



May Is Beef Month!



Beef contains a variety of nutrients for growing children. Just one three-ounce cooked serving of beef provides protein, iron and zinc, which many children lack in their diets.
Submitted photo

Beef's nutrients important for children, adults

Beyond the special memories around the table and the tasty delights we experience across a lifetime, the foods we eat provide our bodies with fuel to thrive and grow.

Beef's nutrients can help you live vibrantly through all life's ages and stages.

Beef As A First Food

For infants and young kids, nutrients such as iron and zinc have been identified as critically important in supporting proper growth and development.

Experts agree that breastfed infants need a good dietary source of iron and zinc by six months of age, which cannot be met by breastmilk alone.

One way that you can boost iron and zinc for your child is by introducing pureed beef as a complementary food, while continuing to breastfeed. Doing so may provide long-lasting benefits for your baby, such as developing a healthy immune system, improving recall skills and reasoning, as well as promoting growth and learning milestones.

Tips for introducing your baby to beef include:

- * Start by offering fully cooked, pureed beef. You can choose to buy pre-packaged

baby food or make your own in the blender.

* Once your baby gets more teeth, introduce tiny pieces of soft foods, such as ground beef crumbles or fork-tender pot roast.

Pediatrician David Hill, MD, FAAP reminds parents to introduce a variety of foods early to avoid picky eating later on. For more information, visit HealthyChildren.org. Dr. Hill also has some quick tips on starting babies on solid foods.

Laying The Foundation For Children

The foundation for a lifetime of good health can begin early when children and teens start to enjoy a variety of foods. At this life phase, it is important to help kids start to eat smart.

Just one three-ounce cooked serving of beef provides protein, iron and zinc, which are often lacking in diets of kids and teens. Making sure your children get the right nutrients will provide energy for their active bodies, aid in brain development and support a healthy immune system.

Fueling Busy Adults

We all seem busier than ever. Trying to fit it all in has

become a daunting task and sometimes our food choices begin to (literally) weigh us down. As you strive to achieve balance, you'll need foods that do more than just get you through the day, you need foods that will provide energy, protein, vitamins and minerals.

To this end, aim to eat a variety of delicious foods that balance the taste you love with good nutrition. Including one three-ounce cooked serving of beef will deliver on that goal with B-vitamins, protein, iron and zinc.

When you're in a hurry, look for recipes that balance taste, nutrition and simplicity.

Eating For Two

Pregnancy is an exciting time in a woman's life. While you do need to be mindful of your body's need for more nutrients, don't be fooled into thinking you should be eating twice as much.

Throughout pregnancy, your body needs about 10 extra grams of protein each day to support the growing baby. It is also important to get enough iron for red blood cell production, zinc for the baby's brain development, choline to help build the brain and spinal cord and B vitamins to utilize energy efficiently.

Including just one additional high-protein snack (like half of a roast beef sandwich on wheat bread) will help you meet these important nutrient goals.

Here are a few ideas for quick ways to add some extra nutrition to your daily meals:

- * Add a little extra beef to your standard casserole and enjoy it all week.
- * Include beef jerky as a snack.
- * Serve scrambled eggs with a little taco-seasoned ground beef.
- * Ask for slices of grilled steak on your salad at lunch.
- * Load up classic ground beef tacos with extra vegetables and low-fat cheese.

Beef producers vital to county

Beef cattle ranching and farming was the top agricultural employer in Jackson County last year, generating a contribution of more than \$49 million to the county's economy, according to data from the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

The county's 17 agriculture, food and food processing sectors had a total direct output of more than \$203.9 million in 2019, supporting 1,191 jobs in the county, it was reported. The numbers reported utilized the most recent IMPLAN data available from 2017, adjusted for 2019.

The beef industry employed more people in the county than any other agricultural sector, with 684 jobs in beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots and dual-purpose ranching and farming. The sector generated a total of \$49,384,149, which

was second to the non-poultry, animal slaughtering sector, which generated \$105,366,787 for the year with 153 employees.

Overall, the county's agriculture, food and food processing sectors — directly and indirectly — support 1,338 jobs, or 19.58 percent of the county's work force, adding \$61.4 million, or 14.4 percent of the gross regional product, of the county's economy.

The county's top 10 employers in agriculture, food and food processing sectors for 2019 were:

- Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots and dual-purpose ranching and farming, 684.
- All other crop farming, 182.
- Animal slaughtering, except poultry, 153.
- Landscape and horticultural services, 49.
- Grain farming, 37.

- Truck transportation, 23.
- Oilseed farming, 22.
- Veterinary services, 18.
- Wholesale trade, 17.
- Other local government enterprises, 14.

The top 10 agricultural sectors for the year in terms of total monetary output were:

- Animal slaughtering, except poultry, \$105,366,787.
- Beef cattle ranching and farming, \$49,384,149.
- Oilseed farming, \$14,973,738.
- All other crop farming, \$9,096,332.
- Grain farming, \$8,545,561.
- Meat processed from carcasses, \$4,991,838.
- Other local government enterprises, \$3,733,162.
- Dairy cattle and milk production, \$2,987,378.
- Wholesale trade, \$2,987,017.
- Truck transportation, \$2,908,407.

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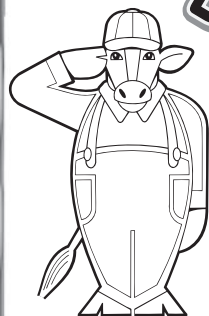
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May Is Beef Month!

Beef industry continues to grow in Kansas

The beef cattle sector is the single largest sector in the Kansas agriculture industry and is recognized nationally and globally for raising healthy cattle and producing high-quality beef.

Kansas has the third largest number of cattle on ranches and feedyards and has a significant role in the nation's beef processing as well. Resources to support beef cattle are plentiful in Kansas, from the abundant feed supply to the pastureland to the efforts to conserve the water supply.

The beef industry in Kansas includes leaders throughout the supply chain, as well as in research, health, marketing and advocacy. Agriculture-related education is a source of strength in the state. The beef cattle industry is well respected on a state and national level, which has led to strong support from state and federal policy makers and agriculture agencies.

In addition to concerns of weather and fluctuating prices, challenges facing the beef cattle industry threaten to prevent its continued success. A number of local, state and federal policies have the potential to directly affect the beef industry, from transportation to environmental regulations and international trade.

Fluctuating land prices, changes in land use and generational transfer add to the challenges the industry must continue to address. The ability to access markets — either physically or electronically — is critical to future success in the industry. There is a need to continue improving infrastructure to deliver products and information.

