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District Extension Agent
Livestock and Natural Resources

Fly Tags!

Insecticide ear tags can be an excellent tool for managing pests like horn flies and face flies during the summer months. To minimize the chance of pest resistance, you must do a good job rotating the tags using different active ingredients.

Beef cattle producers are encouraged to look at insecticide ear tags as one method of reducing pest populations on cows and calves in the summer months. In my area, the last couple of years have been great for pest populations, and problems like the spreading of pink eye have arisen during the summer months due to those extremely high numbers of pests.

Proper use of the insecticide ear tags, including following the label on the number of tags you should use per animal, is also a significant factor in their success. With cows and bulls, better control can be achieved using two tags per animal.

Insecticide ear tags can have many different combinations of chemicals embedded in them. Horn flies have developed pyrethroid resistance, so it's important to rotate between chemical families to minimize further resistance. You should work with your veterinarian on a rotation schedule.

Using an insecticide ear tag can help eliminate the horn flies that congregate on your animals, especially those that congregate around the eyes, helping to spread problems like pink eye (which, if left unchecked, can become a major health issue in your herd). The problems take away from animal performance and decrease your overall profitability.

Caution! Always read and follow label directions for the safe use of any pesticide!
Be sure to remove the tag at the end of the fly season!

District Extension Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Soybean Seed Treatments

According to the 2021 edition of *Kansas Soybean Management*, seed rots/seedling blights during planting/early emergence result in average soybean yield losses of two and a half bushels per acre. Pythium, Rhizoctonia, and Fusarium are the primary culprits. Technological advances in seed treatments have allowed us to ‘stay ahead’ of many of these diseases, but they aren’t 100 percent effective. An understanding of what seed treatment you actually have is important.

For example, metalaxyl and mefenoxam seed treatments have activity against Pythium and Phytophthora, but not Fusarium or Rhizoctonia. Even within a disease species, seed treatment efficacy can differ. Rate can be important, too. For example, fields with a history of Phytophthora may require higher rates of seed treatment to be effective.

Weather has huge influences on how well seeds emerge, but they affect seed treatment efficacy as well. Seed treatments typically provide some level of protection against disease for approximately three weeks after planting. If disease pressure occurs after that window, seed treatments will likely not reduce damage like they would have earlier in the window.

All these factors underscore the need for an understanding of seed treatments combined with a good scouting program after planting to help better manage soybean seedling diseases. For an overview of our four most common soybean diseases, check out the Crop Protection Network: <https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/resources/publications/seedling-diseases>. With any luck, it will help reduce that two-and-a-half-bushel loss to something much less.

Fall Lawn Weed Control

Spring is here. Lawns are growing, and weeds like henbit and chickweed are doing everything in their power to make their presence known. Unfortunately, efforts to ‘control’ them right now are usually more out of revenge than effectiveness.

If henbit or chickweed, or even dandelions, are an issue in your home lawn, you can sure do some spot treating now, but broad-spectrum control efforts may not yield the results you were hoping for. Plants may be burned back, but henbit and chickweed, in particular, are rarely killed.

Spot treat as needed, but make sure to mark your calendar for October applications as well. During that time, many of our common turf grass herbicides for broadleaf weeds are very effective (henbit and chickweed are winter annuals and have started their *next* growing season by this time). It won’t mean you won’t have weeds (some spring follow-up *will* be necessary), but it will provide you a much better opportunity to make spring control more effective.

For more information on specific products to apply in the fall, contact any of our District Extension Offices or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu.

Cindy Williams
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Food, Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Eating for the MIND

According to the Alzheimer's Association, over five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease (AD), increasing to 16 million in 30 years. The cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's and other dementias is estimated to total \$259 billion this year, increasing to \$1.1 trillion (in today's dollars) by mid-century. Nearly one in every three seniors who dies each year has Alzheimer's or another dementia.

Why is the rate of Alzheimer's disease increasing so dramatically? Research shows that several factors contribute to late onset AD (over age 65, the most common form). These include older age, genetics (especially carrying the APOE4 allele), family history, a history of head trauma, midlife onset high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and high cholesterol. Delving deeper, Americans are living longer, but over 65 percent of adults are overweight or obese and diabetes rates are climbing (over a third have diabetes or prediabetes). What is good or bad for the heart is also good or bad for the brain.

What are common lifestyle factors influencing the heart and brain? Diet, exercise, sleep, and mental acuity are the most prominent and fortunately, modifiable factors.

In the last several years there has been renewed study in eating patterns to support brain health. The Mediterranean diet, first named in 1993 but eaten for over 4,000 years in the 22 countries of the Mediterranean region, has shown great promise in promoting and maintaining brain health. Studies in Spain that began in the early 200s and continue today have demonstrated declines in heart attacks and strokes and improved cognition when participants were following Mediterranean eating patterns. Longer life, less diabetes and fewer cancers, and lower rates of childhood obesity are also seen. The diet focuses on consumption of more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, olive oil, water, and fish and shellfish; smaller amounts of cheese, yogurt, and poultry; and least amounts of red meats and sweets. A moderate amount of red wine is included. This eating pattern also includes little processed foods, so overall it is lower in sodium and sugar, as well as saturated and trans fats. It is higher in fiber, potassium, antioxidants; and healthy fats compared to the typical Western diet. The research is so compelling about the healthfulness that this eating pattern has now been recognized and recommended in the newest 2015-2020 U.S. Dietary Guidelines.

Published in 2015, research from Rush University in Chicago has combined elements from the Mediterranean diet and the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, developed in the early 1990's by Harvard researchers), call the MIND (Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay) diet. The goal is to prevent AD. They tested over 900 Chicago-area seniors over four and a half years. The longer people had followed the MIND diet patterns, the less risk they appeared to have for AD. The study found the MIND diet lowered Alzheimer's risk by about 35 percent for people who followed it moderately well and up to 53 percent for those who adhered to it rigorously.

Source: <https://extension/psu.edu/lifestyle-patterns-for-mind-health>

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

DASH to a Healthy Heart Eating Style

Are you familiar with the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Diet? Rather than a short-term “diet,” DASH is a lifetime eating style that supports overall health and wellness. No foods are off-limits, and there are no specific calorie requirements.

The DASH eating style is for everyone in the family. If you follow this plan, you can expect to see your blood pressure decrease, along with other health benefits. The program promotes reducing sugar, eliminating heavily processed, sodium-rich foods, and increasing fruits and vegetables.

The DASH eating plan is easy to follow and includes common foods available in your grocery store. What it doesn't have are highly processed and pre-packaged foods. In the U.S., we rely on this type of food as part of our “grab-and-go” lifestyle. Avoiding these could be one of the most significant challenges in following the DASH plan.

So, what are processed foods, and why eliminate them? Some examples include chips, soda, cookies, hot dogs, lunch meat, cheese slices and spreads, bacon, cereal, canned foods, candy, packaged snacks, and ready-made meals.

The American family consumes most of their calories from these foods, and avoiding them is almost impossible. Reducing the number of processed foods you eat is a good start. These foods typically contain increased amounts of salt, sugar, or fat and often contain additives or preservatives to improve taste, texture and extend shelf life.

An easy way to identify processed food is to look at the label. If you see a long list of ingredients that you don't recognize and can't pronounce, it is safe to say it's processed.

Information about the DASH eating plan is easy to find through an online search. Here is a link to get you started: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan from NIH National Health, Lung, and Blood Institute.