

# September 2025

### Holton Office

114 W 5th St.  
Holton, KS 66436-1778  
785-364-4125

### Oskaloosa Office

P.O. Box 326  
100 E Washington  
Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326  
785-863-2212

### Seneca Office

1615 Branch St.  
Seneca, KS 66538-1504  
785-336-2184

### District Office Hours:

**Open Monday-Friday**  
8:00 AM-Noon; 12:30-4:30  
PM

**Closed on designated  
holidays**

[www.meadowlark.k-state.edu](http://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu)

### 4-H Youth Development



Heather Roenne, Extension Agent

### Saying Thank You

The county fair is over. The show box and halters are put away; the ribbons have been hung on a mirror or put under the bed; winning recipes have been refiled in the cabinet; and wonderful memories have been made. What's left? A big part of 4-H is being grateful for the help, support, and awards that were received. A handwritten thank you note can brighten someone's day and let them know that they are appreciated.

Thank you notes don't need to be fancy or poetic. In fact, the simple, down-to-earth language of being yourself will help your message be genuine. These are some easy steps to write a thank you note.

1. Greeting: Begin with a warm, appropriate salutation. Use the recipient's name to make it more personal if possible. An example might be, "Dear Dr. Roach" or "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Greer."
2. Express specifically what you are thankful for. "Thank you for supporting me in the livestock auction at the Jefferson County Fair," or "I appreciate your generosity in sponsoring the

champion color photo award at the County Fair."

3. Add a personal touch about your project and share how the award made a difference to you. "My market steer project was special to me because it taught me responsibility and patience. I will use my premium for purchasing a steer for next year. I want to continue learning about beef nutrition and how to raise a quality market animal," or "My champion photo was taken in my grandma's garden. I enjoy trying to catch all the bright colors and being in a place I love."
4. Look ahead and thank them for their continued help and support within 4-H as a whole or in a specific project. Donations are seen in time, expertise, and money; all of these are needed and appreciated.
5. Close your note warmly. Wrap up your note with a friendly closing. It can be as simple as, "Thanks again," or "Best Regards." Then, sign your name.

Thank you notes can help strengthen relationships and can make a lasting impression. Try to send gratitude to people who helped, supported, and donated to your 4-H project work. They are investing in you! This is an important way that you can make the best better!





David Hallauer, Extension Agent

## Armyworm Aftermath

When moth numbers like these show up in your Fall Armyworm pheromone trap, you *might* be in trouble...and trouble is what many growers experienced in Early August as Fall Armyworm (FAW) larvae feeding damage hit many brome and alfalfa stands.



Right now, we're seeing multiple stages of the pest's two week (+/-) feeding cycle. That means: keep scouting! It's a lot easier to attack FAW early than late. Unfortunately, we can't get to every infestation early, leaving many asking 'what's next'? There aren't any definitive answers – just more questions...

1. What is *current* status of the feeding? If you have high (4-5/sq. ft.) numbers of small (3/4" or less) larvae, are open to applying an insecticide, and you can do so in a timely manner, you *might* reduce feeding damage. Larger (1"+) larvae are less likely to be as adequately controlled with an insecticide application.
2. What was the state of the stand *before* feeding? If it was able to take advantage of July moisture and regrowth was good, it may have withstood greater feeding injury than stands that had not. A perennial grass plant regrows from root reserves requiring adequate foliage regrowth to a) put out new leaves and b) 'refill' its root system. If plants didn't return to a 4-6" height prior to feeding, root energy levels may be reduced – with recovery slowed. *Weed pressure, fertility issues, etc... contribute to stand health as well.*
3. What is the outlook *ahead*? If soil moisture is good *and* there's time for regrowth prior to dormancy (early November...) *and* we don't see additional feeding without good recovery *and* there aren't other issues to contend with (that's a lot of ands...), a grass stand in good health will likely recover. That doesn't mean it will return immediately to optimum production levels, but it will survive to produce another season.