The workforce required to maintain successful beef operations involves issues of education and immigration, which adds complexity to operation management and sustainability, especially as the industry continues to become more competitive.

As the beef industry adapts to meet consumer demands, it must identify goals for strategic growth based on competitive advantages of raising and feeding cattle and processing beef in Kansas. Coordination between public and private leaders within the industry will direct efforts toward navigating the barriers which could prevent growth.

A focus on workforce education, industry communication and policy development will assist in identifying opportunities to expand or grow the Kansas beef cattle sector. Collaboration will be key to developing a long-term growth strategy for the Kansas beef cattle industry, a strategy that not only builds upon earned brand equity and the tradition of this industry, but that encourages growth and future prosperity for the Kansas beef cattle community.

The beef cattle sector has been and continues to be the single largest sector in the Kansas agriculture industry, with cattle and calves generating \$8.27 billion in cash receipts in 2017, which

accounted for more than 50 percent of Kansas agricultural cash receipts that year.

Not only does Kansas have the third largest number of cattle on ranches and feedyards at 6.35 million on Jan. 1, 2019, the state also has a significant footprint in the cattle processing sector.

In 2017, Kansas produced nearly 5.69 billion pounds of red meat, or nearly 11 percent of the nation's total.

According to estimates prepared by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and based on the IMPLAN economic data model, beef cattle farming and ranching has a direct output of approximately \$6.3 billion and employs nearly 34,130 Kansans.

In addition, animal slaughtering and meat processed from carcasses, except poultry, has a direct output of \$11.2 billion and supports a total of 17,292 jobs.

The beef industry is also recognized nationally and globally for raising healthy cattle and producing the beef which consumers demand. In 2017, exports of beef and beef products from Kansas totaled over \$1.25 billion, the largest export value in the past five years.

Beef and beef product exports from Kansas have accounted for between 18 and 26 percent of total U.S. beef exports for each of the last five years. As the global middle class continues to grow, it is expected that global demand for protein will also increase, adding more value to cattle raised in Kansas.

Through July 2018, the U.S. Meat Export Federation estimates that exports have added \$318.31 per head in value.

The success of the Kansas beef cattle industry has not come without significant challenges, though. Volatile markets, regulatory challenges, weather extremes and natural disasters are a growing number of anti-agriculture and anti-meat activists spreading false information

regarding cattle production practices and beef nutrition can make it difficult for the entire beef cattle community.

In order to develop a strategic growth plan for the beef cattle community, it is important to understand the areas where Kansas has a comparative advantage and the best opportunities for growth or expansion. These areas include:

Biosecurity - The Kansas beef industry has been aggressive and progressive in advancing biosecurity and foreign animal disease preparedness. In addition to participation in the Kansas Department of Agriculture-led foreign animal disease exercises, feedyard operators throughout the state are working with KDA to develop or update biosecurity plans.

Education - The Kansas State University Department of Animal Sciences and Industry is recognized throughout the cattle industry as one of the premier animal sciences programs in the nation and a prime spot not only for superior education and a tremendous provider of qualified employees but also as a hub for cutting-edge research.

Export Potential - In 2017, exports of beef and veal products were \$1.25 billion and exports of hides and skins were \$208 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Human Capital - Kansas is not only one of the top beef producing states in the United States, it is also home to world renowned leaders throughout the supply chain. There is a wealth of knowledge driving the continual improvement in the beef cattle industry, including research and extension leaders at K-State and Fort Hays State University and throughout private industry.

Consumer Outreach - Today's consumers are increasingly interested in knowing how and where their food is grown, raised and processed. Through-



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Submitted photo

out the beef supply chain, private operations have opened their doors to welcome consumers and influencers from urban and suburban areas in Kansas for learning opportunities.

Traceability - In response to calls to action from cattle producers in Kansas, a public-private partnership that includes the Kansas Livestock Association, KDA, K-State and private industry formed in early 2018 to explore opportunities to move the industry forward on the topic of traceability.

Weather and Natural Resources - The semi-arid climate is Kansas is suitable for cattle production year-round.

Not all land in Kansas is suitable for growing crops, but cattle are able to graze on grasses and plants growing on the 16.3 million acres of pastureland throughout the state and convert these resources, which would otherwise likely be unused, into high quality protein for human consumption.

Raising cattle not only allows Kansas farmers and ranchers to maximize production on land not conducive for farming, it is a higher value product compared to farming.

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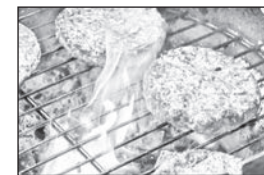


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May Is Beef Month!



Wranglers Beef Chili recipe

Wrangler's Beef Chili
 Serve this classic ground beef chili atop whole wheat noodles and offer kids a variety of delicious toppings.

Ingredients:
 1 pound ground beef (93 percent lean or leaner)
 1/2 cup chopped onion
 1 can (15 oz.) pinto beans, drained and rinsed
 2 cans (8 oz.) no-salt added tomato sauce
 1 cup frozen corn
 1 cup water
 2 teaspoons chili powder
 2 teaspoons ground cumin
 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 Hot cooked whole wheat macaroni (optional)

Optional toppings include crushed baked tortilla chips, chopped green or regular onion, chopped tomato, chopped bell pepper, chopped fresh cilantro, reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese and non-fat Greek yogurt.

Directions: Heat a large nonstick skillet over medi-



um heat until hot. Add fresh ground beef and onions; cook eight to 10 minutes, breaking beef into 3/4-inch crumbles and stirring occasionally. Remove drippings.

Stir in beans, tomato sauce, corn, water, spices and herbs. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 20 to 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve over macaroni, if desired. Garnish with top-

pings, as desired.

Cincinnati-Style Beef Chili: Stir in one teaspoon cinnamon with other seasonings. Serve over hot cooked whole wheat spaghetti.

Moroccan-Style Beef Chili: Substitute one cup frozen peas for corn. Stir in one teaspoon pumpkin pie spice with other seasonings. Serve over whole hot cooked whole wheat couscous or brown rice.

How cattle are fed in winter

There are more than 700,000 beef producers spread out across every state in the nation with diverse climates, different breeds of cattle and different types of ranches. Every place is unique and there's no one-size-fits-all method to raising and feeding cattle.

States like Kansas usually have an abundance of grass in the summer, which goes dormant when it freezes. So what happens when all that grass goes dormant? What do the cows eat?

Cattle still eat grass over the winter. It's just in the form of hay. Have you ever seen those round bales dotting the landscape as you drive down the interstate? In the late summer, fields, pastures, county parks and even the grass alongside highways and roads are mowed, raked up and baled by tractor before the grass starts to go dormant.

