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Livestock and Natural Resources

Cattle Dermatology

Area cattle owners have probably noticed some funny spots on the head or neck of their cattle from time to time. Cattle producers may not recognize those mystery spots as either ringworm or warts.

Both of those conditions seem to surface in late winter. That's probably because, during the winter, cattle are in close proximity to one another at feed bunks and hay racks. Adult animals seem to have fewer skin problems than calves and yearlings. That said, these can occur in the pasture.

Ringworm symptoms are caused by a fungus. The fungus is passed from animal to animal when they come in contact with one another or when they rub on feeders, posts, and trees.

Cattle that are in poor nutritional condition or heavily parasitized are more often affected. A deficiency in certain vitamins can contribute to skin problem.

The ringworm lesions usually clear up in two or three months as warm weather arrives. Treatment is not usually necessary unless you have cattle going to a show or sale.

Since ringworm is a condition that can be transmitted from animal to animal, veterinarians cannot clear that animal for a show, and they should be treated.

Warts

A variety of viruses causes warts. They can spread like ringworm, or humans can aid their spread if proper sanitation isn't followed.

A perfect example is placing a tattoo in the ear, and when you go back a few weeks and try to read the number, you find a cluster of warts in the ear. If the tattoo equipment isn't disinfected, several animals will show warts in their ears.

Bulls can get warts on their penis, but most warts are found around the head and neck. Some warts are not much bigger than a pea while some grow to fist size or greater. Animals have the ability to develop immunity to the wart virus after exposure to a new strain.

As with ringworm, treatment is not advised unless the cattle are being moved and require a health paper.

If the cattle are easy to get hold of, individually removing a few warts can be done. It seems the removal of warts encourages the animal's immune system to create antibodies that help speed the recovery. There are commercial wart vaccines that can be given, but their effectiveness varies.

David G. Hallauer
District Extension Agent
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Plan...then Plant – Conservation Trees/Shrubs Now Available

The following is an excerpt from a University of Missouri Extension Publication entitled Landscape Plantings for Energy Savings (<https://extension2.missouri.edu/g6910>):

Windbreaks reduce air movement around the home and thereby slow heat loss from the walls. The most effective windbreaks can reduce wind velocity as much as 50 percent. Windbreaks can also deflect wind movement.

The use of windbreaks for winter climate control around the home can reduce winter fuel use by 10 to 25 percent.

Those figures vary based on where you live, what type of windbreak you plant, and the final windbreak design. Even on the low side of these values, however, it wouldn't take long to make a windbreak pay – and might be a good reason to start one today.

For years, the Kansas Forest Service Conservation Tree and Shrub sales program has helped landowners start windbreaks (and other tree plantings), so benefits like those previously referenced and other conservation benefits can be realized. Their offering of low-cost tree and shrub seedlings have resulted in the planting of thousands of trees over the years.

Conservation Tree and Shrub program trees can be planted for windbreaks, as well as wildlife habitat, wood lots, timber plantations, or educational and riparian (streambank) plantings. Need a lot of trees for a windbreak. Check it out. Thinking of trying a wildlife planting? They've got options. Maybe you're looking to plant some trees now for harvest decades in the future – this program has trees for you. Most of the species are native to Kansas. Those that aren't have been evaluated to make sure they thrive here.

Fall is a great time for planting trees. We tend to see lowered pressure from insects, weeds, and disease. The young trees/shrubs also tend to have lower moisture demands than those planted in the spring. That means, however, that you need to start planning now.

Not sure where to even begin? Try the Kansas Forest Service resources page at <https://www.kansasforests.org/resources/>. Whether you're leaning towards timber production or a new Kansas windbreak, you can find information to help you get started.

For ordering or other information, visit the conservation trees section of their website at https://www.kansasforests.org/conservation_trees/. The site even includes an interactive map with suggestions and suitable species. Simply put in your address, and you can begin the process of determining what trees might work for you.

Orders can be placed through early October. If planning and site preparation won't allow you to order and plant in a timely manner, a second ordering window opens in early December with shipping beginning in mid-March. Either way, start the planning process today for a windbreak/woodlot/wildlife planting that can provide benefits for years to come.

