

Fenceline

by Jody G. Holthaus
Meadowlark Extension District Agent
Livestock-Natural Resources

Fair Time-Algae

Ethel Ann King brought us a book, it's called "Under the 4-H Flag" and as close as we can tell it was written in 1927. I've read a few chapters, I'm thinking it was written about a Missouri farm family. The club work they referred to was "Pig clubs" and "sewing clubs". That's quite a change than we have in our current 4-H program, which once had a campaign, "4-H is more than Cows and Cookin".

This is fair season, which highlights all of the "club work" going on in the county. It was always encouraging that during or after fair week, people would come into the office and want to sign up their kids, must be doing something right.

As EA's books says "It is our privilege to impress upon young and plastic minds the importance and dignity of agriculture, to bring out its hidden beauties, to help make of the farm and home a year-round workshop which not only yields return for investment and labor but is the best place on earth to live"

Don't forget to visit the county fairs: Jackson County Fair July 25-29, Nemaha County Fair July 29-August 1 and Jefferson County fair, August 1-4.

I'm hearing rumor that there have been some livestock deaths due to Blue Green Algae in a pond. Supposedly, a dozen meat goats died in this area.

A pond containing a harmful algal bloom may be covered with a scum that looks like bright green paint, but other colors are possible, varying from blue-green to grey and occasionally red or brown. Some types are filamentous and may form slimy strands when many cling together. Duckweed is bright green, but to the naked eye can be seen as individual plants.

If you suspect Blue-Green algae, samples can be taken and sent to Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostics lab. The Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment has a do it yourself, test. You can collect a sample using a canning jar. You can find complete instructions at www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/download/Jar_Test.pdf. While this test is not 100%, it can give an indication if further testing is needed.

Simply, take a clear jar and fill it $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water, just below the pond's surface. Wipe off any scum, on the outside of the jar. Screw the lid onto the jar, place in cold refrigerator and leave completely undisturbed overnight. The next day, carefully remove the jar and look to see where the algal have accumulated. Do not shake or agitate the jar in any way. If the algal are all on the bottom, it's likely not to be Blue/Green algae. If the algae have formed a green ring around the top of the water, there is a strong possibility that the pond does have a blue-green algae community present.