While you may wonder why they're just sitting there, each and every bale is a valuable source of nutrition for cattle, especially in the winter. Many beef producers will start planning their winter feed needs in the fall, and these hay bales are most likely a large part of that equation.

Those round bales are just one of the many examples of how cows are nature's ultimate "upcyclers." Their unique digestive system can easily turn that hay and grass into valuable energy and high-quality protein throughout the winter when nothing is growing. As an added bonus, mowing and baling fields can help reduce the fuel load for wildfires.

Since cows are usually roaming pastures over the winter, ranchers will load these round bales onto trucks or tractors and deliver them daily to their cattle in the fields. Think of them as a food delivery service - just in a pickup and cowboy hat.

Kansas is famous for the iconic grasslands that make up the Flint Hill ecosystem, but we also have thousands of farms and ranches that supply grains like wheat, corn and soybeans. While we all have seen those combines out harvesting in the summer or fall, not many of us see what is left behind in the field.

Did you know approximately half the weight of a corn plant remains after harvest in the stalk, leaf, cob and husk? Fortunately, cattle love the residue (leftovers) and the grain left behind by the combine and are able to upcycle this into human-edible protein.

In doing so, cattle are transforming a human-inedible byproduct of farming it into high-quality beef. This increases the sustainability of that land. Plus, cattle also leave behind a nitrogen-rich, organic fertilizer that pro-

vides nutrients for the following year.

Kansas is the number one wheat state in the country. Due to the Kansas climate, winter wheat is often planted in the fall and harvested in the summer. Many people who aren't familiar with winter wheat may mistake the wheat for grass because it may appear as green stubble.

Wheat is an excellent source of winter time forage for cows and calves and more than two million head of cattle will graze winter wheat every year.

When grazed properly, winter wheat can provide nutrition to cattle with little to no impact on the potential yield of the wheat crop. The wheat captures energy from the sun and the cattle convert it into beef. The result is more food grown on the same amount of land with the same amount of resources.

As an added bonus, cattle manure offers a great source of organic fertilizer for the wheat fields.

Immature winter wheat may look like grass to the untrained eye. However, a large number of cattle graze on winter wheat every year. The practice allows wheat farmers to generate additional income by renting their pastures to cattle producers. Or, if a farmer grows both wheat and cattle, they are able to increase their profitability per acre by producing more food per unit of land.

Some fields have bare earth after harvest that is more susceptible to soil erosion. One way to reduce erosion of topsoil is to plant cover crops on a field. Cover crops, like turnips, are plants that provide temporary soil cover and help with soil conservation by reducing topsoil runoff and improving soil structure. They also can help improve the nutrients in the soil and provide some weed control.

While the primary purpose of these crops is to improve soil health, they offer a great source of nutrition to grazing

cattle throughout the winter. These crops not only provide nutrition to cattle, but deer and other species also will graze the plants. Grazing cover crops allows beef producers to add another layer of production to their land that helps offset the cost of planting soil-improving cover crops.

Cattle always need a steady supply of water and that means a lot of extra work for farmers and ranchers when it gets cold. Daily water checks are routine on the farm and often require ice to be broken by hand. In doing so, producers make sure their cattle always have ample access to clean and fresh water.

Just like we need that multivitamin, cattle need some extra nutrients as well, especially in the winter. Depending on the age and nutritional needs of cattle, they will be given vitamins and minerals, molasses or supplemental cubes (like an energy bar for cattle) called "cakes."

Additional supplements like distillers' grains may be fed. Distillers' grains are what is left over after breweries make that delicious craft beer that pairs so well with our favorite steak. While it may seem like waste to people, cattle love it and save millions of pounds of distillers' grains from being thrown away each year. The best part is they are able to take something of zero nutritional value to people and upcycle it into delicious, high-quality beef.

So what do cattle eat during the winter? Cattle eat a balanced diet of forages, crop residue and supplements that are all inedible to humans. Because of their unique digestive tract, cattle are able to convert these products into high-quality beef.

But here's the thing, this doesn't just happen in the winter. Cattle are year-round sustainability rock stars and graze pastures as nature's perfect solar-powered, food-producing machines.

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May Is Beef Month!

Recipe for Steak Diane

Steak Diane
Looking for a classic steakhouse dinner? Steak Diane is the answer. Served with a creamy pan sauce made with mushrooms, shallots, Dijon-style mustard and brandy, this recipe will have you skipping reservations more often.

Ingredients:
2 beef strip steaks, boneless, cut into one-inch thick strips (8 oz. each)
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
1 pound sliced mushrooms
¼ cup minced shallots
2 tablespoons brandy
1/3 cup whipping cream
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

Directions: Combine lemon peel, salt and pepper in small bowl; press evenly onto steaks. Heat large non-



stick skillet over medium heat until hot. Place steaks in skillet; cook 12 to 15 minutes for medium rare (145°F) to medium doneness (160°F), turning occasionally. Remove steaks; keep warm.

Add mushrooms and shallots to same skillet; cook three minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Add

brandy; cook and stir one to two minutes until browned bits attached to skillet are dissolved.

Stir in cream, lemon juice, mustard and Worcestershire sauce; cook three to five minutes until sauce is heated through and slightly thickened. Spoon sauce over steaks.



In the photo above, a newborn calf is shown with its mother while it's being checked over by Matt Perrier of Eureka. Submitted photo

Tending to newborn calves

Cattle across Kansas are born on open pastures like those covering the 150-year-old Dale Banks Angus Ranch in Eureka. During calving season, Matt Perrier, the caretaker of the cattle, wakes at 5:30 a.m. to prepare for a busy morning of checking on newborn calves.

While Matt is a skilled equestrian and will often move cattle on horseback, he chooses his ATV to check on newborn calves. The ATV allows him to carry essential record keeping and medical supplies over very steep and sometimes rocky terrain.

Finding a newborn calf nestled

in the open tall grass is no easy task. Fortunately, Matt knows his cattle and his land. The family rancher knows his cows and the time frame of when they will calve. If he can find the cow, he will find her newborn calf.

"When I weigh calves, I use a soft, loose-fitting sling attached to a hand scale," Matt said. "I try to keep the calf between the cow and me at all times so she can see that I am not harming it. Nearly every cow will stay right with the calf and calmly communicate with it as I am identifying and weighing it."

When Matt is done identifying and weighing the calf, he lets the calf go back to the cow and they walk across the pasture together. The entire process only takes a few minutes, and the cow is usually by the calf's side the entire time.

