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Search Engine Your Life

Wouldn't it be nice if we could just use the computer's search engine to get answers to important questions? For example, if I search, should I get married? I got three bad reasons and four good ones on why people get married. If I search, should I vaccinate my child? It tells me five important reasons to vaccinate your child. How about searching should I eat meat? Nine reasons came back on why eating meat is good for your health. I like it.

What should I feed my cattle? Raising beef cattle for dummies, cheat sheets, and cattle feed on Amazon, really?

The single largest annual input into our beef herds is forage. A cow consumes about 3% of her body weight each day. A 1200 pound cow, which is really small these days, will require 36 pounds of forage a day, regardless if she grazes it herself or you deliver it to her. Her nutritional needs increase as calving season approaches and peaks after calving. We expect her to be in good condition when calving, so she produces enough milk for the calf, recover from calving, and prepare to rebreed in 3 months. We ask quite a bit of our mama cows.

Of course, to save on costs, it's usually always cheaper if the cow harvests the forage for themselves. By the time you harvest and haul forages, you've invested a lot into that forage. If you can find some cover crops or corn stalks that you can rent, you can extend that grazing season for a few more months. There are a few farmers that think cattle on corn stalks can cause compaction. When you search on the internet you will find this:

"Sixteen years of corn residue grazing in eastern Nebraska did not result in detrimental effects on soil properties (including bulk density and penetration resistance) or crop yields. These fields had silt-clay-loam soil, were managed under no-till and were in a corn-soybean rotation. In fact, fall grazing (November to February) of corn residue improved soybean yields by 3.4 bu/ac. In a western Nebraska field managed in continuous corn, grazing corn residue for five years did not affect corn yields (148 versus 154 bu/ac, for not grazed and grazed, respectively).

A three-year study with five locations in eastern Nebraska also showed that grazing had no impact on subsequent crop yields. Three locations were managed under continuous corn with corn yields of 239 bu/ac for grazed and 223 bu/ac for ungrazed (which did not statistically differ). Two locations were in a corn-soybean rotation with soybean yields not differing between grazed (59 bu/ac) and ungrazed (62 bu/ac). During the last two years, soil penetration resistance was measured in the spring and was found to be slightly increased at two locations. However, the increase in penetration resistance was below the threshold for impeding root growth and did not carry over into the next year."

One word of warning, when you are searching on the internet, you can get information that may not be true, shocking, I know! If you want to know what research has been done on the subject, then just type in ".edu" at the end of your search, and you will only get information from Universities and not people just trying to sell you something.

David G. Hallauer
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Soybean Sudden Death Syndrome

The onset of soybean Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) the last two weeks raises questions about what might be done to reduce future issues. In most cases, it's not all that straightforward.

SDS is a soil borne fungus preferring a) the presence of the fungus in the soil and b) wet conditions during the early to mid-reproductive stages. If both of those boxes are checked, the result tends to be yellowing plants that drop leaves, resulting in reduced flowering and pods that may abort or fail to fill completely – often dependent upon when the onset of disease occurs.

Effective management requires an integrated approach. Very few soybean varieties have excellent SDS resistance, but some have higher than average ratings and should be considered where SDS has been a past issue. Delayed planting may be an option since SDS tends to be worse when soybeans are planted early into cool/wet conditions. It is not a good option if delaying planting results in yield reductions. Compaction can increase the incidence of the disease, so checking for compaction issues in field areas with the disease is a good idea.

SDS is often associated with soybean cyst nematode (SCN). Recent research suggests a synergistic effect from the presence of both diseases, even as the presence of SDS is not always a predictor of SCN levels (SCN is still a huge soybean yield robber and *should* be a management consideration for soybean producers). Rotation out of soybeans can help, but the SDS fungus has a great ability to survive on non-soybean crop residue until soybeans return.

Seed treatment research near Topeka in both SCN and SDS by K-State Research & Extension Kansas River Valley (KRV) Experiment Field Agronomist in Charge Eric Adee found good responses from a couple different active ingredients to combat SDS. You can find the full results at: <https://newprairiepress.org/kaesrr/vol6/iss5/16/>.

In many cases, reproductive stage moisture is going to dictate SDS levels, so it may not be an issue with the same variety on the same field in a different year. Even so, now is a great time to evaluate fields for the presence of SDS to fine tune management in the future.

Dividing Daylilies

If you haven't divided your daylilies in a while, consider it this year. Fall is the most common division window, even as they can also be divided in early spring.

Start by cutting back the tops to about half of original height. This should make plants easier to handle.

The root system is tough to divide, and made harder if it has been a long time since the last division. Use a spade to lift the entire clump out of the ground. Use a garden hose to wash the soil from the clump, and then roll the clump back and forth until the individual divisions separate.

Space divisions 24 to 30 inches apart, and set each at its original depth. Flowering will be reduced the first year, but each division should return to normal by the second year.

August 21, 2020

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

No news from Cindy Williams this week.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Alzheimer's Caregiving: Changes in Communication Skills

Communication is hard for people with Alzheimer's disease because they have trouble remembering things. They may struggle to find words or forget what they want to say. You may feel impatient and wish they could just say what they want, but they can't. Here are some suggestions from the National Institute on Aging.

The person with Alzheimer's may have problems with finding the right word or losing his or her train of thought when speaking. Other examples are understanding what words mean, paying attention during long conversations, or remembering the steps in common activities, such as cooking a meal, paying bills, or getting dressed.

The first step is to understand that the disease causes changes in communication skills. The second step is to try some tips that may make communication easier: Make eye contact and call the person by name. Be aware of your tone, how loud your voice is, how you look at the person, and your body language. Encourage a two-way conversation for as long as possible.

To encourage the person to communicate with you: Show a warm, loving, matter-of-fact manner. Hold the person's hand while you talk. Be open to the person's concerns, even if he or she is hard to understand. Let him or her make some decisions and stay involved. Be patient with angry outbursts. Remember, it's the illness "talking."

To speak effectively with a person who has Alzheimer's: Offer simple, step-by-step instructions. Repeat instructions and allow more time for a response. Try not to interrupt. Don't talk about the person as if he or she isn't there. Don't speak to the person using "baby talk" or a "baby voice."

Be direct, specific, and positive. Here are some examples of what you can say: "Let's try this way," instead of pointing out mistakes. "Please do this," instead of "Don't do this." "Thanks for helping," even if the results aren't perfect.

You also can ask questions that require a yes or no answer. For example, you could say, "Are you tired?" instead of "How do you feel?" Limit the number of choices. For example, you could say, "Would you like a hamburger or chicken for dinner?" instead of "What would you like for dinner?" Use different words if he or she doesn't understand the first time. For example, if you ask the person whether he or she is hungry and you don't get a response, you could say, "Dinner is ready now. Let's eat."

Try not to say, "Don't you remember?" or "I told you." If you become frustrated, take a timeout for yourself.