9/22/1717

Jody Holthaus, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Livestock and Natural Resources

**FENCELINE**

Ode to a Cow
When life seems one too many for you,
Go and look at a cow,
When the future's black and blue,
Go and look at a cow.
For she does nothing but eat her food,
And sleep in the meadows entirely nood,
Refusing to fret or worry or brood.
Because she doesn't know how.
Whenever you're feeling bothered and sore,
Go and look at a cow.
When everything else is a fearful bore,
Go and look at a cow.
Observe her gentle and placid air,
Her nonchalance and savior faire,
Her absolute freedom from every care,
Her imperturbable brow.
So when you're at the end of your wits,
Go and look at a cow.
Or when your nerves are frayed to bits,
And wrinkles furrow your brow;
She'll merely moo in her gentle way,
Switching her rudder as if to say:
"Bother tomorrow! Let's live today!
Take the advice of a cow."
*The Old Farmer's Almanac, 1936*

"We've seen incredible volatility in land values in the last six years," said Mykel Taylor, associate professor and farm management specialist with K-State Research and Extension. During that time, historic high prices were recorded in 2014-2015 followed by sliding values in 2016 and so far this year.

Values for non-irrigated or dryland cropland in Kansas have fallen the most – 17 percent since 2015 – said Taylor, who gave a presentation on the topic at the recent K-State Risk and Profit Conference in Manhattan. Prices for irrigated cropland dropped 9 percent, and pasture land values fell 5 percent in that period.

Farmland values and rental rates are two of Taylor's primary areas of research. She uses data from farmer surveys conducted by the Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service and transaction data recorded in the Kansas Department of Revenue Property Valuation Division to study trends.

The farmer surveys provide a ballpark estimate of what land is selling for, but it's based on farmers' opinions, she said, adding that the farmer response rate to such surveys in Kansas is relatively low. For that reason, using market-based data from actual transactions recorded at the PVD gives a clearer picture.

Long-run trends indicate farmland values will continue to move lower through the rest of the year and potentially beyond and may fall by as much as 50 percent from the highs of 2014 and 2015, Taylor said, noting that though land values typically follow agricultural profitability, they do not adjust as quickly as changes to grain and livestock prices do.

"The way net farm income is related to land values, we project out a possible 30 to 50 percent drop from the 2014-2015 highs," she said, noting that prices vary across the state.

"Farmers are still our biggest buyers of (Kansas) farmland," Taylor said when asked about multi-national corporations buying farmland in Kansas. "Kansas is not as attractive to investors as states in the Corn Belt because of the volatility in our yields."

Some appraisers have reported that the overall number of bidders at farmland auctions has dipped, she added.

Information on farmland values, rental rates and other information can be found on the K-State extension agricultural economics website www.agmanager.info.

David Hallauer, Agent
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Crop and Soils, Horticulture

# Tree Planting in the Fall

While spring is typically thought of as 'planting season' for most of our lawn and garden plants, trees are definitely one of those that can thrive when planted in the fall. Unlike fall, when soils could be cold and saturated (resulting in oxygen levels so low that root growth is inhibited), the warm and moist soils associated with fall actually *encourage* root growth. That means that the tree becomes established well before a spring-planted tree making it better able to withstand summer stresses.

Because we are planting in to drier soils, some special care is required for fall plantings. Tree roots are actively growing even though the top is dormant, so make sure the soil stays moist but not soggy. This may require watering not only in the fall but also during the winter months if we experience warm spells that dry the soil. Consider a mulch layer as well to help minimize moisture loss and slow soil cooling so root growth continues as long as possible. If planting evergreens, do so as early in the fall as you can since they need at least six weeks before the ground freezes for the roots to become established.

Fall planting isn't for every species!! Some trees do not produce significant root growth during the fall and are better planted in the spring. These include beech, birch, redbud, magnolia, tulip poplar, willow oak, scarlet oak, black oak, willows, and dogwood.

If you are considering a fall planting, don't forget to consider seedlings from the Kansas Forest Service Conservation Tree Planting Program. The fall ordering season runs through October 13th. Pick up an order form and price list from your District Extension Office or visit www.kansasforests.org .

If by chance you miss the fall planting window, the Conservation Tree Planting Program has an even wider array of trees and shrubs available during their spring ordering season! Orders are taken from December through early March with seedling distribution starting in mid-March. Visit the website above or contact a District Office for ordering information and a price sheet. Want to determine what trees or shrubs might fit best on your property? The website even has a tree suitability tool for your use as well!

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

## Campylobacter Linked to Puppies

Many of you know that I volunteer as a 4-H dog leader so I have had people asked me about the recent outbreak associated with puppies. After all how can you resist those cute fuzzy faces! Unfortunately, puppies are currently linked to an outbreak of Campylobacter in seven states affecting 39 people, including Kansas. This is not puppy love.

It is a fact, animals, even our beloved puppies carry germs. This outbreak is traced back to puppies sold at Petland stores. The suspected source of the bacteria is dog feces. Symptoms of Campylobacter include diarrhea (bloody), fever, stomach cramps, nausea, and vomiting. Symptoms develop in two to five days after exposure and last about a week.

When puppy shopping, look for shiny, soft, clean fur. The puppy should be bright, alert, and playful. Always take the puppy to your veterinarian for a check-up as soon as possible. If the puppy is sluggish, not eating, or has abnormal breathing, see your veterinarian.

Always wash your hands after handling any animal, their food, or cleaning up after them. This important step will help stop the transfer of disease to you.

## Our Hands, Our Future!

Speaking of washing your hands, did you know that October 15 is designated as Global Handwashing Day? The theme, Our Hands, Our Future, is a reminder that handwashing protects your health and other life aspects.

The simple practice should be a habit as it is the most effective and inexpensive way to protect your health. Even in the United States, where soap is plentiful, handwashing doesn't happen as often as it should. To help promote handwashing, there are many resources from the American Cleaning Institute.

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Nancy Nelson, Agent
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

No news today!