Ultimately, there's no way to predict with certainty what might result from heavy feeding or insecticide vs. no insecticide applications. It's a dynamic system. What we can do is be vigilant for the remainder of the season:

- **Additional Generations:** The life cycle of the FAW is +/- 30 days, meaning there's a chance we could see one or more cycles prior to fall dormancy. They *may* move on during the moth cycle – but they may not (or high moth numbers elsewhere could decide to lay eggs *here* for another generation)!
- **Insecticide Applications:** Scouting every week (if not more) is suggested. When insecticide applications are made, always read and follow label directions, applying appropriate rates of insecticide AND carrier volume. Check out these KSU Agronomy eUpdate articles for product efficacy information:
  - <https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article/late-summer-insect-update-fall-armyworms-654-4>
  - <https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article/update-on-fall-armyworms-and-armyworms-608-7>
- **Harvest Management:** Monitor grazing pressure. Continual removal of new regrowth could stress root systems already asked to support a grazed (by livestock) or hayed plant *and* one fed on by FAW. Avoid a second cutting of grass hays and watch regrowth in the alfalfa crop for feeding pressure as well.
- **Weed Pressure:** Stands thinned by feeding are susceptible to invasive broadleaf and grass weed species, particularly if stressed by additional factors. Herbicide use when grass is under stress should be done with care (always read and follow label directions!), but thinking ahead to the need for potential weed control applications is suggested.

Keep scouting! While there *is* a stage of FAW spent underground, this is not a pest known to cause significant injury to root systems. New regrowth is an entirely different story. So while young larvae may be difficult to find (and not much fun to look for...), it is important to monitor for them so you have an idea what might be coming. A stand I evaluated last week averaged less than 7 larvae/sq. ft. (40% of those were 1"+) in the first 7 stops scouted. The next three stops were 25, 30, and 45/sq. ft. – with the majority 3/4" and less. Numbers (and injury) can vary across a field.

Drop me a line ([dhallaue@ksu.edu](mailto:dhallaue@ksu.edu)), if you have further questions about your stand.



Cindy Williams, Extension Agent

## Looking for An After-School Snack? Pizza Waps

These make a tasty nutritious after-school snack or for a light meal. Try some and see for yourself! Pizza Wraps are tortillas filled with your favorite pizza toppings.

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon margarine, softened
- 4 (10-inch) flour tortillas
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar-Monterey Jack cheese blend
- 1/4 cup pizza sauce
- 4 ounces sliced pepperoni, cooked beef or chicken

Directions: **Remember to wash your hands!!!**

Serves: 4

1. Heat a large skillet or griddle over medium-high heat.
2. Spread margarine on one side of each tortilla. Place one tortilla in skillet, margarine-side down.
3. Spoon a tablespoon of pizza sauce onto half of the tortilla.
4. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of cheese over the sauce and top with a few slices of pepperoni.
5. Fold the clean half of the tortilla over the filling and cook each wrap, turning once (about 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until cheese melts.)

Nutritional Information: Total fat 29g; saturated fat 12g; cholesterol 50mg; sodium 1140mg; total carbohydrate 42g and protein 19g.

Source: *Kids a Cookin', K-State Research and Extension Family Nutrition Program.*



## Back-to-School!!

The first important lesson of the school year is packing a safe lunch. All it takes is a quick refresher course:

- **Keep it clean.** Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food. Use hot water and soap to ensure that food preparation surfaces and utensils are clean.
- **Keep foods at the right temperature.** Perishable items (such as sandwiches and fresh fruit) and shelf-stable items (such as crackers and packaged pudding) should be kept chilled to reduce the risk of food-borne illness.
- **Wash produce.** Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, then blot dry with a paper towel.
- **Plan ahead.** Prepare sandwiches or other perishable items the night before, and store them in the refrigerator until your child is ready to leave for school.
- **Use proper storage.** Insulated, soft-sided lunch totes work best for keeping perishable foods cold. Include a cold source, such as a small frozen gel pack or a frozen juice box, with perishable items. Frozen gel packs will keep foods cold until lunchtime but are not recommended for all-day storage.

## Are All Disposable Wipes Equal?

Something else you might be sending besides lunch is disposable wipes. Disposable wipes are convenient in many ways, but not all are the same. The key is to use them for their intended purpose, such as personal care, hand cleansing, or disinfecting at home, work, or other locations.

Wipes are made from polyester, polypropylene, cotton, wood pulp, or rayon fibers formed into sheets. They are moistened with water and other ingredients, such as cleansing and moisturizing agents, or preservatives to prevent the growth of bacteria and mold.

### Safety tips for using wipes:

- Use only on unbroken, intact skin.
- Let skin dry thoroughly after use.
- Keep containers closed to keep wipes moist.
- Discard used wipes to prevent cross-contamination.
- If you have sensitive skin or specific allergies, always read the label before using.



Ross Mosteller, Extension Agent

## Cow Body Condition and Reproductive Success

As we approach the time when calves are weaned from spring calving cow herds, it is a perfect time to discuss Body Condition Scoring in beef cattle. Non-lactating, mid-gestation cows who have access to a more abundant forage resource recent rains provided, gives an opportunity to increase body condition score rather efficiently and economically. Fall calving cows should also be able to more efficiently hold body condition as they enter lactation and rebreeding phases.