Cindy Williams
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Food, Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Online challenge offered to get yourself, family better prepared

While these past several months dealing with COVID-19 seems like a disaster for some, September is National Preparedness Month. Prepare Kansas is a free, easy way to ensure you're better equipped to handle emergencies.

Whether it's reviewing insurance coverage or putting together a grab-and-go kit, preparing for any kind of disaster will make a recovery easier. And Kansans know a thing or two about disasters. Flooded basements, fires, tornadoes or ice storms, we have them all and much more.

To help Kansans become as prepared as possible for emergencies, K-State Research and Extension is offering the Prepare Kansas Annual Preparedness Challenge. It's a free weekly online challenge through September that includes activities individuals and families can accomplish each week. By the end of the month, participants will be better prepared to withstand and recover from emergencies.

Prepare Kansas aligns with National Preparedness Month, with a theme in September this year of "Disasters Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today."

"The weekly activities in Prepare Kansas may be even more relevant and doable for families this year since many children are learning from home because of the COVID-19 pandemic," said K-State family financial resource specialist and Prepare Kansas co-creator, Elizabeth Kiss. "in one way or another, children can be included in many of the weekly activities, even if it's just talking about each week's challenge."

The weekly activities this year revolve around:

- *Making a plan---talking with others about being prepared, updating the family communications plan and reviewing the plan, and reviewing plans for shelter and/or evacuation, including pets, taking COVID-19 into account.

- *Building a kit---build a kit of basic emergency supplies plus grab-and-go backpacks for family members and pets.

- *Preparing for disasters---know the difference between watches and warnings, sign up for emergency alerts and participate in an emergency drill.

- *Talk to your kids---seek information on preparedness.

- *Get financially prepared---set aside money for an emergency, review insurance coverage, build or maintain a financial grab-and-go box, and complete a home inventory.

For more information about the weekly challenges, go to the Prepare Kansas blog or on social media at #PrepareKS and #BeReady.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Taking a New Look at Fermented Foods

The practice of fermenting foods has been around for thousands of years. According to some historians, fermentation was discovered accidentally when workers building the Great Wall in China packed some cabbages with salt in a pot, hoping to preserve them. To their surprise, when they opened the pot later, they found it bubbling and with a pleasantly sour flavor.

The basic method of preserving vegetables in a salty brine spread around the world so that today, nearly every culture with access to salt makes some type of fermented food. The simplicity of this preservation method, coupled with its unique flavors and reported health benefits, makes fermenting food popular worldwide.

Many foods and beverages are created through the process of fermentation: sourdough bread, yogurt, beer, wine, sauerkraut, and kombucha, to name a few.

Fermentation of vegetables is a process where the natural bacteria found in fresh vegetables utilize the carbohydrates to reproduce and excrete lactic acid, which preserves the vegetable and creates a characteristic tangy flavor. Fermentation is primarily carried out by *Lactobacilli* bacteria, a large family of acid-producing bacteria that live all around us.

The lactic acid gives foods a bright color and tangy flavor. In human digestion, lactic acid functions as a digestive aid – fermented foods served at a meal help stimulate the production of digestive juices. The lactic acid produced in fermented foods inhibits food spoilage bacteria, making properly fermented foods a safe form of food preservation.

Fermentation improves the digestibility of foods, making nutrients more available. Some of these lactic acid-producing bacteria are considered to be probiotics, meaning they can take up resident in the gut and help bolster the microbiome. Thus, consuming ferments with live lactic acid-producing bacteria intact is especially supportive of digestive health, immune function, and general well-being.

There are two main fermenting techniques for vegetables: dry salt and brining. The dry salting method mixes finely chopped, sliced, or shredded vegetables with salt and allows them to macerate to release their juices. Sauerkraut is a classic dry salted ferment.

The process of brining is used when the vegetables are going to be left whole or in chunks. Dill pickles would be a classic brined ferment.

Tested recipes for dill pickles and sauerkraut are available at the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP) web site: (http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can6a_ferment.html). That website also has additional information available on suitable containers, covers, and weights for fermenting food, as well as causes and possible solutions for problems with fermented pickles.