"While much of the work we do at calving is data collection and identification, we are constantly checking cattle for their welfare," he said. "The selection of cattle with lower birth weights is a huge benefit for our cows' welfare. Smaller calves mean less calving difficulty and stress on the mother."

Six tips for batch cooking beef

Not only can batch cooking save you time and keep you on a budget, planning meals with nutrient-rich beef, vegetables and whole grains provides you and your family with a balanced plate and nutrients like zinc, iron and protein needed to keep your family focused and strong for everyday success.

Choose The Right Cut

"Low and slow" and "set it and forget it" are the Kansas Beef Council's two of its favorite sayings when it comes to beef in the slow cooker. Nothing beats the

convenience of putting a roast into a crockpot, walking away for a few hours and coming back to a delicious meal. However, not all cuts are ideal for slow cooking.

The council recommends the following cuts: chuck roast, shoulder pot roast and bottom round roast.

Plan And Prepare A

Double Portion

Plan and prepare double the portion of grilled meat or a double-portion roast.

Prepare Cooked Grains

Balance out your meals with the fiber found in whole grains. Plan and prepare cooked grains, such as brown rice, quinoa, bulgar, wheat berries, barley or farro.

Eating whole instead of refined grains is connected with better health as some studies show decreases in cardiovascular disease, risk of type two diabetes and improvements in digestive health.

Don't Forget The Veggies

Add lots of veggies to your meal plan. Shoot for seasonal produce and a variety of colors. To avoid cross-contamination and prevent food-borne illness, keep raw meats separate from other fresh ingredients during food preparation and consider using different cutting boards for meat and veggies.

Store Separately

Most of these prepared items

may be stored in the fridge for up to three days. Store cut-up veggies, grains and meats in separate containers and toss together for a quick weeknight dinner. By keeping ingredients separate, you'll be able to toss together a variety of meals using different combinations of flavors from fresh herbs, dried seasonings, sauces, dressings or citrus juice.

Freeze It For Later

Plan to freeze individual meals or individual ingredients that will be eaten later in the week or month. Find freezer storage guidelines at the National Center for Home Food Preservation website.

For the best food quality and food safety, defrost individual meals or ingredients in the refrigerator, not at room temperature.

The Benefits Of Batch Cooking

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May Is Beef Month!



Understanding beef basics

Beef has long been America's favorite protein and rightfully so as it delivers great flavor and powerful nutrition. The following tips will give you a better understanding of how to decipher your choices at the meat case and how to properly store, prepare and cook beef.

Understanding The Label
At the supermarket meat case, each beef package label typically identifies the primal cut and the sub-primal cut name. It also includes the weight, price per pound, total price, sell-by date and safe handling instructions. It may also include a grade, nutrition and preparation information and the country of origin.

Ground Beef Label
Ground beef packages are labeled according to USDA standards. The information on the labels will be expressed as percent lean to percent fat (80 percent lean/20 percent fat, for example).

Ground Beef labels may also indicate which primal cut the beef comes from (such as chuck, round or sirloin).

What To Look For
* Select beef with a bright cherry-red color. Beef in a sealed bag typically has a darker purplish-red color. When exposed to the air, it will turn a bright red.

* Choose beef that is firm to the touch.

* Make sure the package is cold with no holes or tears.

* Choose packages without excessive liquid.

* Purchase beef on or before the sell-by date.

Storing Beef

* When shopping, pick

up beef just before checking out. If it will take longer than 30 minutes to get it home, consider keeping it cold in a cooler.

* Refrigerate or freeze as soon as possible after purchasing.

* If you plan to freeze your beef, think ahead to group weekly meals and re-package into right-size portions for you and your family.

* You can freeze beef in its original packaging up to two weeks. For longer storage, wrap in heavy-duty aluminum foil or place in plastic freezer bags, removing as much air as possible.

* Place beef packages on the lowest shelf in your refrigerator on a plate or tray to catch any juices.

* Label each package with the date, name of beef cut and weight and/or number of servings. Practice the FIFO (first in, first out) inventory system.

* Refrigerate leftovers within two hours after cooking.

* Ground beef is more perishable than roasts or steaks. Plan to use refrigerated ground beef within one to two days of purchase.

Keep It Clean

To avoid cross-contamination and prevent foodborne illnesses, follow these easy steps:

* Wash hands well in hot, soapy water before and after handling raw meat and other fresh foods.

* Keep raw meat and meat juices away from other foods, both in the refrigerator and during preparation.

* Wash all utensils, cutting

surfaces and counters with hot, soapy water after contact with raw meat.

* Keep carving boards separate from other food preparation areas and serving platters.

Handle It Right

* Use a gentle touch with ground beef. Over-mixing will result in burgers, meatballs or meatloaves with a firm, compact texture.

* Before cooking, pat steaks and roasts dry with paper towels for better browning.

* When stir-frying, partially freeze steaks for about 30 minutes for easier slicing.

* When roasting or broiling, place steaks or roasts on a rack in a roasting or broiler pan to allow fat to drip away during cooking.

* For kabobs, cut steak into uniform pieces to ensure even cooking. Pieces do not need to be absolutely square – some may have rounded or uneven edges.

* Thread steak pieces onto skewers leaving small spaces between them. Loose or tight spacing can cause beef to cook unevenly.

Cookware Basics

* Use the pan size specified in the recipe. If the pan is too small, the beef will be crowded and browning will be inhibited. If the pan is too large, overcooking may result.

* Choose heavy, good-quality pans that are thick enough to heat evenly without scorching.

* Nonstick pans are easier to clean and allow for cooking with little or no added fat. Best results are achieved over medium heat with nonstick pans.

Rules of thumb for grazing

By Jody G. Holthaus
Meadowlark Extension
District Agent
Livestock & Natural Resources

This article is too good; I just had to share it with you. It comes from Keith Harmony, who is a range scientist at Hays, and is as follows.



Over the years, I've heard rangeland managers develop rules of thumb, or short phrases, to try to help them simplify decisions that need to be made to manage their pastures. Some of these rules of thumb have merit and scientific or economic data to support the rules of thumb; however, some rules of thumb may be unfounded and lack informational support.

The following is a list of some common rules of thumb, along with an explanation of whether or not the rule of thumb has any merit or basis of support.

Thumbs Up means it's a rule of thumb with merit, and a Thumbs Down indicates the rule of thumb lacks support and has room for improvement.

A Thumbs Up and a Thumbs Down means that arguments may be made for and against the rule of thumb.

1. Take Half and Leave Half. Thumbs Up. This is probably the most common and most important rule of thumb for rangeland managers to follow. Clipping studies and grazing studies have both shown that when about 50 percent of the growing season's top growth is removed, animal performance and vegetative production are at near optimal

levels, and performance can be sustained over a long period of time.

