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### ***Alfalfa Weevil***

If alfalfa makes up a portion of your forage program, it's time to scout for alfalfa weevils. The Kansas Mesonet alfalfa weevil growing degree day calculator indicates all of our stations at or approaching the beginning of feeding damage, a fact confirmed with feeding injury assessments made across the District late last week.

Feeding injury and larvae were found at each of five sampled sites. Most larvae are still less than an eighth of an inch in length, with some small enough they are difficult to find even when plants are dissected. Numbers at most sites are light thus far at less than one larvae per stem. Unfortunately, regrowth of many stands is still slow as we await warmer temperatures. At the same time, our growing degree days – and thus the weevil hatch time frame – are ahead of schedule for this time of year.

Start scouting soon, breaking 30-50 randomly selected stems and shaking them individually in to a deep sided bucket. At current alfalfa hay prices, economic returns to treatment may be possible at infestation levels of one larvae/stem or slightly lower. NOTE: when larvae are very small, they may be difficult to dislodge from sampled stems. Split terminal growth with a knife to dislodge additional feeding larvae. It is likely larvae are still hatching, so additional scouting will likely be necessary if even low levels are found.

If chemical control is desired, multiple products are available. For information on alfalfa weevil control products, request a copy of the 2022 Alfalfa Insect Pest Management Guide from any District Office. It is also available online at: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf809.pdf> . Always read and follow label directions.

### ***Early Season Turf Mowing Height***

Mowing height for cool season turf grasses can play a big role in the health of the turf grass stand through the summer – and even beyond. Weeds like crabgrass need light to germinate seeds. A tall, thick turf grass stand can shade soil reducing weed pressure. Turf grass root depth is correlated to mowing height as well: the higher the cutting height, the deeper the root system with the result a more drought resistant turf. That's why we typically suggest mowing heights of two to three inches for Kentucky bluegrass and three to three and a half inches for tall fescue.

While best to maintain these taller heights through the growing season, you can get away with mowing (a little) lower for the first mowing or two in early spring. Doing so might actually speed green-up as we remove old, dead grass and allow the soil to warm up more quickly. Just don't get carried away and scalp the turf. Mowing height shouldn't be lowered to less than about an inch and a half. After a mowing, increase the height again.

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### **Financial Checkup: It's Time**

As we grow older, we know it's important to visit our doctor yearly for blood work and preventative screening. From physical to mental health, it is vital to catch things and arrange treatment before it's too late....and the same goes for financial health.

What exactly is a financial checkup? Where do you go to have one done and is the potential diagnosis associated with such an evaluation? First, a financial checkup can help identify problems and chart progress. A long-term plan can help outline steps to help achieve financial goals.

K-State Research and Extension has recently revised the publication, *How Are You Doing? A Financial Checkup*, which is available online at <http://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2721.pdf>. This checkup includes a financial fitness quiz to address habits in financial management, saving/investing, insurance and estate planning, credit and shopping. After completing the quiz, your score will show you where you are financially. No matter what your score, know that it is never too late to improve your finances. Here are a few tips to consider after completing your quiz.

1. Modify your spending plan. Ideally, income should equal expenses plus money placed in savings. List all of your income and your expenses and adjust as necessary.
2. Identify your financial goals. Where have you made progress over the last year and where have you fallen short? Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time based.
3. Protect your assets. Review your homeowner's or renter's insurance, health insurance, and auto insurance and disability insurance. Look at both your coverage and premiums and consider shopping for a better option if desired.

You may not think of it often but your financial health is an important piece of your overall wellness. Take the time and schedule your checkup now.