

River Valley District

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K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

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UNCONVENTIONAL GRAZING STRATEGIES TO STRETCH SUMMER PASTURE

Rainfall has been spotty at times, but overall this has been another year we haven't been forced to find additional forage resources. However, some producers might have taken the opportunity to expand their herds and fell a little short on forage availability. There can be many different times when ranchers are looking for opportunities to stretch summer pasture. If you fall into this category, this article might stimulate some ideas for unconventional grazing and stretching that summer pasture just a little bit longer.

Touring around the area, some pastures are looking pretty short in some areas. While we had decent amount of rainfall, there is still a possibility for overgrazing or leaving the cattle on just a little longer than planned. One way to estimate forage availability is to imagine pastures receiving little rain for the rest of the summer. The question that can then be asked is, "Will I have enough forage available not only for this year but also a sufficient base amount for the years to come?". If the answer is no then cattle are either going to struggle or producers are going to be forced to feed hay until corn stalks or winter pastures are ready for grazing. The decisions that are made this year will not only affect this year's forage but the years to come as well.



With that said, there are management strategies that can be implemented now to stretch current pastures and lower that risk of running out later this year. One option is to remove the forage by haying it in order to ensure less of a risk of overgrazing and result in less forage waste that comes along with grazing. The second option that might work even better could be windrow grazing. In order to do this effectively, cut and windrow the amount of pasture the cattle might need for roughly a week's worth of forage. The next step is to build an electric fence that gives them just a day or two's worth of forage. After they finish that piece, just pick up the electric fence and move it down the windrow. As they near the end of that windrow, then lay down another patch and repeat the strip grazing.

Producers have found that windrow grazing can sometimes double the number of grazing days compared to regular rotational grazing patterns. So, if your operation is seeking out ways to stretch out that summer pasture, then this might be a great option. Please contact Katelyn Brockus out of the Washington office with any questions, 785-325-2121 or kbrockus@ksu.edu.

SELECTING SUMMER ANNUAL FORAGE GRASSES

One common question that I have been getting in the office this year is how do I extend my grazing season this year. Producers have also asked for guidance on how to manage more cattle on fewer amounts of land. Maybe the situation is that producers have expanded and lost rented ground this year, but they are unwilling to sell the cattle. Let's look at some options to be able to utilize the land as much as possible through selecting summer annual forage grasses.

This can be a tough and overwhelming choice when it comes to selecting which forage best fits your operation. There are a plethora of options that include: sudangrass, sorghum-sudan hybrids, forage sorghum, foxtail millet, pearl millet, and teff. Each one has its own strengths and weaknesses, but it is my job to assist the producer in making the best choice for their operation. It is important to not base a decision off of what grew well last year at the neighbors down the road, but rather to make the decision based off of how the producer plans to use it in their particular operation. This could look very different for you than neighboring producers.

Let's say for an example that the producer is most interested in using this summer annual as pasture. The best choice in this scenario is probably going to be sudangrass or pearl millet. They are both leafy, grow rapidly, and they contain less danger of prussic acid poisoning when compared to the other options.

Now let's go over a different example. Let's say you wanted to use the summer annual for hay or green chop. The best option in this scenario is to select sorghum sudan hybrids or pearl millet because they yield well and will continue to have good feed value after being cut two or three times. In this case, tonnage is important so these options would be realistic. However, if the producer has sandy soils then foxtail millet may be a better choice for summer hay. Foxtail will dry fast, doesn't regrow after cutting, but it handles dry soils well. Cane hay is also an option that produces high tonnage; however, it is lower in feed value and dries more slowly after cutting than the hybrids or millets. If a rancher is looking for a high quality horse hay then teff might be a good option as it really soft and leafy.

There is one more option for planting summer annuals. Let's say you plan to chop silage. The best option in this case would be to choose the forage sorghums, especially the hybrids with high grain production. Forage sorghums can't be beat when it comes to tonnage and feed value.

As producers can see, if you break down these summer annuals into what best fits your operation, then the answer becomes more clear as to which forage should be selected. Feel free to contact Katelyn Brockus with any questions pertaining to this article, ideal planting times, or prussic acid and nitrate toxicity concerns.

