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Crops & Soils/Horticulture

### **Fall Forage Management**

There's a lot going on in grass stands right now: drought stress and approaching dormancy to name a couple. It also means opportunities for exploring management strategies to give forages – and the animals they support – the best chance to do what we need them to do.

Matt and Marley Hamon are hosting our 2022 Tailgate Talk on Tuesday evening, September 13<sup>th</sup> at their farm northwest of Valley Falls so we can discuss such strategies. We'll discuss where grass stands are at right now as well as how to prepare for fall dormancy. NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist Dustin Schwandt and Meadowlark Extension District Livestock and Natural Resources Agent Ross Mosteller will hit on management now that can help forage stands and livestock as we head in to fall and winter.

For cover crop growers interested in the dual uses of covers for grazing *and* weed control, K-State Weed Science Graduate Student Lily Woitaszewski will present her work focused on the impact of pre-plant weed suppression when cover crops are grazed during the winter.

The Jefferson County Conservation District will sponsor a light meal beginning at 5:30 at the farm at 5557 190<sup>th</sup> Rd. northwest of Valley Falls (take K-16 Highway to Swabville Road then head north two and a half miles to 190th. Head west on 190<sup>th</sup> one-half mile to the Hamon Farm – watch for signs). Bring a lawn chair and spend the evening hearing some great information to help shore up your fall/winter forage resource.

To help with a meal count, please RSVP by Friday September 9<sup>th</sup> (flyer available at [www.meadowlark.k-state.edu](http://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu)) by calling the Meadowlark Extension District Oskaloosa Office at (785-863-2212) or e-mailing me ([dhallaue@ksu.edu](mailto:dhallaue@ksu.edu)) or Ross Mosteller at [rmostell@ksu.edu](mailto:rmostell@ksu.edu). Hope to see you there!

### **Cool-Season Turf Fertilization**

For most medium to high maintenance turfgrass stands, fertilizing two to three times a year is recommended. That first – and most important - fertilization window is September. Cool season turf grasses (fescue, Kentucky bluegrass...) are just about to enter their fall growth cycle as nighttime temperatures moderate and days shorten. This results in thickening turf stands from tillering (new shoots at the base of existing plants) or from the spread of underground rhizomes. Feeding stands now can offer huge benefits.

The application doesn't have to be heavy. Limit rates to one to one and a half pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Use a quick-release source of nitrogen (most sources in garden centers and department stores contain at least some of a quick-release source).

To determine if Phosphorous, Potassium, or lime applications are needed, consider a soil test. For less than \$15, samples can be submitted through any District Office for testing.

The *second* most important fertilization window is November. This application, also of one pound of actual nitrogen per thousand square feet, helps grass green up earlier next spring and provide the nutrients needed until summer.

Ross Mosteller  
District Extension Agent  
Livestock & Natural Resources

## "Economic and Environmental Sustainability for Generations"

The mission statement of Greener Pastures Ranching seems to fit very well with what owner Steve Kenyon shared with participants at the Nebraska Grazing Conference. Really it should be the mission statement for everyone involved in agriculture. Steve gave the warning that he would offend nearly everyone in attendance, as he challenged some very traditional ways of thinking. Everyone should have walked away with his overarching question of *“but what else is it doing?”* in the back of mind when looking at production practices. Here is the quick summary of my notes that seem to have application for anyone, if you step back and look hard at your operation.

*“Are you treating a symptom or a problem?”* Resources are often directed to symptoms of problems rather than taking corrective action to fix the root problem. Kenyon challenged everyone to dig into finding problems, address the problem and symptoms will go away as a result. Some examples were: Spraying weedy forbs in an overgrazed grassland. Weeds are a symptom of an unhealthy rangeland due to mismanaged grazing. Fix grazing management, increase healthy grass stand, fix the weed pressure. Another; soils in nature generally gravitate to neutral pH. Liming acid soils is treatment of a symptom, when the problem is on-going use of synthetic, chemical fertilizers; instead natural nutrient recycling. Keep your focus on problems!

*Who are your employees?* Dung beetles, dragonflies, bats, cowbirds, bacteria, actinomycetes, fungi, protozoa and nematodes. Not the folks you think to employ on a regular basis? Kenyon focuses on all the biological processes of land, air, water and invests in natural “ranch employees”. He presented evidence that more common production practices actually harm these natural employees and creates a situation where treating symptoms becomes normal. One item that especially caught my attention was his firm stand that the grazing animal is an interictal part of natural, nutrient recycling and has to be part of agricultural systems. He noted that in Canada there is a current cost-share program on establishing perimeter fences around crop fields to allow grazing for the benefits it provides to nutrient recycling and healthy soils.

*Grazing Management.* There was much to digest, but the final thoughts to share today revolve around grazing. Here are the Kenyon Grazing Principles: maintain a healthy Water Cycle keeping water in and on your soil, Harvest Sunlight for free through healthy perennial plants, Nutrient Recycling systems are the sustainable way to fertilize, Build Biology from top to bottom within the production system and finally, Establish/Support Polycultures for healthy soil.

