

August 6, 2021

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Livestock and Natural Resources

No news this week

David G. Hallauer
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Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Water Requirements

I really hoped I'd get through the growing season without monitoring for soil moisture deficiencies. Unfortunately, its summer in Kansas and that isn't possible. Both Kansas Mesonet soil moisture monitoring sites in the Meadowlark Extension District shows soil moisture levels dropping. With the weather forecast as it stands today, that trend will likely continue.

How much water *does* a corn or soybean crop need from now until maturity? Corn at beginning dent requires five inches of water to reach maturity. Soybeans will need from seven to nine to finish the crop. Some of that can still be obtained from soil moisture, but those declining levels could definitely pose some problems as the crop heads towards maturity.

You can check out soil moisture levels for yourself at the Kansas Mesonet soil moisture page (<https://mesonet.k-state.edu/agriculture/soilmoist/>). If you're looking to learn more about the Mesonet program, consider attending our Fall Plot Tour, on Thursday, August 19th starting at 4:15 p.m. at the Colonial Acres Event Center (Taylor Insurance Services) in Oskaloosa. Mesonet manager Christopher Redmond will talk about the Mesonet program. He'll be joined by KSU Soil Fertility Specialist Dr. Dorivar Ruiz-Diaz to talk about fertilizer best management practices.

At the conclusion of the program, we'll have a sponsored meal from Tarwater Farm & Home. For the meal count, please RSVP by noon on August 17th by contacting the Meadowlark Extension District Oskaloosa office at (785) 863-2212 or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu. Thank you to Taylor Insurance Services and Tarwater Farm and Home for their generous sponsorship.

Watering Newly Planted Trees and Shrubs

It goes without saying that newly planted trees and shrubs lack the root system of established trees, meaning they need some additional watering attention in hot/dry/windy summers. What does need some explaining is that 'newly planted' should probably extend to trees even up to three years old.

If you've got 'newly planted' trees, plan to provide at least 10 gallons of water per week (sandier soils will require much more...) to keep them in good condition. If you're dealing with trees that are larger or older, even more water will be required.

When watering, focus on getting water deep in to the soil. Use a bucket with a hole in it or perforated soaker hose to deliver water across the tree's root system (avoid watering all in one location) so it can soak in to the root zone and be less affected by surface evaporation. Whatever method you choose, wet soils to at least 12 inches deep. Use a metal rod, wooden dowel, electric fence post or screwdriver to check depth. Dry soil is much harder to push through than wet.

NOTE: For fruit tree growers, even *after* they are well established, fruit trees can be affected by high temperatures that can cause fruit to drop, smaller fruit, and even reduce the development of fruit buds for next year's crop. Check the moisture as recommended above. If you can't push the rod or screwdriver into the ground to a depth of eight to 12 inches, additional water may be needed. Check soil moisture again in a week to see if another watering is needed.

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

Foods Champions Announced

It has become an annual event where after the fair that I share with you the recipes of our Overall Grand and Reserve Champion food exhibits. This year is no exception; however, I don't recall ever having sisters share this honor. This year those top honors were shared by sisters from Valley Falls. I hope you enjoy their "winning" cake recipes and let me know what you think.

Taking the Overall Grand Champion Food honor was Lauren Conser of Valley Falls. She is the daughter of Andy and Holly Conser and a member of the Valley Victors 4-H Club. Lauren is 12 years old and in the 6th Grade and her cake was first named Champion Advanced for ages 12-14 group and went on to be selected as the Overall Grand Champion for all ages.

Some of her other projects include: Clothing Buymanship and Construction, Dog Care & Training, Goats and Photography. Here is Laurens "winning" recipe for Classic Vanilla Chiffon Cake. What was really impressive about this cake was the amount of volume or how tall this cake was, along with having outstanding flavor.