Body condition scoring (BCS) is a method for determining the relative fatness of beef cattle. The system used by beef producers in the United States rates body condition on a scale from 1 to 9, with 1 being severely emaciated and 9 extremely obese. Animals are judged by fat thickness in areas such as the spine, ribs, hooks and pins, tailhead, brisket, and muscling in the round and shoulder. The majority of working cows will be in the range of BCS 4 to 6. K-State has an excellent resource titled [\*"Guide to Body Condition Scoring Beef Cows and Bulls" MF-3274\*](#).

Over the years, quite a lot of research established the link between body composition and overall pregnancy rate in beef cows exposed to a limited breeding season. Most of the older work indicates improved overall pregnancy rate when cows calve in a body condition score 5 or greater and when first-calf heifers calve in a body condition score 6 or greater. A moderate correlation exists between body condition at calving and body condition at the time of weaning. Therefore, it is not surprising that increased body condition at weaning is also associated with increased pregnancy rate.

Body condition scores at calving are related to days until cows return to estrus and proportion of cows cycling. Cows with greater BCS at calving resume normal estrous cycles sooner. Subsequently, this can result in shorter calving intervals. Cows in better body condition at calving deliver calves that show greater average daily gain, which results in heavier weaning weights. Every effort should be made to avoid a decrease in BCS during pregnancy. Research shows that the care of the pregnant cow affects fetal programming. Poor nutritional status of the mother may have long-term negative impacts on the calf.

Dr. Matt Cherni, DVM published an excellent data set evaluating pregnancy rates associated with body condition score recorded at the time of weaning. In his data set, 78,398 weaning time body condition score and pregnancy records were collected over a seven-year period on one large cow/calf operation (Table 1).

Table 1	Body Condition Score at Weaning				
	≤ 3	4	5	6	> 6
No. of Cows	2,418	16,822	30,567	20,826	7,765
% Pregnant	73.9	83.4	93.4	95.5	95.6
Probability of Remaining in Herd at Age 11 <sup>a</sup> , %	4	15	49	65	-

Dr. Clifton Willms, CattleWise Consulting used this data set to calculate the probability of cows remaining in the herd at age 11 assuming all cows that were open at weaning were culled each year. Probability considers body condition score, age, and pregnancy at weaning with all open cows culled each year. In his analysis Dr. Willms estimated dramatic improved longevity in cows that were able to maintain a body condition score of 5 or greater.

This data confirms the important connection between reproductive efficiency and body composition of the cow. More importantly, cows with body condition score below herd average at calving or weaning may require expensive purchased or harvested supplemental feed to avoid reproductive failure. Assuming they are otherwise healthy, those animals of lower body condition, within each contemporary group, are expressing that they are not a good fit for the ranch environment. Without expensive artificial environmental adjustments, they have a much greater probability of reproductive failure.





Teresa Hatfield, Extension Agent

## What is the Annual Notice of Change Notice?

The Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) notice from your Medicare Prescription Drug Company or your Medicare Advantage Plan should be arriving shortly. This notice should arrive in your mailbox or your email box in **September** and by the **30<sup>th</sup>** at the latest. The notice should come from your insurance company in which you hold your prescription plan or your Medicare health plan.

It is important to take a careful look at this information. Every year your plan can make changes that will go into effect in **January**. Look over the costs of your plan for the next year, including premium, deductibles, co-pays, and co-insurance. Your plan can also change the formulary or the list of medications they cover. Your medication may be covered this year, but might not be covered for next year. You will also want to make sure your pharmacy is still in the network.

You may want to consider a plan comparison even if you are happy with your plan's changes for next year. Many people have been able to save significant amounts of money by changing their Medicare plans.



## Upcoming Important Medicare Dates

- **September 30—Annual Notice of Change.** You should receive this notice by the end of September. If you have not received your letter, contact your plan.
- **October 1—Get ready for Open Enrollment.** Review any notices from your current plan about cost and benefit changes for next year. Make a point to compare to find and compare plans that meet your needs.
- **October 15—Open Enrollment begins.** This is the one time of year when everyone with Medicare can make changes to their health and drug coverage for the next year. If you are unsure of how to compare Medicare plans, call K-State Extension—Meadowlark District for an appointment with a trained Senior Health Insurance for Kansas (SHICK) Counselor.
- **December 7—Open Enrollment ends.** In most cases, this is the last day you can change your Medicare coverage for next year.
- **January 1—Coverage begins.** If you switch to a new health or drug plan, your new coverage starts **January 1**. If you keep your current coverage, any changes to benefits or costs for the new year also start on **January 1**.