At the right stocking rate, half of the 50 percent of the growth that is removed during the growing season, or 25 percent of the total growth for the year, is actually ingested by grazing animals. The other 25 percent of the total growth that disappears does so as a consequence of trampling, defecation, wildlife use, insect feeding and natural senescence and weathering of the plant material.

The 50 percent of total growth that should remain standing through the growing season is needed for leaves to continue to photosynthesize to produce carbohydrates for new leaf material, for maintaining and producing new root growth and for storage during the dormant season to serve as a source of energy to initiate new plant growth the next season.

The right stocking rate for a pasture balances forages availability with animal removal to achieve this concept of take half and leave half on a sustainable basis.

2. You Can't Overgraze and Make Money. Thumbs Up. Pastures that are overgrazed produce lower net returns than pastures that are stocked at a moderate rate using the take half and leave half concept. Greatest net returns per acre will be experienced when, collectively, the greatest number of animals

achieve their most efficient individual gain animal production and economic return.

This is also the stocking rate where total pasture gain on a per acre basis is usually at its greatest point of efficiency. As the stocking rate increases further, additional animals cause enough competition for high-quality forage or competition for enough quantity of forage, that individual performance is reduced.

This results in production per acre increasing because more animals are on pasture, but production per acre increases at a decreasing rate because each individual animal will gain fewer total pounds.

Increasing the stocking rate further and removing more vegetation results in even more competition and lower individual animal gain, and animal gain per acre will eventually even start to decline. Grazing animals at high stocking rates don't achieve great enough gain to cover their own costs of production, so net returns plummet. Returns per acre and per animal are at their greatest level when total gain is most efficient to cover the costs of production.

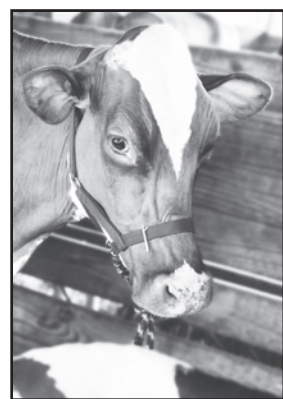
Grazing studies have shown that the greatest returns per acre are usually achieved at a moderate stocking rate that takes half and leaves half, and are least with heavy stocking when more than half of the standing forage is annually removed.

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May Is Beef Month!

AG WEEK: Trades starting to stabilize

By Matt Hines

Livestock futures finished last week on a higher note as slaughter levels are finally stabilizing and hopefully soon to improve. Cash feedlot trade was again very light last week, but higher at \$105 live with dressed trade at \$150.



The six-week total now for unemployment is up to 30.3 million new claims with 3.84 million new claims added for the week ending April 25, the lowest weekly total since March 21.

Compared to last week, steers and heifers sold steady to \$4 lower except for 700 to 900-pound heifers in the North and South-Central regions being steady to \$2 higher. Positive moves in stocker and feeder cattle at auctions will continue to move those calves to new ownership. Many problems can exist with that, as order buyers may only have instructions to buy limited amounts, so demand can wane at individual auctions from time to time.

For the week, Friday, April 24 through Friday, May 1, June live cattle were up \$4.62, August was up \$3.65, May feeder cattle was up \$.37, August were up \$1.25 and June lean hogs were up \$11.17. Boxed Beef, Choice was up \$84.11 at \$377.48 and Select was up \$78.11 at \$357.13. Pork carcass cutout was up \$89.26 at \$106.61.

Cattle slaughter for the week was estimated at 425,000 head, down 40,000 from the week previous and down 248,000 from last year. Hog slaughter for the week was estimated at 1,545,000 head, down 441,000 compared to the week previous and down 821,000 compared to a year

ago. June live cattle moved into a new recent high on Monday at \$89.72 with resistance next up at about \$92 and support at \$84.60. May feeders were still squeezing yet holding a higher trend this past month with support at about \$115 and resistance up at \$124.

Lean hog futures continue sharply higher with the June contract now more than \$24 off its lows from mid-April and resistance next up at \$74.

**Monday, May 4
Livestock Futures Settlements**

- June live cattle were up \$.82 at \$88.07 and August was up \$.50 at \$93.05.

- May feeder cattle were up \$1.25 at \$119.07 and August was up \$1.32 at \$128.97.

- June lean hogs were up \$2.80 at \$65.50.

Grains were lower to end the week and mixed week over week. Corn continues to see pressure with ethanol demand low, planting pace ahead of average and fears that we may see USDA push new crop ending stocks up more than 3 billion bushels later this month.

Soybeans continue to gain on corn and export sales are good, especially this time

of year with ample supply available from South America, but with competitive pricing compared to U.S. values.

Wheat is mixed with Kansas City hard red wheat (HRW) higher for the week, but soft red wheat (SRW) Chicago is lower as that spread continues to come in. Markets will be looking at updated forecasts here this week across dry areas of Europe and Russia.

For the week, Friday, April 24 through Friday, May 1, May corn was down \$.04¼, July was down \$.04½, May soybeans were up \$.15, July was up \$.10, May Kansas City wheat was up \$.07¼, July was down \$.00¼, May Chicago wheat was down \$.05¼, July was down \$.14, May soybean meal was down \$.30 per ton and July was down \$.10 per ton.

Grain export sales were very good last week, as shipments this past week for corn and grain sorghum were above the average needed, but soybeans and wheat were both disappointing. The six-to-10-day outlook shows above normal temperatures for the western third of the U.S., normal to below normal here in the Plains and well below normal for the eastern half of

the U.S. with above normal precipitation across most of the country.

Outside markets were mixed to start the week with soybeans the leader lower to start this week. Brazil reported record soybean exports for April and the banter between China and U.S. continues to build surrounding COVID-19. May grain contracts are now in delivery with daily limits removed and volume thin.

July corn is still holding the long-term lower trend with the contract low down at \$3.09 and support right around \$3. July soybeans are also holding a lower trend going back to January with the contract low at \$8.18½. Support next is down at \$8.08 with resistance at \$8.56.

July Kansas City wheat support is at \$4.75, then \$4.69, with resistance at \$4.89. July Chicago wheat is trending lower since mid-March with support next around at \$4.95 and resistance at \$5.29.

**Monday, May 4
Grain Futures Settlements**

- July corn was down \$.03 at \$3.15½ and New Crop December was down \$.02¼ at \$3.34.

- July soybeans were down \$.13 at \$8.36½ and New Crop November was down \$.09¼ at \$8.45¼.

