given any thought to beekeeping, but didn't know where to get started, hold December 16th on your calendar! The Meadowlark Extension District is hosting a beginning beekeeping workshop starting at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, December 16th at the Northeast Kansas Heritage Complex south of Holton.

Beekeeper Sharon Dobesh will talk about all things beekeeping, with a focus on beginning beekeepers and equipment. There will be plenty of time for discussion during the 90 minute program, as well as time afterwards to look at the assortment of equipment that you might need to get started. If you are new to beekeeping, are just giving it some thought, or have questions about beekeeping you would like to have answered, this workshop will get you started in the right direction.

No RSVP is required. If you have questions about the program, or need directions, you can contact the Holton Office of the Meadowlark Extension District at (785) 364-4125 or visit our webpage at www.meadowlark.ksu.edu and look for the beekeeping school in the events column on the right hand side of the page. Hope to see you there!

Watering Landscape Plants

Rainfall just before Thanksgiving provided some much needed moisture across the area – but did it provide enough? Perennial plants need to go in to winter with moist soil to help reduce the likelihood of winter damage. Newly planted trees and shrubs deserve special attention because of their limited root systems.

Moisture needs to be present to a depth of at least twelve inches. If not, watering should be implemented to do so. This allows deeper roots to take in moisture even while surface root water absorption is limited when temperatures drop. Use a metal rod, wooden dowel, electric fence post or other foot long object to check moisture depth. Dry soil is much harder to push through than wet and you can often find the 'dry line' with one of these tools.

Newly planted trees and shrubs may require watering rates of up to 10 gallons or more with increasing rates needed based on the size of the tree at transplanting. Provide water as uniformly as possible. If using a bucket or garden hose, move it around periodically and allow it to soak in throughout at least the first half of the drip line area of the tree or shrub. When using a soaker hose, hook both ends to a Y-adaptor to equalize pressure along the length of the hose to avoid overwatering on one part of the hose – with no water on the other! Water slowly enough that water soaks in well rather than runs off.

For a list of watering best management practices for newly planted trees and shrubs, check out Watering Newly Planted and Young Trees and Shrubs available from your District Office or online at: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf2800.pdf>.

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There will be no news from Cindy Williams or Nancy Nelson