

April 23, 2021

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Livestock and Natural Resources

No news from Jody.

David G. Hallauer
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Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Soybean Seeding Rates

The only expense items in the KSU Soybean Cost Return Budget for Northeast Kansas that are greater than seed cost are herbicides and land rent. With that in mind, it's obviously an input worth some time to evaluate as you head in to soybean planting season.

A recent Kansas State University study looked at a dataset of soybean yields from the Kansas Soybean Yield Contest by yield category (some of the better yields in the state in many cases...). Low yield environments were classified as those below 60 bushels per acre. Medium yield environments ranged from 60-64 bushels/A, and high yield environments were above 64 bpa. The study looked at yield by seeding rate results to determine an 'optimal' level.

Not surprisingly, soybean yield by seeding rate results were all over the board, with the ability to attain high yields at almost any population. Growing season weather combined with a multitude of in-season hurdles typically results in a great deal of variability.

What was interesting from the study was the confirmation that low-yield environments often respond *better* to higher populations than it might seem they would. For example, yield results showed plant densities could be reduced by 24 percent when moving from the low yield environments to either of the medium or high yield environments. In other words, if seed cost is of concern, and you have the knowledge of a farm to allow for more site-specific management – knowing where you can consistently achieve a medium or high yielding environment as outlined in this study - it might be worth a look at soybean seeding rate to further fine-tune that input cost.

Want to take a closer look at this study? Request a copy of Soybean Seeding Rates and Optimal Plant Densities from any District Office or by e-mailing me at dhallaue@ksu.edu.

2Poison Ivy Identification and Control

For those folks highly allergic to poison ivy, knowing how to identify it is a key to reducing exposure. Because it can show up in three different forms: erect woody shrub, a groundcover that creeps along the ground, and a woody vine that will climb trees, knowing what to look for is important to being able to avoid it.

Climbing poison ivy forms numerous aerial roots giving the vine the appearance of a fuzzy rope as it climbs up almost anything in site. Leaves can vary, too. The compound leaf will always have three leaflets, but margins can be toothed, incised, lobed, or smooth. Leaf size is variable, too, with the middle leaflet typically larger than the other two with a long stalk (the other two are closely attached to the leaf stem). Often confused with Virginia Creeper, poison ivy has three leaves, not five like Virginia Creeper will have.

Poison ivy can be pulled out by hand when soils are damp, but wear gloves and a long sleeved shirt at a minimum (wash clothes immediately and rinse out the washer, too...). It can also be cut off and the stump or cut area treated to prevent regrowth. Plants in the shrub form can be sprayed with a labeled herbicide.

For more information on poison ivy and it's control, check out this publication by K-State Research & Extension Geary County Agricultural Agent Chuck Otte:
<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/49828674/poison-ivy-bulletin-geary-county-extension-office> . A copy can also be requested from any District Office.

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

Keeping Food Safe During Warmer Weather

Did you know that you are more likely to get food poisoning (foodborne illness) during the summer months than any other time through the year? Do you know why? According to the USDA, bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, and people and animals' bodies. These microorganisms grow faster in the warm, humid summer months. Given the right environment, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Second, outside activities increase. More people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides—thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities—are usually not available. Here are four simple steps to safe food in the warm days or summertime.

1. **Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often. Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets. When eating away from home, find out if there's a source of safe water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning. Or pack clean, wet, disposable washcloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.
2. **Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of foodborne illness. When packing the cooler for an outing, wrap raw meats securely; avoid raw meat juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food. Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that held the raw meat or poultry before using again for cooked food.
3. **Cook:** Cook to safe temperatures. Take your food thermometer with you. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often brown very fast on the outside, so be sure that meats are cooked thoroughly. Check them with a food thermometer to make sure they have reached the correct internal temperature.
4. **Chill.** Refrigerate promptly. Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Cold, perishable food like lunch meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salads should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, ice packs, or containers of frozen water. Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car, and place it in the shade or shelter, out of the sun, whenever possible. Food left out of refrigeration for more than two hours may not be safe to eat. When the temperature is above 90°F (32°C), food should not be left out for more than one hour.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark District
Family Life

A Good Night's Sleep

A good night's sleep provides more health benefits than ever imagined.

What happens when you sleep? During sleep, your body is busy repairing and restoring itself. If you routinely do not get adequate sleep, then stress hormones and other inflammatory factors get involved.

Your body will begin to react as if it were under chronic stress, releasing cortisol, a stress hormone. One of the unwanted side effects of the actions from cortisol is the tendency for weight gain, which can translate into obesity over time. Studies have also shown that lack of adequate sleep can also result in overeating.

The importance of sleep to our overall well-being cannot be overstated. The CDC recommends seven or more hours of sleep for adults over 18, and even more for younger people.

Sleep hygiene includes behaviors that help promote good sleep. This article from the American Sleep Association might be helpful, <https://www.sleepassociation.org/about-sleep/sleep-hygiene-tips/>.

When you are under much stress, the result is often poor dietary choices, and you may have “carb cravings,” which makes healthy eating more challenging.

Discover the best way for you to beat stress. Try a daily walk or a regular yoga class, meditate, listen to music, gather with friends – do things that bring you joy.

Other strategies include getting regular exercise and following basic principles of healthy eating.

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