

Jody G. Holthaus
District Extension Agent
Livestock and Natural Resources

Grazing Series Offered

For about 7 years we have conducted the Eastern Kansas Grazing school in the eastern half of Kansas. The two-day school is very popular for those wanting a more in depth grazing school or those contemplating managed intensive rotational grazing. For some, being away for 2 days in September is impossible. In an effort to meet different needs, we are offering a mini-series for Graziers. Luke, Paul and Charles Kennedy have graciously agreed to host these sessions on their land in Jackson county. The first session was successful as we measured the grasses out there, discussed how a grass plant grows and began to discuss stocking rates, grazing days and the types of plants in the pasture.

The second session will be June 26th. We will be focusing more on unwanted weeds and brush. Mixie Vance, the Jackson County Noxious Weed Director and Dr Walt Fick, KSU Range Management Specialist will be the featured presenters. The evening begins at 5:30 pm with a light meal that is sponsored by Jackson County Conservation District. Due to the meal count, we ask that you call in at 785-364-4125, or email jholthau@ksu.edu to make sure we have enough food.

The third session will feature water and fencing ideas, which may be extremely timely, if precipitation does not occur.

All interested persons are encouraged to attend any or all sessions.

David G. Hallauer
District Extension Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Mulching Tomatoes

Tomatoes can be finicky. They like even levels of soil moisture, a specific set of temperatures for blooms to set and fruit to ripen, and seem to attract a number of fungal diseases.

One way to help tomatoes overcome our environmental extremes so they can thrive is to mulch them. Soils are well beyond warm enough now that it's time to consider mulching to prevent excessive evaporation. Along the way, mulch helps with weed suppression and crusting that can restrict air movement into and out of the soil and slow the water infiltration rate.

Not all mulches are created equal. Hay and straw mulches work well – so long as they don't contain weed or volunteer grain seeds that can lead to trouble later. Grass clippings are readily abundant, but they should be dry and applied to a depth of only two to three inches. Wet clippings mold and can become hard enough that water can't pass through them. Know the history of clippings as well. If the lawn has been treated with a weed killer, make sure ample time has passed since treatment. According to KSU Horticulture Specialist Dr. Ward Upham, with most types of weed killers, clippings from the fourth mowing after treatment may be used. If the lawn was treated with a product containing quinclorac (Drive), the clippings should not be used as mulch. If the weed killer used has a crabgrass killer, it likely contains quinclorac.

Bagworms – Time to Treat?

Kansas Forest Service Forester Dave Bruton noted the hatch and feeding of bagworms in northeast Kansas this week. That means its time to initiate scouting measures, as they can be very difficult to see when feeding first begins. The best control efforts will occur when larvae are small and coverage is thorough. Multiple treatments may be needed if hatching continues even after the first insecticide application.

For information, see K-State Research and Extension publication *Bagworms*, available at: <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf728.pdf> or from your District Extension Office.

Cindy S. Williams
Meadowlark Extension District
FACS

Taking Care of Your Heart

The Mediterranean diet is a healthy way of eating that emphasizes benefits for your heart. Based on the eating patterns of people who live in countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, this diet plan emphasizes eating lots of vegetables, fruits and whole grains and increasing your consumption of fish.

If you like to try the Mediterranean style of eating here are some tips to follow:

- *Use My Plate to plan your meals. My Plate emphasizes filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables, which are a main staple of the Mediterranean diet.
- *In addition to eating lots of vegetables and fruit, choose other plant based foods such as beans, nuts and whole grains, like brown rice and whole grain pasta.
- *While you can still enjoy small portions of red meat, try to increase the amount of fish you're eating to at least twice a week. Remember—fish is a good source of heart-healthy Omega-3 oils. Poultry is also lower in fat, so should be featured in many of your meals.
- *Use olive oil and canola oil rather than butter, margarine or shortening. Olive oil, a monounsaturated fat is the main source of fat in this plan. Monounsaturated fats can help lower your level of LDL cholesterol.
- *The Mediterranean diet also uses many herbs and spices such as garlic, basil and rosemary to enhance the flavor of food without adding extra fat, salt or sugar. Try to avoid the salt shaker.
- *Avoid using processed, pre-prepared foods. These foods are often higher in fat, sugar and salt than the same foods prepared by you at home.

Nancy C. Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Make Water Your Beverage of Choice

Water is considered the best beverage of choice because it is easy to acquire, relatively inexpensive, and it is free of calories. It is a natural thirst quencher and good for our bodies. Water helps to regulate a normal body temperature, lubricate and cushion joints, it protects the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and it helps our bodies get rid of waste through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements. Here are some tips to help make water your go-to beverage. Acquire a taste for water. The more often you choose water over other beverages, the better it will taste. Think of sweet beverages as “candy drinks” and enjoy them occasionally. Not all water tastes the same, either, so try water from different sources and at different temperatures. Water that has been infused with fruits or vegetables and herbs is refreshing. Order water with your meal and drink before you eat. Your mind doesn’t always know whether you are hungry or just need a drink of water. Drinking a moderate amount of water before a meal or snack may suppress your appetite. Know the signs of dehydration. Your body loses water every day. When the amount of water lost is greater than the amount of water you take in through drinking and eating, your body becomes out of balance – a condition called dehydration. Thirst is not the most reliable gauge of your body’s need for water. The color of your urine is better indicator. Clear or light-colored urine is a sign you are well hydrated.