TOE ABSCESSES IN FEEDLOT CATTLE

Lameness is a significant disease challenge in feedlot cattle. It has been estimated that 16% of all treatments, 5% of deaths, and 70% of animals for railer slaughter is due to lameness. One cause of lameness that often goes underdiagnosed is toe abscesses. This issue goes by a number of different names such as toe tip necrosis or P3 (third phalangeal bone) necrosis. It can affect heifers, steers, calves, and yearlings. They typically occur and present during the first 3 weeks after arrival into the feedlot. Toe abscesses can occur on any foot, but tend to be more common on the rear feet.

Cause—This disease process is most commonly seen in young cattle coming into the feedlot from wet lush pastures. Although several other factors can play a role in this disease. Wet soft conditions can lead to softening of the sole tissue predisposing the foot to damage. Rough frozen ground with sharp edges can also be a factor. Flighty cattle or poor cattle handling can also be a culprit. Couple that with rough concrete flooring that can grind off layers of sole, and it leads to prime conditions for toe abscesses to occur. Standing long periods of time on concrete floors, as well as sharp metal edges in the floors of working facilities have also been indicated as the cause of toe abscesses. Bacteria invades the underlying tissue once the sole has been separated from the hoof. As the infection sets in, the bone in the foot may be involved. If left untreated, the infection will spread up the leg and can cause multiple abscesses in different areas of the body.

Diagnosis—Toe abscesses are a very painful condition. Cattle will tend to stand in abnormal positions to take pressure off of the affected toe. They may appear simply stiff and show signs of shifting lameness. The source of the lameness is difficult to see due to no signs of swelling. Finding the affected toe requires an examination of the foot. Lifting the foot with soft nylon rope and a pulley off the chute may be the most effective way to conduct this exam. The toe with the abscess will be very painful. Applying pressure with hoof testers, or even a large set of pliers, to the affected toe will cause the calf to immediately pull away. Upon closer examination slight separation of the sole and the hoof wall may be evident. As the disease progresses, swelling will begin to appear on the coronary band (just above the hoof) on the affected toe.

Treatment—Successful treatment is heavily dependent on early diagnosis. The main stay treatment has been to carefully nip the tip of the toe to allow drainage of the pressure causing abscess. Many times, only a small amount of the hoof needs to be removed. Going so deep that the toe bleeds allows bacteria from the environment to invade leading to a detrimental outcome. Use of a long acting antimicrobial is indicated to minimize handling post treatment. Perhaps the most important factor that determines the treatment outcome is moving these animals to a dry well bedded pen to rest and hopefully recover.

Credit to A.J. Tarpoff, DVM, MS, Extension Veterinarian

IDENTIFYING WEAK ALFALFA STANDS

While touring the district, alfalfa fields have been catching the eye. Some of the stands are looking great this year while some are struggling. The past few years have been tough on alfalfa fields. Some of the plants have managed to survive through the harsh conditions while some have endured too much stress. Some of the stress came from harvest and some from insect damage or leaf diseases. Unfortunately, all of these issues combined along with an old or weak stand in the spring may simply have too much root disease and not enough of a healthy root system to keep going.

If you are unsure of how much longer your stand of alfalfa will be productive, then it might be a good time to check your fields and consider if they need replaced. This could mean with a new seeding this August or next spring. It has appeared to be very prevalent that producers are struggling with weeds this year. If this is the case for you, then that is usually a good indication that the stand is getting thin and needs replaced. One positive thing to not forget is after alfalfa, then you can reduce nitrogen on next year's crop by at least 100 pounds per acre!



One way to identify if your alfalfa field needs replaced is by assessing fields with less than 25 shoots per square foot coming from 2 or 3 plants. If you have sub-irrigated or irrigated fields, then you should have over 40 shoots per square foot coming from 4 to 6 plants.

Another good indicator of what state your alfalfa is in is by digging up the roots. Healthy roots should be solid and white with a firm texture. If you have a little bit of browning in the top couple of inches, then you probably don't need to worry yet. However, this can turn into a serious problem within the next year or two. If crowns and taproots show extensive browning and are becoming mushy, then these plants probably won't survive the winter.