Classic Vanilla Chiffon Cake

- 2 cups cake flour
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 7 large egg yolks (room temperature)
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup cold water
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla
- 7 large egg whites
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Sift first four ingredients into a bowl. Create a well and add the next four ingredients. Beat the egg yolk batter until combined and smooth. In another large bowl, beat the egg whites until foamy. Add the cream of tartar and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Fold egg whites into the egg yolk batter until no white streaks remain. Pour into an ungreased 10-inch tube pan with removable bottom. Bake for 55-60 minutes. The top should be golden brown and spring back when lightly pressed. Let cool completely upside down in pan. Remove from pan.

Following in the exact same footsteps with her younger sister, we have Grace Conser that was named the Over Reserve Grand Champion was Grace Conser. Grace is also the oldest daughter of Andy and Holly Conser. She is 16 years old and also a member of the Valley Victors 4-H Club. Some of Grace's other projects include: Dog, Care and Training, Clothing Buymanship and Construction, Photography and Meat Goats.

Grace entered here "winning" recipe in the group for members ages 15 years and older, which is the Senior Advanced. It was named champion in this age group and was later named Overall Reserve Grand Champion. Her winning entry was for Strawberry Chiffon Cake. I think this is a "must" try as it had a beautiful color. Now for that cake recipe:

Strawberry Chiffon Cake

- 2 ¼ cups sifted cake flour
- 1 ½ cups sugar, divided
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup pureed fresh strawberries (about 1 heaping cup berries)
- 7 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 7 large egg yolks
- 7 large egg whites at room temperature

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Take out the 10-inch tube pan, but do not grease it. In a very large bowl, whisk together the flour, 1 ¼ cups sugar (reserving ¼ cup), baking powder and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk together the strawberry puree, vegetable oil, vanilla and egg yolks until well combined, then pour into the dry ingredients and whisk until just smooth and no streaks of dry ingredients remain. In another large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites to stiff peaks, gradually adding the remaining ¼ cup of sugar as you go. Once the egg whites have reached stiff peaks (better to be a bit softer than to overbeat them) gently whisk ¼ of the egg whites into the strawberry batter to lighten it. Gently, working in two or three additions, fold the remaining beaten whites into the strawberry batter, folding until no streaks of egg whites foam remain visible and the batter is a uniform color. Be sure to scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl well. Pour into the ungreased tube pan and bake for 50-60 minutes, until the top of the cake springs back when gently touched and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Invert cake and let cool completely. Once cooled, run a knife around the edges and turn cake out onto a serving platter. Store in an air-tight container. Serve plain or with whipped cream and fresh strawberries. Makes 1 cake and serves 12-14.

Thanks to Lauren and Grace Conser for sharing their “winning” cake recipes with all of us.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Cleaning Summer Gear

Summer is a time when everyone wants to kick back and relax. Here are some tips from the American Cleaning Institute to help you keep suits and summer stuff clean and lasting longer despite sun, sand or chlorine.

Give the lawn or beach chair a good brushing or a vigorous shake to remove sand and then hose it down. You can wipe it dry with a soft cloth or leave it outside to dry. Make sure it is thoroughly dry before putting it away so there's no chance of mold or rust.

Sunscreen can get on clothes, swimsuits, canvas beach chairs and poolside cushions. If the item can be laundered, treat it with a pre-wash stain remover and then launder with the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If it can't be laundered, check the manufacturer's care instructions for the fabric.

While it's tempting to simply hang swimsuits out to dry because they will just be used again, left-in chlorine and sunscreen can cause fabric and elastic to deteriorate before their time. Minimal care is to thoroughly rinse them before hanging them out to dry; laundering is preferable. Check the care label for laundering instructions.

Whether you take them to the beach or the pool, be sure to keep water toys clean, as a build-up of algae and mold can develop simply from being in a wet, damp environment.

Fabrics designed for outdoor cushions are generally soil-and-stain-repellant but spots and spills still happen. Since treatment is dependent upon the fiber content of your cushions, check the care label and, if necessary, contact the manufacturer. Many manufacturers of outdoor fabrics have information on their websites about how to properly care for their fabrics.