

FEBRUARY 2015

Volume 10 #2

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Check us out on the Web at:
www.rivervalley.ksu.edu

Beef Sire Selection



Evaluate the genetics of your herd relative to the goals of your operation. Learn how to evaluate bulls and heifers using EPD's to select the best genetics for your environment, management style, and marketing options.

Presented by:
Dr. Bob Weaber
KSRE-Cow/Calf Specialist
&
Katelyn Brockus
RVED-Livestock Agent

Please RSVP by February 5th!

\$10 for registration

February 10th, 2015

**4-H Building Meeting Room
Clay Center, KS**

**Registration 6:15 p.m.
Program 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
Includes dinner!**



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**K-STATE RESEARCH AND
EXTENSION-WASHINGTON OFFICE**

Phone: 785-325-2121
E-mail: kbrockus@ksu.edu

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 Forshoe, Director, River Valley Extension District #4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335.

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FB The Voice of Agriculture®
CLAY COUNTY FARM BUREAU®
CLOUD COUNTY FARM BUREAU®
REPUBLIC COUNTY FARM BUREAU®
WASHINGTON COUNTY FARM BUREAU®

Prescribed Burning Workshop

February 26, 2015
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Community Center
Jewell, KS



Topics to be covered:

- Reasons for Burning
- Burning For Wildlife
- Notification, Regulations, & Permits
- Weather – How it Affects Burning
- Liability/Burn Contractor/Assistance
- Equipment, Hazards, & Firebreaks
- Planning and Conducting a Burn
 - Plans, Maps, Crews, Equipment
 - Firebreaks, Fire Movement
 - Ignition & Suppression of Fire
 - Safety
- Burning and FSA Contracts

Please RSVP by February 19, 2015 to:

RVED-WS: 785-325-2121 -or- kbrockus@ksu.edu
RVED-CY: 785-632-5335 -or- jforshee@ksu.edu
Post Rock-MC: 785-738-3597 -or- ncates@ksu.edu

Registration - \$15 is payable at the door to RVED#4
(Includes: refreshments, program & notebook)

Lunch is sponsored by:



See www.rivervalley.ksu.edu for more information
or follow us on: <https://www.facebook.com/RVED4>



Speakers will be representatives from:

K-State Research and Extension
KS Dept. of Wildlife, Parks, & Tourism
National Weather Service
Kansas Forest Service
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Farm Service Agency

Sponsored by: River Valley Extension District #4
Post Rock Extension District #1
Jewell County Prescribed Burn Coop



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K-State Research and Extension

CROP NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT MEETING

FEBRUARY 19TH
10:00 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

LOCATION: CLYDE SENIOR CENTER
WASHINGTON STREET, CLYDE, KS.

**K-STATE EXTENSION SOIL AND CROP FERTILITY SPECIALISTS,
DR. DAVE MENGEL AND DR. DORIVAR RUIZ DIAZ,
ARE THE GUEST PRESENTERS**

Topics:

- Using nutrient sensors in your farming operation
- Utilizing variable rate technology
- Crop nutrient needs
- Soil testing

Free Event

LUNCH CATERED BY
VELMA'S LAZY B RESTAURANT

Pre-register by February 16th
For **Registration** Contact
River Valley Extension District
Concordia Office 785-243-8185
Kim Larson, Agent

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*Knowledge
forLife*

BUY A BEEF SIRE, NOT A BUNCH OF BULL!

It is time to start looking for the next genetically superior bull that will add value to your cattle herd. There are four key points that are important in the sire selection process. Whether the operation is seeking a bull that increases weaning weights or a bull that marks out high in calving ease, it is time to start making those decisions.

Point 1: Have a plan. Whether it is a privately owned cattle operation, a family operation, or a partnership the beginning stages of sire selection can be referred to as “the kitchen roundtable”. Sit down with the partners in the operation and come to an agreement on the focus and goals of the upcoming year and on into the future. If the operation is searching for a calving ease bull, then stay clear of the pens that involve high birth weights. Having a plan set in place can increase the profitability and longevity of the operation.

Point 2: If the data is available, analyze the EPDs. While EPDs are not the only focus during the sire selection process, it can be a great tool. If the operation is seeking greater calving ease, EPDs are a great tool to decrease cases of dystocia. It is extremely critical when using EPDs to avoid single trait selection. Have a couple of goals in mind when looking at EPDs. It is vital to maintain a balance within EPDs to avoid single trait selection. It is also important not to compare EPDs within the bulls at one location, but rather compare the bulls to the breed average. Using EPDs can involve a little bit of homework. The Beef Sire Selection Workshop offered on February 10th in Clay Center will offer additional information on EPDs and the beef sire selection process.

Point 3: Utilize visual appraisal. While EPDs are a great tool, they can be misleading. Upon arrival, be sure to visualize the factors that cannot be quantitatively analyzed such as like feet and leg structure. If the bull marks out high in calving ease, but he struggles on the move then continue searching. Without visual appraisal, too much emphasis can be put on EPDs. Overall, make sure the bull will fit the cattle operations program and aligns with the previous goals set in place.

Point 4: Bull docility. Utilizing visual appraisal will aid in determining bull docility. Docility can have an impact on the economics of the operation. Additional input costs, such as fence rebuilding, can carry a large economic burden on the operation. At the end of the day, producers are trying to make a profit; therefore, utilizing visual appraisal for bull docility is a tool of economic value.