- July Kansas City wheat was up \$.04 at \$4.87 and July Chicago wheat was up \$.03 at \$5.19½.

- July Soybean meal was down \$4.10 at \$283.30 per ton.

Note: There is risk of loss in trading commodity futures and options. Matt Hines is a licensed commodity broker for Loewen and Associates, Inc. of Manhattan, specializing in grain and livestock operations as well as commercial consulting clients since 2004. He can be reached at (785) 289-0036.

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(First published in The Holton Recorder, Holton, Kan., on Wednesday, May 6, 2020.)

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FAQ about COVID and beef

Q: Are animals responsible for COVID-19 in people?

The predominant route of transmission of COVID-19 appears to be from human to human.

According to the CDC, there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets can spread COVID-19.

Current evidence suggests that the COVID-19 virus has an animal source. Ongoing investigations are important for identifying the animal source.

Q: Can the bovine coronavirus vaccine be used to treat people?

Bovine coronavirus is not the same as COVID-19. There is no evidence to suggest that the bovine coronavirus vaccine has any effect on humans or the COVID-19 strain.

Q: Will beef from cattle vaccinated for bovine coronavirus help build immunity against COVID-19?

There is no evidence to suggest that this is the case.

Even if a vaccine for bovine coronavirus is used in cattle, there is a 21-day or 60-day meat withdrawal period, depending on the vaccine, required prior to processing. This ensures the end product is safe for consumption and no medication would be present in the beef.

Q: What impact is COVID-19 having on the beef supply?

Cattle farmers and ranchers continue to produce high-quality beef.

As COVID-19 continues to spread and impact economic activity, there is a great deal of uncertainty in terms of what it means for the beef industry, including on supply and demand.

Q: Can I become sick with COVID-19 from food?

USDA is not aware of any reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. However, it is always important to follow good hygiene practices when handling or preparing foods.

According to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), meat from healthy livestock that is prepared and served in accordance with good hygiene and food safety principles remains safe to eat.

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Biden wins Democratic primary election in KS

Joe Biden won the Democratic presidential primary in Kansas that the state party conducted exclusively by mail because of COVID-19 (coronavirus), it was reported.

The former vice president had been expected to prevail in the May 2 vote count and capture a majority of the state's delegates to the Democrats' national nominating commission. Biden took 76.9 percent of the vote.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders was still in the race when the Kansas party began mailing ballots at the end of March, but he suspended his campaign and endorsed Biden.

Biden won 29 delegates and Sanders got 10 in Kansas, inching Biden closer to the number of delegates he needs to clinch the Democratic nomination. He has a total of 1,435 delegates and needs 1,991 to win the nomination on the first ballot at the party's national convention

this summer. Biden is likely to reach that delegate count in June after many states postponed their primaries. Sanders had 984 delegates after the Kansas primary, according to the count by the Associated Press.

Democratic leaders originally had planned to set up polling places across the state in addition to allowing mail balloting. But they scrapped plans for in-person voting at the end of March after Gov. Laura Kelly issued a statewide stay-at-home order, and the change nearly tripled participation over four years ago, with 34.7 percent of registered Democrats casting ballots.

Besides Biden and Sanders, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard also were on the Kansas ballot. Voters also could choose to be uncommitted.

Biden received 110,041 votes in Kansas while Sanders received 33,142.

Family Life: How to tame that sweet tooth

By Nancy C. Nelson
Meadowlark Extension
District Agent
Family Life

It is easy to get too much sugar in your diet. It seems like the more of it we eat, the more we crave sugar. Foods with natural sugar, such as fruit, are still part of a healthy diet.



Experts agree, however, that limiting added sugar has many benefits, including weight maintenance, heart health, diabetes prevention and management and a stronger immune system.

People in the Blue Zones eat sugar intentionally, not by habit or accident. Their diet contains about the same amount of natural sugar as ours in the U.S., but their consumption of added sugar is only about one-fifth of the amount that we consume.

Here is good sound advice

on limiting added sugar in your diet:

- Read labels. Sugar is hiding in pre-packaged and processed foods. Check the ingredient list for corn syrup and sweetener, molasses, honey, malt sugar, cane juice, brown or malt sugar, fruit juice concentrates and sugar molecules ending in "ose" (sucrose, dextrose, etc.)
- Save cookies, candy and bak-

ery items for special occasions and ideally as part of a meal.

- Limit sugar added to coffee, tea and other beverages. Consuming intensely sweetened beverages can leave you craving foods and drinks with more sweetness.
- When baking, cut the sugar in the recipe by one third to one half.
- Seek out whole foods. These

will satisfy you, and they are full of nutrients.

- Be patient. The first few days you eat less sugar will be the hardest. Try getting more sleep, choose healthful carbs (whole grains, fruits, nuts, seeds) and find support.

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What Should Retirees Consider Doing in a Down Market?

The health aspect of the coronavirus affects everyone – we're all concerned about our well-being and those of our loved ones and communities. However, the economic impact may vary among different age groups – and if you're retired or about to retire, you might have some special concerns about starting to draw income from your investments when the financial markets are down. What moves should you consider making?



Shannon Wright

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Review your strategy (and avoid making major changes).** During a market downturn, you might be tempted to "do something" – and for many people, that "something" is selling stocks to cut their losses. But this is more of an emotional response than a logical one, because your stocks are long-term investments, and by selling them when they're down, you're basically locking in your losses. Instead, try to address your current income needs by the cash, cash equivalents and short-term fixed-income investments in your portfolio, along with other sources, such as Social Security, dividends and interest, and even your pension, if you have one.

• **Review your withdrawal rate.** When you retire, you need to determine how much you can withdraw each year from your retirement accounts, such as your IRA and 401(k), without running the risk of outliving your money. Before the market downturn, you might have established an appropriate withdrawal rate for your needs. Suppose, for example, this rate was 4%. However, given the recent fluctuations in the markets, your portfolio's value may have declined, meaning your withdrawals may be higher as a percentage of your portfolio. Therefore, you might consider adjusting your withdrawal rate downward, or, as an alternative, look for ways to cut down on your spending in the short term. With the stay-at-home measures being undertaken across the country, you may already have cut down spending in areas such as traveling, entertainment and dining out, so you may only have to make a few adjustments.

- **Review your reliance rate.** Your reliance rate is how much you rely on your investment portfolio for your income needs. For example, if you need \$60,000 in income each year and you're getting \$40,000 of that from your portfolio, your reliance rate is

66%. The higher your reliance rate, the more sensitive you may be to fluctuations in investment prices. If your risk tolerance has been greatly tested by the recent downturn and you don't have much flexibility with your expenses, you might look for ways of lowering your reliance rate, such as certain annuities, which can provide a guaranteed lifetime income regardless of what's happening in the financial markets.

