KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension
Meadowlark District

May 29, 2026

David Hallauer
District Extension Agent, Crops & Soils

Roughleaf Dogwood Control

One of the increasingly troublesome brush species we see in our grasslands is roughleaf dogwood. Unlike buckbrush which seldom reaches six feet in height, roughleaf dogwood is often much taller and when it gets thick, can choke out forages underneath it almost completely.

The optimum spray window for control of Roughleaf dogwood is between the flower bud state and early seed production stages. For many stands, that window is open right now.

If your herbicide performance expectation is 100 percent mortality – think again with this species. Control is difficult and multiple applications will likely be required. Single active ingredient products containing triclopyr, dicamba, and picloram (alone or with 2,4-D) often defoliate it, but mortality is usually less than 25% and resprouting is common. High volume spot treatments with multiple active ingredient products (triclopyr plus fluroxypyr, picloram plus 2,4-D plus triclopyr, etc…) will likely be better but may still require additional applications. A non-ionic surfactant added to herbicides can help. Any time roughleaf dogwood has been previously defoliated and in a weakened state (following a prescribed burn, etc…), control may be increased as well. Still, it's persistent and not a species that goes away easily.

For more control options, request a copy of the *2026 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide* via any District Office or online at: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/item/2026-chemical-weed-control-for-field-crops-pastures-rangeland-and-noncropland_CHEMWEEDGUIDE . When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions.

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Ross Mosteller
District Extension Agent, Livestock & Natural Resources

Water Wise

As we enter the summer season and think about water, the first thing that might come to mind is splashing in the pool. For the livestock producer, there is no more important nutrient to keep in constant supply than water. Summer weather with increased heat and humidity creates an increased demand for water. Today we will look at ways to be waterwise with livestock.

Water is a vital nutrient needed to sustain all forms of life. Livestock use water in the body for growth, reproduction, lactation, and regulation of body temperature, along with many other processes. Without adequate supplies of water, these functions slow down or perhaps stop, causing reductions in performance or possibly even death. Given the importance of water to the body, it is necessary to understand the factors that influence water intake.

Water consumption varies amongst animal species and within animals of a species, given age, stage of production and other biological factors. Recently, technology has been developed to collect information on water intake on an individual animal basis and has proven extremely useful. These developments in technology have allowed researchers to study water intake patterns and amounts.

Researchers are working to develop equations to predict water intake in beef cattle. These equations utilize predictors, including weather, feed intake, and growth parameters to estimate water intake. While equations are not exact, they supply important insight into estimated water intake levels. These estimations can be used to ensure adequate supply is met for cattle.

Water intake levels can be influenced by environmental conditions, such as weather. While weather's impact on water intake is more often considered during the warmer summer months, it is important to recognize that weather plays a vital role in animal behavior during the colder winter months as well.

During periods of hot temperatures, water intake increases to aid in cooling the body and to replenish water loss due to sweating, respiration, and urination. In contrast, wintry weather causes an increase in feed intake, as animals look to maintain internal body temperature. Therefore, water supply should never be restricted no matter what the weather conditions are at hand.

The rule-of-thumb for beef cattle is that non-lactating females and bulls require one gallon of water per 100 pounds of body weight. In a lactating female, the requirement is increased to two gallons per 100 pounds of body weight. These requirements are estimations, and animals can drink above or below this amount given the environmental conditions they are facing. Space at a water source and water flow should also be accounted for, based on expected weather conditions. Typically, 1.5 inches of waterer space per animal is sufficient, however, a general guideline is that cattle require three linear inches of water space per animal during the summer months.

An abundant, clean, fresh water supply is an essential part of a beef cattle production system. Considerable work has been conducted to determine water intake and factors influencing water consumption for dairy cows, growing cattle, and finishing cattle; however, relatively little research has been published to provide estimates for water consumption of beef cows. To address this, the Kansas State University publication "Estimating Water Requirements for Mature Beef Cows" MF3303 was developed in collaboration with Oklahoma State University and provides some useful information for the cow-calf producer.

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Laura Phillips
District Extension Agent, Horticulture

Recent Decline of Hackberry Trees

Over the last three weeks I have received numerous calls about hackberry trees, mainly from Nemaha County. Landowners are reporting their hackberry trees have yellowing leaves, holes and tears on the leaves, and leaves are dropping off the tree. Many owners have multiple hackberry trees with these issues, but their other trees are unaffected.

Our K-State Plant Pathology lab reports that this is most likely not caused by disease, but environmental stress. The holes in the leaves brought into our extension office look consistent with frost damage, and the discoloration looks to be a stress response from the tree. Normally when we see holes in leaves, we think of insect damage, and when we think of frost damage we think of entire leaves dying. However, frost can cause small holes in leaves. If a light frost hits as the leaves are still developing, it can kill portions of the new leaf tissue. As the leaf continues to develop, portions of the tissue that did not die continue to grow, leaving holes around where some tissue died.

Hackberry trees are particularly sensitive to late spring frost damage compared to other trees. In mid-April and in early May we had a few days with overnight temperatures in the lower 30's. While you can usually see initial damage from frost within a day, it can sometimes take a few weeks for the full extent of the damage to appear. This can make it seem like your tree is declining in health due to a disease, but really the damage from the frost is just slowly becoming more visible to us.

The good news is that hackberry trees are pretty hardy and should recover from the damage on their own. You might be tempted to prune out areas with heavy defoliation, but it's best to wait and see what those branches do. The tree might just send out new leaves. If you suspect a branch is dead, you can lightly scratch the bark with your nail or a knife. If you see green under the bark, the branch is still alive.

If you are concerned about your hackberry tree, or any other tree, start by taking pictures of your tree each week. Get a photo of the tree overall and some close up photos of the leaves. This helps me better understand the timeline of your tree's decline and determine the reason for your tree's issues.

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Teresa Hatfield
District Extension Agent, Family and Community Wellness

No news article this week.

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

Making Fruit Leather

It's summer and schools are out! One summer activity that my family enjoyed was making fruit leather. Making homemade fruit leather is a great way to use up extra fruit and have a healthful snack. But fresh fruit can harbor bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. It is best to heat the fruit for safety and better color retention.

North Dakota State University Extension recommends heating fresh fruit in a double boiler to steam heat the fruit. It takes about 15-20 minutes, and the temperature should reach 160°F with a food thermometer. An alternative is to use canned fruit that is pureed, applesauce or strained baby food fruit.

Fruits choices for fruit leather include apples, apricots, berries, cherries, nectarines, peaches, pears, pineapple, plums and strawberries.

Salmonella in Raw Flour

Another recall has been issued linked to raw flour that has been found in 11 states, caused 12 illnesses and three hospitalizations. It is another reminder that any flour is a raw product and can cause foodborne illness. This outbreak results from people eating raw dough or batter. Currently, no specific brands of flour have been identified as the source of this recall.

Some reminders when handling raw flour include:

*Do not eat any raw dough or batter in any amount. Always bake or cook foods made with any type of raw flour before consumption.

*Wash your hands, equipment and surfaces that have touched raw flour.

*Keep raw flour, dough, and batter away from ready-to-eat foods.