

Meadowlark District Extension News
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Tailgate Talk – August 25th

With any luck, the recent ‘invasion’ of fall armyworms will leave us a little bit of forage to talk about at our rescheduled Tailgate Talk on August 25th. We’ll briefly discuss fall forage maintenance and management, touching on how armyworm damage might affect forage stands as they get ready for fall dormancy. After that, the evening’s focus will be on alternative water sources and why you might need them from Meadowlark Extension District Livestock and Natural Resources Agent Jody Holthaus and KSU Water Quality Specialist Will Boyer.

This fall’s Tailgate Talk will be Wednesday evening, August 25th starting at 5:30 p.m. We’ll meet at the farm of Henry and Tracy Hill family located a quarter mile east of the intersection of 254th and S Roads (south side of the road) northeast of Holton for a light supper sponsored by the Jackson County Conservation District at 5:30 with the program to follow.

To get an accurate meal count, participants are asked to RSVP to the Holton Office of the Meadowlark Extension District by calling (785) 364-4125 or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu. RSVP is available online at <https://tinyurl.com/tailgatetalk2021>. Bring a lawn chair and some insect repellent – we hope to see you there.

Fall Armyworms – Brome

Armyworm damage has reared its ugly head yet again this fall. The hatch likely occurred three to four weeks ago, as many stands have worms an inch long or greater. At this growth stage, their feeding is heavy and damage is characterized first by windowpanes in plant leaves, and then removal of leaves altogether, often leaving little more than stubble in their path as they move across fields.

Fortunately, larvae an inch or greater in length are reaching the end of their feeding cycle. Unfortunately, vigilance is still needed. There is the potential for at least one more generation this fall. In areas where forage regrowth has been slowed – by grazing/harvest/armyworm feeding/etc..., noticeable damage may again occur. If damage is heavy and larvae are still small, control options may deserve consideration. If stands are in good shape and good growing conditions persist, stands may well recover without additional attention.

For more information about armyworms in brome, including stand damage remediation, check out armyworm flyer on our District Crops & Soils page at: <https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/docs/crops-soils/Armyworms%20in%20Bromegrass%202021.pdf>.

Fall Armyworms – Turfgrass

Pastures and hay fields aren’t the only grasses affected by fall armyworms. Turfgrass stands can see heavy injury as well. Like forage stands, damage starts out slight, but gets worse in a hurry. Fortunately, fall armyworms seldom kill grass, often moving on to feed on tender adjacent grass blades rather than eating all the way to the ground. If the stand is healthy, a flush of new growth should soon reappear (rain and/or irrigation will speed up the regrowth process).

If insecticides are considered, consider products with active ingredients like carbaryl, cyhalothrin, permethrin, and spinosad registered for control of fall armyworm in turf. Spray treatments will have greater and quicker contact efficacy than granular applications. For more information, request a Fall Armyworm fact sheet via e-mail or from any District Office.