## Need Help Paying for Your Medicare Costs?

There are two programs that are available to Medicare beneficiaries with lower income and asset levels. These programs may help you or your friends and family afford medication and healthcare costs.

The Medicare Savings Program helps people cover the costs of the Medicare Part B premium, and potentially the Medicare Part A premium, co-pays, co-insurance, and deductibles. Eligible Medicare beneficiaries can complete an application to submit to KanCare to see if they qualify. The Meadowlark Extension District has the application for the Medicare Savings Program.

Extra Help helps people with limited income and resources pay for Medicare drug coverage (Part D). You can apply at [SSA.gov/extrahelp](https://ssa.gov/extrahelp). The Extra Help program helps pay for Part D premium, deductible, co-payments and co-insurance for Medicare Part D drugs.

For questions about Medicare or help with applications, contact: Teresa Hatfield, [thatfield@ksu.edu](mailto:thatfield@ksu.edu) or 785-364-4125.



David Key, Extension Agent/Director

## Tips for Better Community Event Planning

Helping volunteer groups and community organizers succeed.

1. **Start with Clear Goals**—Decide what your event is trying to achieve—whether it's fundraising, awareness, tourism, or simply community fun. Goals guide your planning and help you evaluate success.  
**Feedback Tip:** Use Google Forms or SurveyMonkey to ask past attendees: "What do you want to see this year?"
2. **Use Simple Digital Tools**—Free platforms like Google Workspace (Docs, Sheets), Trello (task lists), or Canva (designs) can keep your team organized.  
**Feedback Tip:** Add short feedback forms in shared folders or send follow-up links via email.
3. **Assign Roles Early**—Give each volunteer a clear role (logistics, promotion, safety, etc.). Clear responsibilities reduce stress and increase follow-through.  
**Feedback Tip:** After the event, ask: "Was your role clear? Did you feel supported?"
4. **Make a Realistic Timeline**—Work backwards from the event date. Include deadlines for permits, promotions, and vendor bookings.  
**Tool Tip:** Try Teamup Calendar or Google Sheets to keep tasks visible to everyone.  
**Feedback Tip:** Midway check-in: "Are we on track? Any adjustments needed?"
5. **Engage Your Community Online**—Use Facebook Events, Groups, and scheduled posts to promote. Instagram polls or short videos can build excitement.  
**Feedback Tip:** Ask followers: "Which band or food truck would you like to see?"
6. **Partner with Local Organizations**—Connect with schools, 4-H, churches, and local businesses. They bring ideas, volunteers, and resources.  
**Feedback Tip:** Afterward, ask: "How can we improve collaboration next year?"
7. **Have a Budget and Track It**—Use Google Sheets or Excel to plan expenses and donations. Don't forget in-kind donations (printing, tents, etc.).  
**Tool Tip:** Use color coding to highlight actual vs. expected spending.  
**Feedback Tip:** Ask vendors: "Was the process smooth? Would you return?"
8. **Think Accessibility and Safety**—Ensure easy access, shade, clear signage, and a basic emergency plan. Think about seniors, children, and mobility issues.  
**Tool Tip:** Use a checklist to inspect facilities beforehand.  
**Feedback Tip:** Ask attendees: "Did you feel comfortable and safe?"
9. **Debrief and Document**—Hold a post-event meeting to capture lessons learned. Save contact lists and notes in a shared folder.  
**Tool Tip:** Try Miro or Jamboard to collect comments visually.  
**Feedback Tip:** Share a summary with next year's team.
10. **Appreciate and Celebrate Volunteers**—Say thank you with a Facebook shoutout, local paper article, or a small appreciation event.  
**Tool Tip:** Use Mailchimp or email templates to personalize thank-yous.  
**Feedback Tip:** Ask: "What made your job easier? Will you help again next year?"

### Final Thought:

Combining clear planning, simple tech tools, and real feedback can help volunteer teams in small communities pull off successful, meaningful events that get better every year.



**Laura Phillips, Extension Agent**

## Caring for Cool Season Grasses

If you have Kentucky bluegrass or tall fescue in your yard, it's now the most important time of the year to do some lawn maintenance. While the current heat feels unrelenting, soon our days will shorten and temperatures will lower. As it does, our aptly named cool season grasses will enter their fall growth phase, spreading new shoots and roots.

In order for these grasses to truly thrive, they will need sufficient amounts of nutrients. Our hot summer has likely depleted the nutrients in your lawn, which makes September most important time of year to fertilize your cool season lawn.

