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A Look at Fertilizer Prices

On the Agriculture Today podcast from KSU last week, Dr. Gregg Ibendahl revisited the large movements in fertilizer prices over the last year. Anyone involved in production agriculture has seen – and felt – that price movement and its effect on operating budgets.

As prices move and factors continue to have influence on the market, it can be difficult to make decisions like those surrounding fertilizer applications that can have drastic effects on production budgets. To help provide at least a little clarity, Dr. Ibendahl puts out regular forecasts to help with those budget (altering...) decisions on his KSU Agricultural Economics webpage: <https://www.agmanager.info/contributors/ibendahl>. Two of the most recent posts look at oil and consumer prices – both factors in a model he has developed to predict fertilizer prices.

If you visit his page, the third document you'll find includes his fertilizer price predictions. The long and the short of his model suggests this: if you have not started looking at fertilizer pricing for the upcoming year, there's good reason to do so soon, with the factors in his model predicted to increase in price – meaning fertilizer might as well.

Budgets he once revised annually are now reviewed annually. In addition to fertilizer (up 30 percent since last August), herbicides are up almost 50 percent during the same time period, making the need for continued monitoring of pricing opportunities important to budget bottom lines. For more on Ibendahl's fertilizer thoughts, check out the website above or listen to his interview. It's episode 1299 at: <https://agtodayksu.libsyn.com/>.

Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle

All it takes is a little weather change for pests that spent the summer outside, to look for a way inside. One of the common ‘invaders’ is the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle (MALB).

Typically found in trees and shrubs through the summer (they were introduced to help control aphid populations...), this annual migration indoors helps the adult MALB survive the winter. They'll find their way in to just about any protected area available. Colors will range from orange to yellow to red, some with spots and others with no spots at all.

While their chewing mouthparts do occasionally result in bites, they are harmless. In fact, because they are considered beneficials, there are only a limited number of pesticides labeled (a list can be found at the link below. Always read and follow product label directions.). It means focus needs to be spent on sealing cracks around windows, doors, etc... and making sure screens are tight fitting when you open windows to enjoy the cool fall weather.

If you see them congregating on the south/west side of the home on warm afternoons, sweep them up with a broom or vacuum. Just make sure you move them a good distance away, or they'll likely return. For information about Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle, contact any District Office or check out our KSU Horticulture fact sheet on them at: <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/common-pest-problems/documents/Lady%20Bug%20Asian.pdf>.