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Kansas Mesonet

In 1986, weather stations were established at all K-State Research & Extension research centers and equipment facilities. These stations combined to form the Kansas Mesonet and can provide excellent information for making real-time production agriculture decisions. Located in long-term sites as recommended by the World Meteorological Organization, these sites employ research-grade instrumentation for highly accurate weather data collection.

Located online at www.mesonet.k-state.edu, information collected from Mesonet stations is updated in real-time, providing temperatures and wind speed (among others) to site visitors. A click on any of the stations provides further information specific to that site.

Trying to figure out soil temperatures for planting? The Kansas Mesonet provides current soil temperatures with the ability to download historical information for trend analysis as well. The same is true for much of the data collected on the network, allowing you to take a look back at things like air temperatures and soil moisture as well.

Got alfalfa? The growing degree calculator can tell you when to start scouting for alfalfa weevil. Research shows that it takes 150 or more growing degree units for alfalfa weevil to start feeding. An average of three weather stations surrounding our Meadowlark Extension District counties shows we are still under 60 GDU's. Another week of pretty warm temperatures in the forecast means weevil will be feeding soon and the Mesonet allows us to monitor as such.

Real-time inversion calculations are posted on the page for pesticide applicator reference, as are relative humidity and other measures important for those conducting prescribed burns. Want information on climate in Kansas? The Mesonet site provides a link there as well.

As the network continues to expand, an even greater breadth of data will be available, all at one site. Check it out today, and watch for upcoming announcements about additional network sites here in the Meadowlark Extension District. Want a tour of the site? Drop me a line and I'll walk you through the many features it has to offer.

Cure the Itch by Planting Peas

According to the Kansas Mesonet, our two-inch soil temperatures are just a tad under 40 degrees F. You know what grows well when soil temperatures reach 40 degrees? Peas.

If you can't wait to get something planted, consider one of several types of peas adapted to Kansas. Shelling peas like Little Marvel, Green Arrow, Knight, Maestro, Burpeeana and Mr. Big are all early maturing types that allow for harvest before hot weather ends production.

Snow peas or sugar snap peas are options, too. Recommended snow peas include Dwarf Grey Sugar and Mammoth Melting Sugar. Sugar snap peas adapted to Kansas include Sugar Bon, Sugar Ann, Super Sugar Snap and Sugar Sprint.

Plant peas about a half-inch deep so they germinate and emerge quickly. Plant two inches apart within the row in rows six to eight inches apart so floppy plants can support one another. Rabbit prevention will likely be needed.

Want to know what other crops might be planted soon? Check out our KSRE Vegetable Garden Planting Guide available through any of our District Offices or online at <http://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf315.pdf>.