When you purchase fertilizer, you will see a series of three numbers on the bag. **The first number is nitrogen**, which helps your grasses develop healthy root systems and recover from the stressful summer conditions. Most lawns will require regular nitrogen applications. We recommend applying 1 to 1.5 pounds of quick-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. It is a good idea to repeat this process in November. If there is no rain, make sure to water in the fertilizer yourself.

**The second and third number on the bag, are phosphorus (P) and potassium (K), respectively.** These nutrients contribute to overall growth and stress tolerance. In established lawns, you often have sufficient quantities of P and K, so there is no need to add these nutrients unless a soil test indicates the need. You can look for fertilizers with high nitrogen, such as 30-0-0 or 29-5-4 or 27-3-3.

When fertilizing, take care to read the instructions and apply fertilizer evenly across the lawn and the rate given on the packaging. When you are done fertilizing, sweep or blow any fertilizer or granular products off of your sidewalks and hard surfaces. This prevents the fertilizer from entering our water ways and protects our water quality.

In addition to fertilizing, there are several other maintenance tasks you can do this time of year to help your lawn. Below is a chart helping you determine what steps to take in the coming months for optimal lawn health. Some tasks, like dethatching, do not need done on every lawn. You only need to dethatch if your lawn has an issue with thatch buildup. If you have questions about what your lawn might need, questions about the fertilizer you need, would like to do a soil test, or need guidance on applying fertilizer to your yard, reach out to our office for more information.

MONTH	FERTILIZING	OVERSEEDING, AERATING, & MOWING	WEED CONTROL	OTHER
<b>September</b>	Most important time to fertilize! Apply nitrogen fertilizer at a rate of 1 pound per 1,000 square feet. If you do not plan to fertilize again for the year, use a slow-release fertilizer and apply 1.5 pounds per 1,000 sq. ft. and water it in.  <i>If using a quick release fertilizer, do not apply more than 1 pound per 1,000 sq. ft.</i>	Dethatch if needed.  Aerate if needed.  Overseed/plant new lawn if needed.	Spray for dandelions if not overseeding or planting.	Water only as needed.
<b>October</b>	If you missed September fertilization and do not plan on fertilizing in November, you can fertilize in October.	Some cool season grasses can be overseeded/planted until Oct. 15 <sup>th</sup> .	Spray for dandelions, chickweed, and henbit if not overseeding or planting.	Water only as needed.
<b>November</b>	Final and second most important fertilization. Fertilize with nitrogen at a rate of 1 to 1.5 pounds per 1,000 sq ft. and water it in.  <i>If using a quick release fertilizer, do not apply more than 1 pound per 1,000 sq. ft.</i>	Mow 2 to 2.5 inches for last mowing.	Spray for dandelions, chickweed, and henbit if not overseeding or planting.	Soak soil well before winter.

**Meadowlark Extension District**

114 W 5th St.  
Holton, KS 66436

Address Service Requested

<https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/>

facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Meadowlarkextensiondistrict>

## Publications & Resources For Sale

Caregiver Helpbook  
Family Account Book  
Farm Account Book  
Radon Kits  
Predator Calls  
IMR Calving Books (Red)  
Pesticide Manuals  
Geo Textile Fabric (12 1/2' wide-sold per linear ft.)  
Neutroleum Alpha®  
Mosquito Briquets  
Soil Tests - Crop, Pasture, Lawn & Garden  
Water Test Kits (pay SDK Labs, not us)  
Forage Tests  
Grazing Sticks  
911 Signs  
Pesticide Application Field Record Book (free)  
Cow/Calf Record Book (free)  
Body Condition Record Book (free)  
K-State Publications (free)

## Items to Check Out

Soil & Hay Probes  
Pesticide Manuals  
Mole Trap  
Freeze Branding Irons  
Buzzers

## Upcoming Events

**Medicare Consulting—Any Date—Any Time**, call for appointment  
—Holton, Oskaloosa, Seneca

**Offices closed for Labor Day—September 1**

**Extension Master Gardener Training—Sept. 4-Dec. 4** (Thurs.) -  
1:00-4:00 PM—Zoom



### Labor Day

In observance of the holiday,  
our offices will be closed on  
Monday, September 1.

Normal office hours will  
resume at 8:00 AM on  
Tuesday, September 2.

## Some of the Programs That We Offer

- A Matter of Balance
- Dining With Diabetes
- Gray for a Day
- Master of Memory
- Stay Strong, Stay Healthy
- Walk With Ease
- School Enrichment
  - Butterflies
  - Chick Embryology
  - Glo-Germ Hand Washing
  - Wheat Science