So, there you have it! Did I offend you? or at least encourage you to stop and think? This approach to a news column has been a venture into new waters for me and I appreciate the comments and questions received thus far. Most weeks, my goal will be to keep it “between the ditches” of University research-based information, but I always try to keep an open mind to all ideas being tried in the field, and their potential application as well.

Presenters won’t dive into these topics specifically, but we would like to invite folks to join us for more grazing discussion at the 2022 edition of Tailgate Talk, at Matt & Marley Hamon’s 5557 190<sup>th</sup> Road, Valley Falls, 5:30 pm on September 13. Details will soon be available on our Meadowlark website and Facebook page. Plan to bring a lawn chair and learn more about weed suppression when grazing cover crops and forage management prior to dormancy.

Teresa Hatfield  
District Extension Agent  
Family and Community Wellness

### **Donation Dilemmas: How to Prevent Charity Scams**

Have you ever answered the phone and a voice told you they were from a local charity collecting donations? Sometimes, they'll sound like a familiar or official organization— for example, they might claim to be affiliated with the local fire or police department. Sometimes these calls are legitimate, donations are how many charities raise money, and charitable organizations are also not restricted by the “Do Not Call” registry. But how do you know if the person you are talking to is from an actual charitable organization or is just someone trying to scam you?

If the call is a scam, they will try many tactics to get you to give them money. One of these tactics is trying to rush you to make a decision. If you are unsure, remember time is your friend in this situation, don't make any hasty decisions. They will try and rush you by using vague sentimental claims. If you consider donating, you can ask the caller to mail you some more information. Tell them that you never make these kinds of decisions over the phone. You might ask them what percentage of your donation goes directly to program support. Charities sometimes use paid fundraisers; what percentage of contributions go toward the fundraiser and not the charity? Paid fundraisers will take a cut out of every donation.

Charity fraud scammers may also try to trick you into making a payment on a donation promise you never made. They may spoof your caller I.D. to make it look like a local call. They may use a name that sounds very similar to an actual charity. They may claim that your donation will be tax deductible when it's not. Major disasters and tragedies will also be the subject of charity scammers. Never wire money or send cash. Scammers may also ask you to load a pre-paid debit card. Then they will then ask you to call them back and give them the serial number on the card. They can then use the money loaded on the card without the actual card. There is no way to trace any of these transactions. Remember don't give out any personal financial information. Report all potential scams to the Federal Trade Commission at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov).

If the caller is from a genuine charity, they will not pressure you to decide immediately. If you are interested in a donation to a charity, make sure you check them out beforehand, if you search the internet for the name of the charity and include words like “complaint”, “review”, “rating”, or “scam”. Check out websites that review charities like GuideStar or Charity Watch. If you notice any red flags, choose another charity. You can also visit the Kansas Attorney General's website at [www.kscharitycheck.org](http://www.kscharitycheck.org) to learn more about a charity.

Cindy Williams  
District Extension Agent  
Family & Community Wellness

### **August is National Sandwich Month**

The sandwich has a long history and its origins are unclear—but regardless of when, where and why they came about, there are many ways to make them healthy! Try these tips for making nutritious sandwiches, without compromising on taste.

- **Opt for whole grain bread.** What makes a sandwich a sandwich? The bread of course. Carbs have a bad reputation, but they are an important part of your diet. Whole grain breads, rolls, wraps, pita and English muffins are some of the healthiest bread options for sandwich building. Whole grains provide greater nutritional benefits than their refined grain counterparts.
- **Pick your proteins.** Lean proteins such as turkey, chicken, lean roast beef, and tofu all work great on sandwiches. While cold cuts provide a quick and easy protein option, check the nutrition facts on your favorites to get an idea of their fat and sodium content. Also, processed meats may not be healthy when consumed daily.
- **Make your dinner work double duty.** Roast a slightly larger chicken, turkey, pork loin or lean cut of beef than you would normally. Slice extras to use for sandwiches. This can save you money and provide a healthier option for your sandwich.
- **Choose your cheese.** Cheese is not always a sandwich necessity, but it can add good flavor and be another source of protein, plus calcium and Vitamin D. Opt for low-fat cheeses and make sure you do not add too much. Cheese can serve as your protein, if you like to go meatless.
- **Do not forget the veggies.** Veggies are a great addition to any sandwich. Add sliced tomato, lettuce leaves, sliced pepper, sliced mushrooms or whatever suits your fancy. Veggies are high in nutrients but low in calories and fat, so do not hold back when adding them to your sandwich.
- **Conclude with condiments.** Mayo, also, has a bad reputation when it comes to nutrition. However, if you look at the nutrition label, you will find most brands are high in healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. That being said, it still should be consumed in moderation. If you are looking for new ways to add flavor to your sandwich, try toppings like whole grain mustard, banana peppers, hummus, smashed avocado, light salad dressing and wasabi. Hold the salt, especially if you are using processed or deli meats.