

Jody Holthaus, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Livestock and Natural Resources

Totality!

Who knew that “totality” meant total cloud cover! I feel bad for those that didn’t get to see it. We got just a glimpse through the clouds and then it got real dark! I had a friend fly in from Washington DC, just for the Eclipse. Whoops!

Now that all that is behind us, the Eastern Kansas Grazing School can take the spotlight. David Hallauer and I are excited to be able to host the school in Holton this year. This school is in its sixth year, we have a committee of Agents, specialists and NRCS folks that plan the school each year. They are bringing to you the experts in rotational grazing. Mark Green is a Range conservationist from Missouri that has been rotationally grazing most of his life. Not only does he practice what he preaches at home, but he designs systems for others with his NRCS work in Springfield Missouri. He has a collection of electric fence gadgets, and he will show you what works and what doesn’t. Mark has a wealth of information to share. Fencing is always a big issue when grazing animals and the other issue is water. Mark also has a display of portable watering systems that could work for you. We will turn Mark loose and let him share his experiences. Even if, you are not going to do rotational grazing, I guarantee you will learn something from the fencing and water presentation that you can use at home.

Doug Spencer, is our hometown guy, who is now the Range Conservationist in Kansas. Doug also, experiments with the family cowherd and grazing. Doug will be one of our main presenters and we will visit his families operation.

We do limit registration, for the ultimate size group, but we do have a few openings. There is a \$60 charge for the two days, for the first person from the farm or ranch and \$30 for the second person.

Call or email today, registration information is located on our website: www.meadowlark.ksu.edu.

David Hallauer, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Crop and Soils, Horticulture

Turfgrass Fertilization Time!

Spring is when we focus most of our efforts on turfgrass management. Let's face it. By the time you've mowed all summer long – in addition to the other lawn care chores you have to take care of! – adding one more turf care chore in the fall is the last thing on your list! With that in mind, try not to look at fall fertilization so much as a chore as a 'time savings tool' for next spring! Let me explain...

Fertilizer applications to turfgrass in the spring can do a lot of good. They make the lawn grow quickly. They provide a turf with a dark green color. They may even cause it to grow fast enough that you can't see the weeds! Unfortunately, the benefit of the fertilizer application might actually be increased by application in the fall versus the spring! If you could only fertilize your cool-season grasses (tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass) once per year, September would be that time!

As days shorten and temperatures, particularly at night, start to moderate, grasses enter their fall growth cycle. This is the time when these cool-season grasses naturally thicken up via tillering (forming new shoots at the base of existing plants) and, for bluegrass, spreading by underground stems called rhizomes. September fertilizer applications can really help this thickening up process.

For best results, apply one to one and a half pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet (the settings recommended on lawn fertilizer bags usually result in about one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet). Fertilizer products do differ slightly, and while most fall fertilizers on the shelf right now are quick release (or a combination quick/slow release), be sure to check for certain.

Time savings wise, a good fall application could help thicken a stand to the point that the turf is a better competitor with weeds than it would be with a single spring application – without the excessive growth that often occurs in the spring. With any luck, that can reduce (not eliminate!!) weed pressure issues and mowing in the spring. See! Time saved!!

If there was a second most important fertilization time frame for cool-season grasses, it would actually be November! November applications will help the grass green up earlier next spring and provide the nutrients needed until summer. It also should be quick-release applied at the rate of one pound actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.

Cindy Williams, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Food and Nutrition, FNP

It's Apple Season!

As fall approaches, apples are starting to ripen and soon will be harvested. Today, there are over 2,500 varieties of apples grown in the United States. To help enjoy that variety of fresh apple flavors year-round, consider preserving them to add to your menu.

Apples can be preserved in a number of ways: dried or made into applesauce or apple butter, a delicious apple-pear jam or a tasty pie filling. Choose the preserving method that is best for your apple variety.

Some examples include:

*Freezing–Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Jonathan, Rome Beauty and Stayman

*Applesauce and apple butter–Golden Delicious, Gravenstein, Jonathan, McIntosh, and Rome Beauty and Stayman

To select apples at peak maturity, look for these signs:

*Color Change: As apples mature, the skin color at the stem and the calyx basin at the bottom of the apple turns from an immature green to a light yellow color. Some apples will develop a red skin color before they are ripe, so that is not a reliable indication of maturity.

