

September 25, 2026

David Hallauer
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Land Lease Resources

Each spring, USDA's National Ag Statistics Service (NASS) surveys operations with a history of cash renting land and compiles it into an annual report. That report is summarized by K-State Extension Farm Economist Robin Reid into the *Kansas County Cash Rent Values* report available on our AgManager website. It's not the only resource on rental rates available, however. There are *many* others as well.

Want to look at numbers? The publication referenced above is a good one, as is the companion publication that typically follows it that takes an economic view of rental rates. Use any or all, keeping in mind they all have limitations and require some level of study to see what they cover and what they do not. For example: the *Kansas County Cash Rent Values* report doesn't differentiate between old and new agreements or production levels and includes hay ground values in crop ground numbers. Still, it's the best local survey numbers we have and can be a great resource. In short, they are best used not as *the* number but as a *starting* number for every unique situation.

Interested in a written contract or what state statutes say about oral lease arrangements. We have resources to help with those types of questions as well. From the complex with explanations to the simple *almost* fill in the blank type examples, there are options that can help.

Don't even know where to begin? There are even references to help with that. Most are going to start with the recommendation to focus on agreements that are equitable to both landlord and tenant. They will also provide some insight into other considerations as well. Maybe they'll just remind you of what you have already considered. Maybe they'll help you improve the agreement you have. Either way, they can serve as great information to think about.

Check the numerous resources out online at <https://www.agmanager.info/farm-management/land-rental-rates> . If hard copies are more convenient, feel free to visit any of our District Offices or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu.

Ross Mosteller
District Extension Agent, Livestock & Natural Resources

Hold the Net Wrap

There are days when I sit down to write on a topic for the week and writers block hits. That mental block got me thinking about another blockage and inspires this week's topic. We are entering the time of year when calves are weaned and stored harvested forages fed. A question that arises is should the net wrap or twine be removed before feeding? This article, originally ran in Progressive Cattle, looks at the research and reasons why the answer should be YES – remove the wrap.

Net wrap is an efficient forage binding method and significantly reduces harvest and storage losses compared to twine. According to a survey conducted by South Dakota State University (SDSU), net wrap was the most preferred method of forage binding (67%) compared to twine (26%) or both (6%) depending on the crop harvested or livestock being fed. Oftentimes, to save time and labor, net wrap or twine is not removed prior to feeding hay to cattle. The SDSU forage binding survey reported 54% of producers removed net wrap or twine when feeding bales whole, but only 11% of producers removed it when grinding bales.

Whether it occurs by accident or simply out of boredom, cattle can consume some of this net wrap or twine, which then accumulates in the rumen. The buildup of forage binding material in the rumen can result in cattle weight loss, diarrhea, and other symptoms similar to hardware or Johne's disease. Research by North Dakota State University (NDSU) has shown that the rumen microbes do not digest plastic net wrap or biodegradable twine. Sisal twine does get digested but at a much slower rate compared to hay.

In another NDSU study, steers were fed net wrap in a ration until 14 days prior to harvest to determine if the material would pass through the digestive system. However, there was still a significant amount of net wrap remaining in the rumen after 14 days. In non-related livestock mortality cases, 26% of SDSU survey respondents had postmortem exams conducted by a veterinarian and 30% of those recovered net wrap from the animal.

Cows fed ground, net wrapped hay for 140 days in an SDSU study accumulated a softball-sized mass in the rumen consisting of 0.8 to 1.1 pounds of net wrap. The entangled mass of net wrap and feed measured around 3 feet in length when stretched out. Based on the amount of net wrap offered through the diet, about 53% of the net wrap was recovered through rumen evacuations. Research by Montana State University has shown similar results where 47% of the net wrap offered to cows was recovered from the digestive tract.

While grinding net wrapped bales may reduce the particle size compared to feeding intact net wrap, health issues can still occur. It is important to consider how failing to remove forage binding materials may affect rumen function and capacity of the cattle being fed long-term. Due to differences in diet and the amount of baled forages consumed, cows are likely to be more at risk than feedlot cattle. There is no treatment available for the buildup of forage binding materials in the rumen, so prevention is key to avoiding any health issues

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Laura Phillips
District Extension Agent, Horticulture

May send at a later time.