So, go take a look at your alfalfa stands and see what path you need to take in making the right decision moving forward. If you have any questions please contact Katelyn Brockus in the Washington office at 785-325-2121 or kbrockus@ksu.edu.

WHEAT STREAK MOSAIC

While Kansas wheat harvest is finished up for this year, it is never too late to learn from the 2017 wheat crop to prepare for the 2018 season. One problem that is predominant in western Kansas, but has sporadic outbreaks in central and eastern Kansas is Wheat Streak Mosaic. Wheat Streak Mosaic is described by its name: it's a "mosaic" or has yellow streaking of the leaves of the wheat plant more towards the center region of the leaf with more overall yellowing towards the leaf tips. Wheat Streak Mosaic is caused by Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus, which is carried by the wheat curl mite. The wheat curl mite causes a rolling of the leaves (similar to the appearance of an onion plant) and potentially reduces test weight and yield by itself. With the combination of damage from wheat curl mite and Wheat Streak Mosaic yield losses, in severe cases, can be reduced by as much as 80% in some instances.



Furthermore, it is vital to realize that the wheat curl mite must be combatted in order to combat Wheat Streak Mosaic. Once wheat is harvested the wheat curl mite needs a new host to survive and often moves to green grassy weeds including: volunteer wheat, green foxtail, rye brome, downy brome, and Japanese brome just to name a few of the grasses that make a good host. During the postharvest time, it is important to eliminate these grassy weeds in the field if possible within two weeks of planting the new wheat crop. Another control method is to avoid planting wheat too early; planting after the "hessian fly free date" reduces the likelihood that the wheat will emerge when there are larger numbers of wheat curl mites that are more likely to migrate to the new wheat plants. Moreover, it is a good idea to plant wheat varieties with moderate or high levels of resistance to wheat streak mosaic such as Joe, Clara CL, and Oakely CI. However, it is important to note that with increasing temperatures (above 75 degrees F) the resistant wheat varieties effectiveness declines. Chemical controls (such as labeled miticides and insecticides) tend not to be very effective at controlling the wheat curl mite.

RISK & PROFIT CONFERENCE

August 17-18, Manhattan

<http://www.agmanager.info/risk-and-profit-conference>

SOIL COMPACTION

Since wheat harvest is primarily finished up across Kansas, some are now looking at the possible next step, tillage. Some associate tillage with soil compaction, which can be the case in some instances, but doesn't necessarily have to be the circumstance. There are practices that can minimize soil compaction on the farm whether a producer is conventional tillage, conservation tillage, or no-till.

To begin with, it is important to understand soil on a deeper level. Soil texture is relevant to soil compaction and is essentially the percentage of sand, silt, and clay within a soil. Many producers are familiar with heavy, clay soil areas on their farms, or so called "gumbo" areas. Heavy, clay soils are notorious for compaction because of the size of the soil particles. Clay soil particles are like tiny, flat plates that stack on each other, thus creating very compact soils. I like to give this analogy that relates the size of soil particles to objects more easily visualized: sand is like a silver dollars, silt is like a dime, and clay is like a period at the end of a sentence on this document. Now that isn't necessarily to scale, but it gives you the idea of what we are talking about. The reason clay becomes more compact, is because it has more surface area and less area for air to be trapped. Soil moisture is also a key component to soil compaction. There is a moisture range that leads to most compaction. Too little moisture content in the soil causes high friction between the particles reducing the soils ability to compact, but to wet of soil doesn't compact well either and tends to smear because it has very little air in the soil to allow for compaction. The moisture level of the soil that will usually compress the most and lead to the most compactions, is soil that when compressed with the hands forms a ball that doesn't break apart. It is best to till soils when they are dry enough that the compressed ball will break apart or even slightly drier. If the soil is too dry and loose, the producer risks the chance of wind erosion.

