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Livestock and Natural Resources

Summer Refreshment

What offers refreshment on a hot summer day? Cool water? Resting in the shade? It just so happens that these also provide comfort to livestock! With the recent heat wave in Kansas, livestock producers should monitor their animals for signs of heat stress and plan their chores according to the animal's comfort. The signs of heat stress can be obvious.

Across the board, nearly all farm animals will pant and breathe heavily. However, some species, like sheep and goats, are more tolerant of heat than other species, think cattle or hogs. Regardless of species, decreased appetite and increased body temperatures can lead to some very serious problems. Interestingly, sweat glands are not all that common with livestock; cattle only sweat on their nose, pigs don't produce sweat at all, but horses are efficient sweaters.

A 1200 lb. cow, nursing a calf, will drink 15 to 25 gallons of water daily, and more in extreme conditions. Growing calves and yearling cattle will need 5 to 12 gallons a day, depending on their size. Mature sheep and goats drink 2 or 3 gallons a day. Hogs consume around a half gallon, up to about 6 gallons. Horses will drink 5 to 15 gallons a day. These amounts are important when choosing a watering system. At a minimum, the water trough should be large enough to supply half of the expected daily needs at one time. But, in an ideal situation, the trough will supply enough water for 2 or 3 days in one filling. This larger amount will provide a cushion against a disaster. Also, be sure the supply is sufficient to fill the tank in a timely manner. If lower ranked animals in the pecking order show up to an empty tank, they will leave without consuming enough, or possibly any, water. Clean water makes a huge difference in consumption and performance.

Researchers have compared natural shade to artificial, compared no shade to natural and artificial. They've looked at growth performance and conception rates. Studies have been conducted throughout the US and in many other countries. Results vary, but I infer that stressed animals need shade. Livestock can become acclimated over time to an environment. Animals will benefit from producers doing certain chores during cooler temperatures. For example, if you are planning to haul a load of calves in an enclosed trailer, those animals will arrive at their destination under less stress through early morning hours compared to the sunny high temperatures of afternoon. Or, during a weaning event, monitor forecasts for the coolest temperatures of the day, and plan to separate pairs at that time

Often newly weaned animals will be more active right after the weaning event. Provide plenty of shade and clean water for animals under stress. How much shade is needed? Research in Kentucky looked into space requirements for cattle. For yearling calves, allow 15 to 20 square feet per head. 800 pounders and larger feeder cattle need 20 to 25 square feet and mature cows should have 30 to 40 square feet. Ample space is needed, otherwise, livestock will crowd under the shade and air movement will be restricted. Shades vary from simple and inexpensive to complex and pricey. Nature's permanent shades are trees, arguably the best option for air circulation. There are portable shades available commercially that can be moved around a pasture. Artificial shades can be rigged up from any about material, just some ingenuity is required.

David G. Hallauer
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Big Equipment and a Busy Time...

The sight of equipment moving down the road can be an awesome sight. It's also one that can be nerve wracking for the equipment operator and those who meet that equipment on the roadway. With a little 'looking ahead', maybe it doesn't have to be.

Start with an understanding of the vehicles on the road. Loaded sprayers, semis, etc... don't stop quickly. Smaller cars can't see around/over large vehicles in front of them. Drivers should consider not only what they are driving and how it handles, but also what the driver they are meeting or attempting to pass is dealing with as well.

Look at your surroundings, asking yourself questions like: can other drivers see me entering or exiting? Is it likely the equipment ahead of me is going to get up to my speed or not? Will they be entering that field exit ahead? Sometimes, we know the terrain around us, what traffic patterns look like, and maybe even the possibility the next farmstead will be the exit for the equipment in front of us. Often we do not, and an abundance of caution should be exercised when meeting or passing equipment.

Consider options that make you more visible. If you are behind large equipment, can they see your smaller vehicle? Are your lights on? Are you signaling appropriately? Slower moving vehicles often have good caution lights as standard equipment, but there may be improvements you can make to help them be even more visible. If you're behind large equipment, look for lights on the machine. If you are the machine operator, make sure all lights are clearly visible, checking signal operation frequently.

If you're an equipment operator looking for tips on spray rig safety on the road, Purdue Extension had a great publication entitled ***Keep the Spray Rig on the Road and Out of Trouble***. Drop me a line if you are interested in a copy.

Tailgate Talk – July 14th

Make sure to RSVP for this year's Tailgate Talk on Wednesday, July 14th hosted by the Henry and Tracy Hill family northeast of Holton (one quarter mile east of S and 254th Roads). A light supper from the Jackson County Conservation District will be served at 5:30 with the program at 6:00. RSVP by July 9th by contacting the Holton Office of the Meadowlark Extension District (785-364-4125) or online at <https://tinyurl.com/tailgatetalk2021>. Hope to see you there!

They've Returned - Japanese Beetles

Japanese beetles are back and feeding again. The half inch long metallic green beetle with coppery wing covers outlined by white dots feeds on over 300 species of plants, meaning they'll likely be feeding over the next six weeks in a landscape or garden near you.

Beetles feed in groups at the top of the plant and work down. When disturbed, they drop from the plant, so adult beetles can be killed by shaking the beetles from the plant into a jar or bucket containing soapy water. This is best done in the morning when the insects are sluggish.

LOTS of insecticides can be used and typically provide a couple weeks' protection depending on the product (always read and follow label directions). Traps are not recommended

unless used on a commercial scale, as they tend to attract more beetles than they kill. Check out our Facebook page for more information on Japanese beetle management in your landscape or garden at: <https://www.facebook.com/Meadowlarkextensiondistrict> .

July 2, 2021

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

Cindy is out of the office today.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Travel Check-in Checklist

As things start returning to normal, many of us will be traveling once again. With that comes navigating airports, train stations, restaurants and hotels. Whether you are staying in a rental property or hotel room, you want to know your space is safe and clean.

One key factor is choosing a place you trust. Ask the rental owners about their cleaning routines or inquire with a hotel about their protocols between guests. It can also help to read reviews and see how others have rated the location for cleanliness.

One way to make sure your home away from home is clean is to make it part of your check-in routine. Here's the American Cleaning Institute's checklist of what to clean and disinfect when you arrive:

- Carry wipes for cleaning quickly. There are even travel packs of disinfectant wipes that can make the job easier.
- Focus on the high-touch spots that might be overlooked during routine cleaning, like door knobs, light switches, phones or remote controls.
- Wash the dishes prior to using them, especially if there is a kitchenette or kitchen in the unit. This is only needed if you plan on using them during your stay.
- Do a visual check of the room to make sure it looks clean, especially the bathroom. If not, it may be worth a call to the front desk for assistance.