Teresa Hatfield
District Extension Agent, Family and Community Wellness

Fall Prevention Starts at Home

More than 25% of adults age 65 and older experience a fall each year. After one fall, the risk of falling again doubles. Some falls result in serious injuries, such as hip fractures or traumatic brain injuries. The good news is that many falls can be prevented, and there are steps you can take today to reduce your risk.

Many older adults develop a fear of falling, and in some cases, that fear can actually increase the likelihood of a fall by causing people to become less active or more cautious in ways that affect balance and mobility. Because many falls occur in and around the home, one of the most important things you can do is conduct a home safety check.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends reviewing your home for common fall hazards. Use the checklist below to identify areas that may need attention.

Stairs and Steps

- Remove papers, shoes, books, and other clutter from stairs and walkways.
- Repair broken or uneven steps.
- Make sure there is adequate lighting and a light switch at both the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs promptly.
- Repair loose or torn carpeting.
- Ensure handrails are sturdy and extend the full length of the staircase.

Floors

- Remove throw rugs or secure them with non-slip backing or double-sided tape.
- Arrange furniture to create clear walking paths.
- Pick up items that could become tripping hazards.
- Secure electrical cords and wires along walls or behind furniture.

Kitchen

- Store frequently used items on lower shelves where they are easy to reach.
- Use a sturdy step stool with a handrail when reaching high places. Never stand on a chair.

Bedroom

- Place a lamp within easy reach of the bed.
- Install night lights to illuminate the path between the bedroom and bathroom.
- Keep floors clear of shoes, cords, and other obstacles.

Bathroom

- Place non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips in the tub and shower.
- Install grab bars near the toilet and bathtub or shower.
- Consider using a shower chair if standing for long periods is difficult.

Making a few simple changes can significantly reduce your risk of falling and help you maintain your independence. This fall, take a few minutes to walk through your home and identify potential hazards. A safer home today can help prevent a serious fall tomorrow.

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

Where Has Our Work Ethic Gone?

Every parent and teacher's dream is to have children that internalize and display a good work ethic. The characteristics of consistent effort, perseverance and positive attitude combine to form the work ethic mindset. These qualities build the child's sense of personal responsibility and pride in their work.

When I was a classroom teacher, I was delighted with those students who went the extra mile to complete assignment, because they held high expectations for their work. I often found their high expectations were a result of parental guidance and modeling of a good work ethic at home.

Why has work ethic eroded over the years? Psychologists suggest that several changes in attitude toward work may have led to a weakening in effort. The first is that work is not always accepted as a necessary and routine part of life. If kids are often excused from daily tasks, they begin to think that work is optional, not a required part of family living. Another related change is that kids don't feel the sense of accomplishment from completing their work as they once did in earlier generations. They are missing the self-esteem boost that comes from completing their jobs with skill and effort. The last is that kids often look upon work as too hard, so why should they try? They defeat themselves before they ever begin, rather than look at the task as a challenge they can tackle.

What steps can parents take to develop work ethics? A great start is to call a family meeting to discuss work expectations at home and school. Let kids give input on chores, study times and consequences for work that doesn't meet guidelines.

Nest, set up a work schedule to get kids into a regular routine and keep them on track. Remember to model a strong work ethic by completing your tasks side by side with them. Most importantly, teach the work-related skills of patience and perseverance. Explain that work can be hard, boring or frustrating, but completing the job is the critical factor to achieving success.

As you help children build their work ethic, tell them they are developing key skills for their future careers. Employers look for workers who are dependable and committed to their jobs. Such employees increase the productivity of the company. Employers value workers who are motivated and engaged in their job. When the time comes for company promotions, employees who have shown dependability, commitment and positive attitude will likely be the first to climb the ladder to better opportunities.