Tillage practices such as ripping (subsoiling) and chisel plowing are optimized in soils that are slightly drier due to the "shattering effect" of the top soil in between the shanks of the implement. Tillage practices, such as chisel plowing and subsoiling, should be utilized when trying to rid a field of a "tillage" or "hard pan", which is a layer of compacted soil below the surface. For shallower tillage pans, the use of a chisel plow will suffice, however if the tillage pan is deeper, subsoiling would be a better option. However, another option that would be appealing for the no-till produce would be the planting of a cover crop that included deep-rooting tillage radishes. The taproots of tillage radishes promote better water infiltration and allows for deeper freezing/thawing action alleviating even more soil compaction deeper in the soil profile. For anybody who still uses a moldboard plow on terraces for maintenance, plowing around six inches deep is ideal in most situations. As for proper moisture to minimize compaction plowing, watching the moldboards and seeing if they are scouring (or being left with a smooth and shiny polish) is a simple approach. If the moldboards have a smeary look (assuming the moldboards are rust free), then the soil is more than likely too wet to be plowed.

Moreover, as for minimizing soil compaction across the field, there are a few extra steps in order to achieve this goal. The use of duals (when able to) increases the surface area and reduces compaction across the field. The use of radial tires instead of bias-ply tires also warrants decreased compaction resulting from an increased tire footprint. Additionally, keeping tires properly inflated will help to reduce soil compaction. Stop by and visit with me at the Concordia office, call 785-243-8185, or email thusa@ksu.edu with any questions.

BLOSSOM END ROT

Do you have tomatoes with a sunken, brown leathery patch on the bottom of the fruit? If so, then you probably have blossom end rot. Blossom end rot is not a disease; it is a condition that is caused by a lack of calcium in the soil. In Kansas this is not necessarily the case, because Kansas soils are derived from limestone, which is partially made up of calcium. So, what causes blossom end rot in Kansas? Actually, there are a number of possible causes, especially on tomatoes. Let's look at some of the other possible causes of blossom end rot.

The first possible cause could be that the tomato tops have outgrown the root system. During cooler spring weather the root system can keep up, but when it turns hot and dry, the plant tries to keep itself alive by sending water; with the calcium it carries; to the leaves and the fruit is bypassed. The plant responds to the heat and lack of calcium with new root growth which should allow the condition to correct itself after a couple of weeks.

The second possible cause could be heavy fertilization, especially with ammonium forms of nitrogen, which can encourage this condition. Heavy fertilization encourages more top foliage growth than root growth causing the ammonium form of nitrogen to compete with calcium for uptake through the roots to the fruit.

The third possible cause could be anything that disturbs the plant roots such as hoeing too deep. Mulching your plants will help because it keeps the soil surface cooler and reduces weed growth and promotes a better environment for root growth.

The fourth possible cause could be inconsistent watering. Keep soil moist but not waterlogged. Mulching can help by keeping the soil moisture level consistent over time. Even so, there are some years you do everything right and the condition shows up due to the weather. In such cases, remember that blossom-end rot is a temporary condition, and plants should come out of it in a couple of weeks. You want to pick off affected fruit to encourage new fruit formation.

Even though blossom end rot is most common on tomatoes, it can also affect squash, peppers, and watermelons. If you are noticing that you have a lot of blossom end rot occurring, go through the possible causes and see if you can find what might be causing the problem. Remember you can do everything right and still end up getting blossom end rot, but it should correct itself in a couple of weeks.

SWEET CORN COMPLICATIONS

Two of the main complications that seem to be an every year occurrence are sweet corn earworm and raccoons. If you plant sweet corn in your garden, you have probably had one, if not both of these problems.

Corn earworm tends to be a problem every year in Kansas. The earworm moth lays eggs on developing silks at night. When the egg hatches, the larva crawls down the silk and into the ear. The larva starts feeding at the tip of the ear and works down. Several earworms may hatch and attack a single ear, but only one is usually present at harvest due to the cannibalistic nature of the insect.

Control is challenging as silks continue to grow over a period of time. This means that even if silks are treated, new silk will appear that hasn't been protected. Applications every 2 to 3 days are needed for insecticides to be effective, when peak flight of these moths usually appear. From the time silking starts until the time you harvest is usually a three-week period, but there is only a two-week period from when the silks appear to when they begin to dry. Since moths prefer juicy silks, insecticides are only needed the first two weeks of silking. Chemicals with the active ingredient cyfluthrin or spinosad, which is an organic product. However, more time consuming, mineral oil or other light horticultural oils may also be used as an organic control.