You may want to consult with a financial professional to discuss the above suggestions and determine what other moves you might need to make. As a retiree, or near-retiree, it can be unsettling to start tapping into your resources when the financial markets are so turbulent. But if you've prepared or you're willing to explore new courses of action, you can move into your golden years without getting unduly tarnished.

This article was written by Edward Jones, member SIPC for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Shannon Wright
financial advisor
118 W. 5th St., Holton, KS
785-364-4662

MOTHER'S DAY WORD SEARCH

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O K V Y S E E A Q H I W O G F F S E D T
L B E V M K S V N Q E I H G V G E R L E
C N R N T M A A O R L R K G N C K A O U
R G K E N C A A C L E H R I F S P P L Q
R E R T A E O M D W B T T M P P H M B U
C L H C R K R Y A W O F A T E E F E E O
V D N T U F F D B E I H T M Y C M P D B
A K G T O R P A L G U E S T V I E H E B
Q Q Q T O M B Q S I K D P A U A A D C I
Q T R H N H D W I T H S L E B L L W D F
M V D K C E Y N A G E C A R W K N P R L
K N C E R A W F A S M F H T C I V G L C
H M Y O D K W Q O R K A D A D O P T E D
Q O N N W K P R W T G T S W H P Y A O Q
L O U H C V A U I W A W G T B C Y M L O
H S P B A B Y F A V O R I T E S U M O M
M D K W H E O U I E T H H C H M P H E P

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Puzzle Solution On
Classified Page!

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Immanuel Lutheran Church

By Esther L. Ideker

The fourth Sunday after Easter, Good Shepherd Sunday, was observed on May 3 and provided online.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Pastor Michael Van Velzer conducted the service, which opened with the hymn "The King Of Love My Shepherd Is." "And so through all the length of days, Thy goodness faileth never; Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise, Within Thy House forever."

Following the confession and absolution, introit, Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis and collect for the day, Pastor Van Velzer read the Old Testament lesson from Acts 2:42-47. Psalm 23, the Shepherd Psalm, was spoken.

The Epistle lesson was from 1 Peter 2:19-23 and the holy gospel was read from John 10:1-10. The Apostles' Creed was professed. The sermon hymn was "What A Friend We Have In Jesus."

Pastor Van Velzer's sermon was based on John 10:1-10. In the gospel text, the Lord compares His holy, Christian church to a flock of sheep, compares Himself to the door of the sheep pen and the shepherd who enters into the pen and calls His sheep leading them out to pasture. What an ideal, pleasant picture.

But, there are thieves, robbers and strangers determined to lead this holy flock of Jesus astray to steal, kill and destroy them. Every story has trials, troubles, problems and some degree of pain and suffering. So when Jesus announces that He has come so that His holy flock of little lambs "may have life and have it abundantly," we wonder, what does that mean?

The word "abundant" means "in excess," more than you know what to do with. This is the life that Jesus gave you in your baptism where He brought you into His sheep pen and made you one of His holy flock. He called you by name and said, "I am your Shepherd and you are my little lamb. Now listen to my voice and follow me that you may have what I have already given to you – life in abundance."

His way leads to the cross, of course, only because there are robbers, thieves and strangers in this world – and we have listened to their voice and followed them. The sheep realize that although this eternal life in abundance is theirs even

now, there is still suffering pain, shame, sorrow, tears and death. The sound of His voice in the ears of His holy flock comforts them in their suffering and pain and cross bearing and gives them courage in their trials and temptations.

His gracious voice – "I lay down my life for you. I will never leave you nor forsake you. We do not travel alone but as a holy flock. And the holy flock hear their Good Shepherd say to them, 'Come to Me, you are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.' He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelations 21:1-4.)

The offertory was sung. In the prayers of the church, our Blessed Shepherd was asked to grant us devotion that we may abide in the teaching of the apostles and honor the fellowship of the church.

Grant good government and good leaders who will honor God's purpose, protect God's people, serve the cause of justice and defend our liberty against all threats. Inspire and equip the church and its ministers to speak faithfully and boldly God's word.

Bless all artists, artisans, composers, musicians, craftsmen and writers, that they may employ all their skills in service to the gospel. Hear us on behalf of all those who suffer in body and mind and who grieve those whom they love.

The Great Good Shepherd was implored to hear God's sheep and answer prayers with mercy, granting us those things profitable for us and our salvation and keeping from us all things harmful. The Lord's Prayer was spoken.

The Service of the Sacrament followed. "Come, Let Us Eat" was the distribution hymn. Following the Nunc Dimittis, thanksgiving and benediction, the service closed with the hymn "Today Your Mercy Calls Us." "O all embracing Mercy, O ever open door, What should we do without You, when heart and eye run o'er? When all things seem against us, to drive us to despair, We know one gate is open, One ear will hear our prayer."

Celebrating birthdays this week are Pam Schumann, May 4, and Abby Brey, May 6.

Area Health And Medical Directory

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FAMILY PRACTICE ASSOCIATES

Joel Hutchins, M.D.
Clint Colberg, M.D.
Erin Locke, M.D.
Malia Warner, M.D.
LaDonna Schmidt, M.D.
Michael Engelken, M.D.
DeAnna Goff, APRN
Jamie Stuke, APRN
Ashley Reinecke, APRN
Jill Collins, APRN
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Family and Consumer Sciences

Temporary lifestyle changes as a result of tough times

By Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension
District Agent, Family and
Consumer Sciences

In addition to creating a heightened awareness of personal health and safety, the outbreak of the coronavirus that causes the COVID-19 disease has put a pinch, at the least, on many families' home budgets.



Elizabeth Kiss, a family resource management specialist and associate professor at Kansas State University's College of Health and Human Sciences, said that developing a plan for the family's income is key to making ends meet during tough financial times.

"You can direct your financial affairs by taking a close look at your obligations and making informed decisions about what to do," she said.

Kiss and colleagues have developed a series of publications titled "When Your Income Drops," which is now available online, providing guidance to families and individuals who suddenly face a drop in income due to unemployment, reduction in wages, termination of support payments and other emergencies-some of which have been witnessed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The publication (<https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3498.pdf>) is available through the K-State Research and Extension bookstore at <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3498.pdf>.

Kiss says there are "Five C's" to help make ends meet:

- **Control.** "Control as much of the situation as you can," Kiss said. "Don't panic or waste energy blaming yourself or others. Remember that you and your family can take control of your actions."

