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**Germination Testing**  
Whether you’re planting seed to harvest, or just for cover, the effectiveness of the planting is often only as good as the number of seeds you can get to grow. There are a lot of factors that go in to getting that to happen, one of the most important being seed germination.

The Kansas Crop Improvement Association Seed Lab is a great testing option for Kansas producers. Testing can be done for multiple crops, many for under $25 (pasture grasses and multiple species samples will be higher). All it takes is a two-pound seed sample, a submittal form, and payment for the tests being performed.

Submittal forms, testing fees, and mailing instructions can be found on the Kansas Crop Improvement Association website at: [https://www.kscrop.org/seed-lab.html](https://www.kscrop.org/seed-lab.html). Plan ahead. Allow a minimum of two weeks for germination testing after samples are received and processed. Want to try a ‘simple’ test at home? Check out last week’s KSU Agronomy eUpdate for a ‘how to’: [https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article_new/germination-testing-of-wheat-seed-452-2](https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article_new/germination-testing-of-wheat-seed-452-2).

While you’re on the KCIA site, it’s a good time to make sure you are appropriately using the seeds you are testing or planting. You can check out the State Seed Law and Plant Variety Protection Act at: [https://www.kscrop.org/seed-law.html](https://www.kscrop.org/seed-law.html).

**Suckers/Watersprouts on Fruit Trees**  
We typically consider the dormant season to be fruit tree pruning time. While (mostly) true, if you have fruit trees that have developed suckers or watersprouts, summer pruning will be needed to best manage them.

There is a difference between suckers and watersprouts. Suckers are growth that arises from the base of the tree or from roots. Watersprouts are the growth that appears on major branches and grows straight up, but both are troublesome and may require removal multiple times during the growing season. Either way – don’t delay. Waiting to remove until next spring will only encourage more of them next year.

Where do they come from? Heavily pruned trees are a common culprit as they try to ‘compensate’ for removed canopy. However, some trees are simply more likely to produce both types of growth even if not heavily pruned.