As for raccoons, they seem to be the official sweet corn inspector. They always seem to get to the corn right before you pick it! Protecting your corn from them is the hardest.

The most effective control measure is to fence off your corn plot. You can either use electric or kennel fencing. With electric fence, you should use two or more wires. Place the first about 5 inches above the ground and the second wire 4 inches above the first (or 9 inches above the ground). You want to make sure the raccoons can't crawl under, go between, or go over the wires. If you want to use kennel fencing instead, you want to make sure the corners of the panels are tied tightly together so the raccoons can't squeeze through the corners.



If you chose to put a fence around your corn, you should try to have it up before the corn begins to ripen. Once raccoons get a taste of the corn, they are going to be difficult to discourage even with a fence.

If you have been having problems with sweet corn earworms or raccoons affecting the amount of sweet corn you get, try these tips so you can enjoy your sweet corn. If you have any questions please contact Kelsey Hatesohl at the Washington Office at 785-325-2121 or at khatesohl@ksu.edu

The Kansas Farm Management Association (KFMA) has released the 2016 Whole-Farm Summaries for the state, each regional association, and by county. The links for these are below. The enterprise reports for the state are also available. The association enterprise reports will follow soon.

Executive Summary: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/whole-farm-analysis/kfma-executive-summary>

State Summary: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/whole-farm-analysis/kfma-state-summaries>

Association Summaries: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/whole-farm-analysis/kfma-association-summaries>

County Summaries: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/whole-farm-analysis/kfma-county-summaries>

State Enterprise Reports: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/enterprise-reports>

Contact information for the KFMA is available at: <http://www.agmanager.info/kfma/contacts>

RANCH MANAGEMENT FIELD DAYS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST

Dates and locations are set for all three KLA/Kansas State University Ranch Management Field Days next month. The first field day is August 17 at Black Diamond Angus Ranch near Spearville. Mark Diederich Family Farms is the site of the August 22 field day at Greenleaf, located in southern Washington County. DL Cattle Company will host the August 23 field day at their pasture near Fredonia. Oklahoma State University Entomologist and Professor Justin Talley will present fly and tick control tips at all three events. Other program details will be finalized in the coming weeks. Each of the field days start at 3:30 p.m. and concludes with dinner at 6:45 p.m. Bayer Animal Health and the Farm Credit Associations of Kansas are sponsors of the events.

RIVER VALLEY BOARD ELECTIONS FILING DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 1

Extension Districts Law provides for four positions on the board for each county in the district and stipulates that in each odd year, two of those positions will be on the ballot of the November General Election. To be on the ballot, a person must be a resident of the county, be at least 18 years of age, and file for the position with the County Clerk. The filing deadline is 12:00 noon on September 1, 2017.

If you are interested in filing but have questions, please contact John Forshee, Director, by calling any of our offices.

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- **DO YOU HAVE DIABETES?**
 - **WANT TO MAKE THE BEST CHOICES FOR YOUR HEALTH?**

WE CAN HELP...

Dining with Diabetes

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Date: WEDNESDAYS
August 9, 16, 23 & 30

Time: 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Location: FNB (101 C St.)
Basement Meeting Room
Washington, KS

Nutrition and physical activity are keys to managing your type 2 diabetes, but where do you start? The *Dining with Diabetes* program can help!

Designed especially for people with type 2 diabetes, this program will help you learn the skills needed to promote good health.

Dining with Diabetes is taught by trained and caring educators. The program includes:

- planning meals and snacks with delicious and healthy recipes
- cooking demonstrations and food sampling
- motivation and support — connect with others who are living with diabetes
- ideas for being more active
- an understanding of how diabetes affects your overall health

COST: \$25.00 per person
(to cover food & materials)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
Monday - August 7th

You may contact any River Valley Extension District Office to register:

Belleville - (785) 527-5084
1815 M Street - Courthouse

Clay Center - (785) 632-5335
322 Grant Avenue

Concordia - (785) 243-8185
811 Washington - Courthouse

Washington - (785) 325-2121
214 C Street - Courthouse

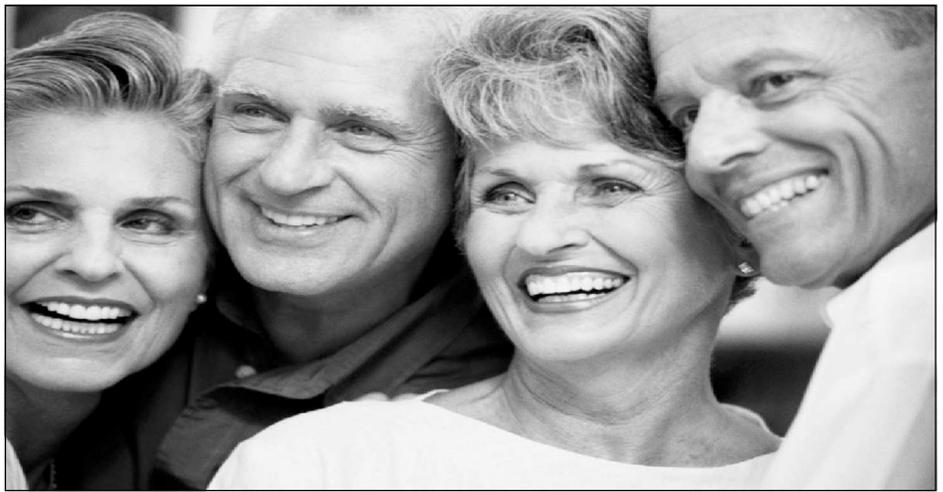
For more information visit
k-state.edu/diningwithdiabetes

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Medicare Basics Workshop



This free educational program is designed for anyone interested in learning more about the Medicare maze, particularly those who are nearing age 65, who are soon to qualify because of a disability, or who are helping family members with insurance and financial matters. We will cover Medicare eligibility, how and when to apply, what is covered by the various parts, and how to fill the gaps. We will also explain programs available to assist low income individuals and how to watch out for Medicare fraud.

Hosted By River Valley Extension District

Tuesday, August 8~ 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

200 W. 4th Street

Washington, Kansas

Wednesday, August 9~ 6-8 p.m.

Belleville Public Library Meeting Room

1327 19th Street

Belleville, Kansas

**To register call the Washington Extension Office at 785-325-2121 or
the Belleville Extension Office at 785-527-5084 or e-mail Deanna Turner at
dturner@ksu.edu**

Medicare Basics is one of a series of Answers for Older Kansans (AOK) workshops sponsored by the North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, an Aging and Disability Resource Center. Other AOK workshops focus on community living and aging in place. Call Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or 785-776-9294 for more information.

NE Kansas Area Agency on Aging
1803 Oregon
Hiawatha, Kansas 66434

North Central-Flint Hills
Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
401 Houston St.
Manhattan, KS 66502

 Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact John Forshee, Director, River Valley Extension District #4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335. **Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service**

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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT
“2017 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
July 31-Aug. 5		Republic County Fair	Belleville-Fairgrounds
Aug. 3		Turf & Ornamental Field Day	Wichita
Aug. 8	6:30-8:30pm	Medicare Basics Workshop	Washington-Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Aug. 9	6-8pm	Medicare Basics Workshop	Belleville-Public Library Meeting Room
Aug. 9, 16, 23, 30	5-7pm	Dining With Diabetes	Washington-FNB Basement Meeting Room
Aug. 10	9am-4pm	Food Preservation Class	Clyde- The Branch, 104 South Chestnut
Aug. 14		Vegetable Field Day	KSRE Experiment Field—Olathe
Aug. 17-18		Risk & Profit Conference	Manhattan
Aug. 22	3:30pm	KLA Field Day	WS Co.- Mark Diederich Family Farms
Sept.		Prepare Kansas 2017 (online)	K-State Research and Extension Facebook Page
Sept. 19	8am-4pm	Sunflower Fair- “The Fest of the West”	Salina- Tony’s Pizza Event Center (formerly Bicentennial)
Oct. 4		Fall Forestry Field Day	Randolph
Oct. 9	10:30am	Extension Fall Fling	Clay Center-4-H Conference Center, Fairgrounds
Oct. 13		Animal Science Family and Friends Reunion	Manhattan

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