She notes that it's natural for individuals to take some time to get over the initial shock, but then start making plans to work around the shortfall.

- **One way to cut down anxiety** is to assure yourself you are doing the best you can with your family resources," Kiss said. "Recognize that your life will be different for a time, but you and your family can still manage financial affairs rather than have them manage you."

- **Claim.** Check with local agencies to determine what benefits or assistance programs for which you may be eligible.

- **If the decrease in your income** is from unemployment, you can start by applying for unemployment benefits at <https://getkansasbenefits.gov/>," Kiss said. Other programs that can help include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicare and others.

- **Communicate.** Let family members know what your limitations may be. Perhaps other family members who are still earning an income can contribute more, or maybe the family

member no longer earning an income can use a hobby or skill for temporary income.

"Once you know how much income will be coming in, make a list of your expected expenses," Kiss said. "Be sure all family members participate in discussions about expenditures. Decide what the family needs next week, next month, and over two or three months."

- **Confer.** Call your creditors and explain your situation; don't simply default on payments.

"Find out what happens if you miss payments," and if there is a grace period for making payments," Kiss said. "With this knowledge, contact creditors before they contact you. Creditors will be more likely to believe you and help you if you make contact early."

- **Kiss notes that it's wise to make a plan to first pay creditors** who are likely to garnish your wages, impose a high finance charge, repossess items, cut off basic services or who are owed a large amount.

- **Change.** Be prepared to make changes to your lifestyle temporarily so that you can maintain basic essentials.

"Look for ways that you and family members can use time, energy, talents and knowledge to reduce expenses," Kiss said. "Take better care of things you already have. Recycle clothing. Swap items and services with a friend or neighbor."

"To make it through hard times, your family will need to make informed decisions and work together to carry out these decisions."

Crops and Soils

Tackling roughleaf dogwood

By David G. Hallauer
Meadowlark Extension
District Agent, Crops and
Soils/Horticulture

Sometimes reaching a height of almost 15 feet, Roughleaf dogwood is very well adapted to almost any of our grazing season environments. It is often found in clusters along fence rows and stream edges as well as open grazing areas, and once established, it can be very difficult to stay ahead of. It is identifiable by its flat-topped clusters of white flowers usually seen starting in late May/early June.



Roughleaf dogwood typically isn't found in regularly burned warm-season grass pastures. In cool-season pastures, or less frequently burned warm-season stands, the plant's tendency to leaf out after the optimum burn window limits the ability of fire to control it. Once it takes hold, only multi-year late spring burns will reduce stands.

Chemical control is an option, but a multi-year program is required. Foliar applications should be made between the flower bud state and early seed production. Many of our more common single product treatments (triclopyr, picloram, dicamba, etc.) seldom result in greater than 25 percent mortality rates. Even high volume multi-product treatments may only provide 50 percent control.

For best results, consider products like PastureGard HL (triclopyr + fluroxypyr), Surmount (picloram + fluroxypyr) or even a combination of Grazon P+D and Remedy Ultra, all applied with water and a non-ionic surfactant when possible.

As with the buckbrush control recommendations (<https://bit.ly/2YnZ6TP>) last week, remember that application timing is important. Picloram is a restricted use pesticide and requires a Private Pesticide Applicator's License to purchase/apply.

Additional product information can be found in the 2020 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide available from your District Office or at <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/SRP1155.pdf>. Always read and follow label directions.

Spring Lawn Care: Pay Attention to Mowing Height

There are lots of things we can do to make our lawn healthier. We fertilize. We apply weed killer. Often overlooked, however, is the importance of mow-

ing height. Most of our turf grass species are cool-season in nature – predominantly fescue and bluegrass. These cool-season species have an erect growth habit and tolerate low mowing less favorably than warm-season species.

Hot weather is more stressful to cool-season grasses than warm-season grasses, too. That means that not only is our base mowing height important, but our mowing height should be adjusted through the season to help insulate the ground against heat, increase the turf's food-producing area and encourages roots to penetrate more deeply into the soil.

Mow too low, and you increase stress on the turf, which can require additional watering. Done too often, you'll end up with thin, weak turf more susceptible to weeds.

A good mowing height for cool-season turf lawns is two and a half to three inches. Mowing at the lower end of the height range might be okay now, but plan to raise deck height as warmer weather arrives.

A good rule of thumb is to never remove more than one-third of the height of the turf at one time. To attain a three-inch mowing height, that means mowing when the grass reaches no more than four and a half inches.

CHCS resumes surgeries, other services

Community HealthCare System announced that it would resume surgeries and wellness visits at its hospitals and clinics on Monday, May 4, it was reported.

Many restrictions and precautions will remain in place to protect patients and staff from the spread of COVID-19, but those who need care no longer need to wait.

Like other healthcare facilities, Community HealthCare System, or CHCS, postponed non-emergency surgeries, yearly checkups, and other elective procedures when the statewide stay-at-home order was issued and the COVID-19 threat loomed large. Although COVID-19 spread remains a possibility, our area has seen relatively few cases and has experienced minimal community spread.

"Our medical staff has deemed it safe to reopen procedures with screening and guidelines in place to protect patients and associates," said Todd Willert, CHCS CEO.

CHCS is following guidelines from the American College of Surgeons, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. These include screening of patients, maintaining social distancing in waiting areas, offering cloth masks to all who enter CHCS facilities, maintaining extra cleaning and sanitizing procedures adopted for the last few weeks, remaining closed to visitors except under certain circumstances, and ensuring that staff wear appropriate personal protective equipment, or PPE.

Senior care facilities, including Redbud Plaza Assisted Living in Onaga, Eastridge Skilled Nursing Facility in Centralia, and St. Marys Manor in St. Marys, will remain closed to visitors. Fitness centers will also remain closed.

According to Willert, reopening requires careful planning and a phased approach.

"We will be closely monitoring our supplies of PPE and

working to ensure that we are keeping everyone safe. We will also remain vigilant, because COVID-19 will be with us for a long time, and we know it can start to spread again in the coming months until a vaccine is available," Willert said.

Surgery staff will prioritize scheduling procedures for patients with symptoms or high risk factors. Clinics will maintain separate areas for patients who are suspected to have COVID-19 and those who are not, and they will offer wellness visits and visits for sick patients at different times of day.

"We have precautions in place at all clinics to maintain physical distance and to sanitize surfaces between visits. Our clinics all have designated times and spaces for sick vs. well patients," said Melissa Talley, CHCS chief practice management officer.

"Patients can call their individual clinic to make appointments and ask questions about new procedures. Our staff is eager to help," Talley said.

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