*Flavor: This is a good guide if you are familiar with the apples you have and know how they should taste. Even if you do not know the characteristic flavor of the kind of apple you have, you can still sample slices of a few apples and decide if they have a sweet flavor. If the apples are not ready to harvest, they will taste starchy or immature. If apples have already fallen and taste a bit starchy, store them for a period to see if they become sweeter.

*Flesh color: As apples mature and starches change to sugars, the flesh changes from a very light green to white. You can see the difference when you cut a thin slice and hold it up to the light.

*Days from bloom: The number of days from bloom is a reliable guide for general maturity time, though weather conditions will have some influence. Some kinds of apples and approximate days from bloom to maturity are Jonathan-135, Delicious -145, Golden Delicious-145 and Winesap-155.

*Seed color: The seeds of most apples change from light green to brown as the fruit ripens. This indicator should be combined with other changes, since it is not absolute.

Preserve apples as soon as possible after harvest. If any apples must be stored, keep them in a cool, dark place. They should not be tightly covered or wrapped up; a perforated plastic or open paper bag, basket or wooden crate are good choices. If kept in the refrigerator, apples should be placed in the humidifier compartment, in a plastic bag with several holes punched in it or in a zipper-type vegetable bag to prevent loss of moisture and crispness. Apples should not be placed close to foods with strong odors.

Nancy Nelson, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Skin Care and Aging

Your skin changes with age. It becomes thinner, loses fat, and no longer looks as plump and smooth as it once did. Your veins and bones can be seen more easily. Scratches, cuts, or bumps can take longer to heal. Years of sun tanning or being out in the sunlight for a long time may lead to wrinkles, dryness, age spots, and even cancer.

But, there are things you can do to protect your skin and to make it feel and look better. The National Institute on Aging (www.nia.nih.gov) shares this information.

Many older people suffer from dry spots on their skin, often on their lower legs, elbows, and lower arms. Dry skin patches feel rough and scaly. There are many possible reasons for dry skin, such as:

not drinking enough liquids, spending too much time in the sun or sun tanning, being in very dry air, smoking, feeling stress, and losing sweat and oil glands, which is common with age

Dry skin also can be caused by health problems, such as diabetes or kidney disease. Using too much soap, antiperspirant, or perfume, and taking hot baths can make dry skin worse.

Some medicines can make skin itchy. Because older people have thinner skin, scratching can cause bleeding that may lead to infection. Talk to your doctor if your skin is very dry and itchy.

Here are some ways to help dry, itchy skin: use moisturizers, like lotions, creams, or ointments, every day. Take fewer baths and use milder soap. Warm water is less drying than hot water. Don't add bath oil to your water. It can make the tub too slippery. Try using a humidifier to add moisture to a room.

Older people may bruise more easily than younger people. It can take longer for these bruises to heal. Some medicines or illnesses may also cause bruising. Talk to your doctor if you see bruises and don't know how you got them, especially on parts of your body usually covered by clothing.

Over time, skin begins to wrinkle. Things in the environment, like ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun, can make the skin less elastic. Gravity can cause skin to sag and wrinkle. Certain habits, like smoking, also can wrinkle the skin.

A lot of claims are made about how to make wrinkles go away. Many of them don't work. Some methods can be painful or even dangerous, and many must be done by a doctor. Talk with a dermatologist or your regular doctor if you are worried about wrinkles.

Age spots, once called "liver spots," are flat, brown spots often caused by years in the sun. They are bigger than freckles and commonly show up on areas like the face, hands, arms, back, and feet. Using a broad-spectrum sunscreen that helps protect against two types of the sun's rays may prevent more age spots.

Skin tags are small, usually flesh-colored growths of skin that have a raised surface. They become common as people age, especially for women. They are most often found on the eyelids, neck, and body folds such as the armpit, chest, and groin.

Age spots and skin tags are harmless, although sometimes skin tags can become irritated. If your age spots or skin tags bother you, talk to your doctor about having them removed.