

December 13, 2019

Jody G. Holthaus
District Extension Agent
Livestock and Natural Resources

No news from Jody.

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

Nutrient Management/Soil Health Workshop

A glance at the 2020 KSU Corn Cost-Return Budget for Northeast Kansas shows total expenses - \$533.37 and total fertilizer expenses - \$77.72. Those numbers may not be identical to yours, but I would venture a guess that on a percentage basis, fertilizer cost is going to come in somewhere in the ballpark of this budget. That means that 14-15 percent of a corn budget's total expenses lie in fertilizer costs.

Helping producers manage that nutrient cost is the focus of a January 23rd workshop at the Evangel United Methodist Church (227 Pennsylvania St.) in Holton. Efficient nutrient use will be our focus, with an emphasis on managing nutrients in an economically and environmentally sound manner.

Following a few announcements at 9:45. K-State Research & Extension Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Specialist Dr. Dorivar Ruiz-Diaz will provide an overview of soil sampling best management practices, as well as an overview of what nutrients we should focus on as well as where a soil test recommendation comes from. He'll discuss what you can do to keep nutrients from being a limiting factor for production. Dr. Ruiz-Diaz will also share manure management tips, including the values we can expect to see from our common manure products.

The morning will conclude with a discussion of how cover crops may help us address the industry's 4R Management (right source, right rate, right time, right place) approach to nutrient stewardship. Dr. Nathan Nelson, KSU Professor in Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management will share work being done by a team of researchers at Kansas State University to address how cover crops affect those strategies – and how water quality might be affected.

After a sponsored lunch compliments of the Jackson County Conservation District, KDA Division of Conservation and the Delaware and Middle Kansas WRAPS groups, we'll talk programs to assist producers. Tyler Warner, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks District Wildlife Biologist will discuss using precision analysis to identify acres that might generate more revenue under different management. He along with representatives from the Jackson County Conservation District, NRCS, and WRAPS will share information on their cost share program and funding resources. We'll conclude shortly after 2:00 p.m.

RSVP's for the sponsored lunch are requested by January 14th. Contact Brian Boeckman at the Jackson County Conservation District at 785-364-3329, extension 136 or via e-mail to brian.boeckman@ks.nacd.net.

Profitable nutrient management can yield big dividends – for both the environment and the producer's bottom line. Plan to attend and see if your nutrient management plan can be enhanced even further. If you have questions contact me at any of our District Offices or via e-mail to dhallaue@ksu.edu. A program flyer and information can be found online under the Crops and Soils tab at www.meadowlark.k-state.edu.

Horticulture Videos

If you enjoy horticulture and learn better by watching than just listening, check out the Video of the Week at kansashealthyyards.org They have numerous educational videos for you to check out. This week: Basic Care for Houseplants

Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension District
Food, Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Tips for Hosting Healthier Holiday Parties

There are hundreds of tips on how to eat more healthfully when you “GO” to a party, but what if the celebration is at your house? This season, will you be the “host with the most,” (calories, that is,) or the savvy entertainer who offers “great taste and a small waist?” Here are a few tricks for a delectable yet healthy—ish holiday party.

- Make food beautiful! Garnish with colorful vegetables, clusters of grapes or fresh herbs. Use a carved out squash or cabbage to hold lower fat dips and spreads.
- Pass the appetizers. Guests can only take one at a time, only the tray passes by and only with a napkin. You’ll need fewer pieces and “kinds” so put your effort into making your offerings awesome. Nothing drippy or more than one or two bites, please! Recruit a couple of guests to pass (someone always wants to help!)
- Cut the cheese, please. Cheeses are always popular but did you know soft cheese, such as goat, feta and fresh mozzarella have about 25% fewer calories than traditional Cheddar or Stilton? You can still offer them, just cut into smaller bites. (Although chunks of cheese are pretty, guests tend to carve off more than a standard serving.) Pair with whole grain crackers.
- Broth is best. If you are serving dinner, start with a light, brothy soup (avoid cream soups or bisques.) It is warm and fragrant, feels filling, and studies show that you will eat about 20% less. It’s a nice change from salad.
- Ponder the protein. Rather than a traditional ham, how about serving roasted pork loin or a flavorful, marinated tenderloin? Ham has 228 calories and 16 grams of fat, while the loin comes in at 122 calories and 3 grams of fat (3 ounce serving.)
- Go Greek. Substitute at least half your sour cream with Greek yogurt to save calories and fat. Yogurt is a bit “tangier” so taste as you go.
- Make dessert special. For dessert, focus on one or two special offerings that you only make at holiday time. (why waste calories on a chocolate chip cookie you can have anytime?) Save calories by making a lattice crust for your pie, or make a meringue or crumbled top. Did you know you can bake a pumpkin pie filling without the crust?

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Our Thanksgiving dinner was an hour drive away and ended up being postponed until the following day due to the weather. We were fortunate the call to postpone came before we started out and that all the food arrangements were easy to manage with this change.

You've invited the guests, decorated the table and prepared the food. Then the guests are delayed, call to cancel or don't show at all. Holiday meals and other celebrations require careful planning to ensure that everything goes "just right." When guests encounter emergencies and the meal must be delayed or cancelled, food must be handled "just right" to remain safe.

Here's how USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline recommends to handle the food safely.

Q. I have prepared a special dinner for a group of friends, but I just heard the weather report advising everyone to stay home. What should I do with all the food?

A. If your guests can re-schedule within four days, cooked foods can be stored safely in the refrigerator. For longer storage, freeze any cooked food. Arrange the cooked food in shallow airtight containers or wrap tightly with heavy-duty aluminum foil or freezer wrap, and freeze. These foods will keep their best quality (flavor, texture, juiciness) for 3 to 4 months. Also, most vegetable, rice and pasta dishes can be frozen. Cream sauces may become lumpy or separate when frozen and reheated, but they will be safe to serve again.

Q. Everything is ready for the meal but my guests have been delayed at least an hour. What shall I do to hold the food?

A. Remember the basic food safety rules: Keep hot food hot, and cold foods cold. Don't let any cooked food, meat or poultry remain in the danger zone – between 40 °F and 140 °F – for more than 2 hours.

If you have hot foods in the oven, you may be able to hold them safely until your guests arrive. Put a food thermometer in the thickest part of your roast or poultry, or center of your casserole. Adjust the oven temperature so that the food stays at an internal temperature of 140 °F or above. To prevent dryness, cover the dishes or wrap with aluminum foil.

Q. Due to an emergency situation, my guests will be here, but they will be three to four hours late. Can the food stay in the oven?

A. Food will probably dry out if kept warm that long. For extended delays, it is safer to refrigerate the food and reheat it when your guests arrive. Food in shallow containers will cool rapidly to a safe temperature in the refrigerator. Do not worry about putting hot foods directly into the refrigerator because the thermostat will keep the unit running to maintain a safe temperature (40 °F or below). When your guests arrive, reheat food in a 325 °F oven to an internal temperature of 165 °F, or until hot and steaming. Cold foods should be kept refrigerated until mealtime.