For additional information on the beef sire selection process and EPDs, the Beef Sire Selection Workshop is offered on February 10th at 6:30 in Clay Center. Refer to flyer for additional details.



Help Wanted

The River Valley Extension District is accepting applications for the position of DISTRICT EXTENSION AGENT, 4-H Youth Development. The primary office location is Washington with District Offices located in Belleville, Clay Center, and Concordia. The successful candidate will work with the 4-H Program Managers and River Valley District Staff and District Extension Agents to deliver 4-H Youth program education across the district which includes Clay, Cloud, Republic, and Washington Counties.

If you are interested, or know of a qualified candidate that might be interested, please refer to the K-State Research and Extension website: www.ksre.ksu.edu/jobs for responsibilities, qualifications, and application procedure. Application Deadline: 2/9/15. K-State Research and Extension is an EOE of individuals with disabilities and protected veterans. Background check required.

2014 FARM BILL DECISIONS

For producers needing additional assistance in understanding the Farm Bill programs or who would like help in using the KSU-OSU Farm Bill Decision Tool, you may contact the extension office to set up a face-to-face appointment with Kim Larson. If you have internet access, go to Ag-Manager.info to view many helpful documents and presentations which will allow you to become more familiar with the new Farm Bill.

LIVESTOCK COST SHARE AVAILABLE IN THE SALT CREEK WATERSHED

The Salt Creek Watershed in Cloud and Republic Counties has been identified as being impaired with livestock waste and impacting the Republican River and ultimately the Milford Reservoir. The Milford Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) has been awarded money by KDHE to provide technical and cost share assistance to livestock producers in this area to implement management strategies that reduce the impact of livestock waste in the watershed.

Producers in this watershed are invited to an informational meeting to be held on Thursday, February 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Belle Villa Family Dining to learn more on how to apply for this cost share. A free meal is included so there is no cost to attend. We ask you to please RSVP to the Clay Center Office (785-632-5335) by Tuesday, February 17.

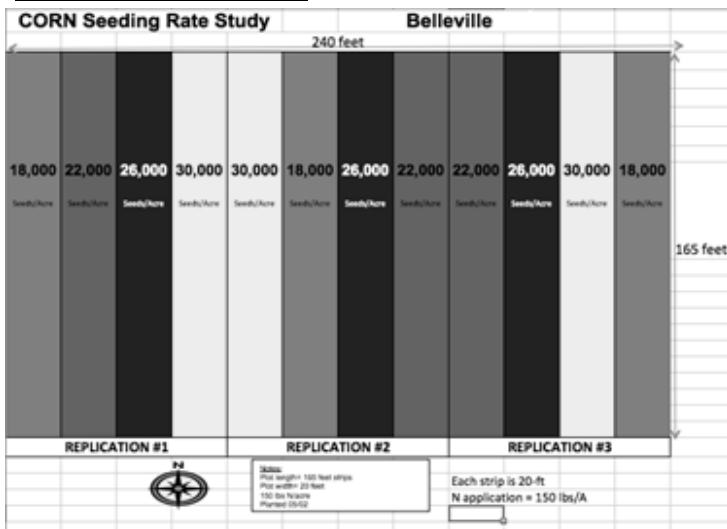
The program is being sponsored by the Milford WRAPS, Kansas Crossroads RC&D, Republic County Conservation District, and the River Valley Extension District.

ON-FARM RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS: NORTH-CENTRAL KANSAS STUDIES

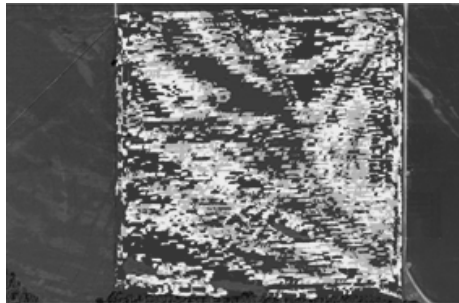
K-State Extension state specialists, area agronomists, and county/district agents are seeking to collaborate with producers in establishing on-farm and large-scale research plots. The goal is to establish a network of on-farm research collaborators with the main purpose of providing research results on production practices at the local scale.

During the 2014 growing season, we have collaborated with several farmers in performing on-farm seeding rate research trials in corn and soybean. Here is one example of how this information can assist farmers.

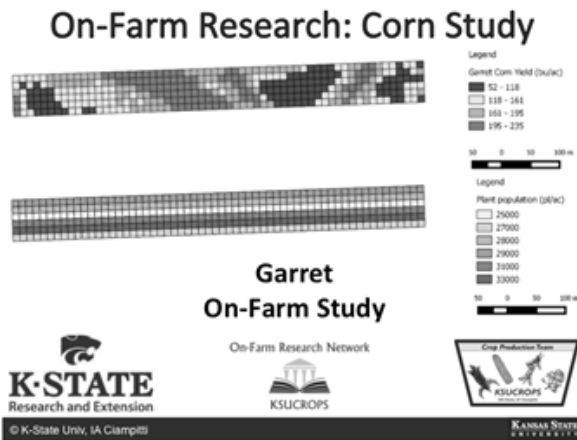
Experimental Layout:



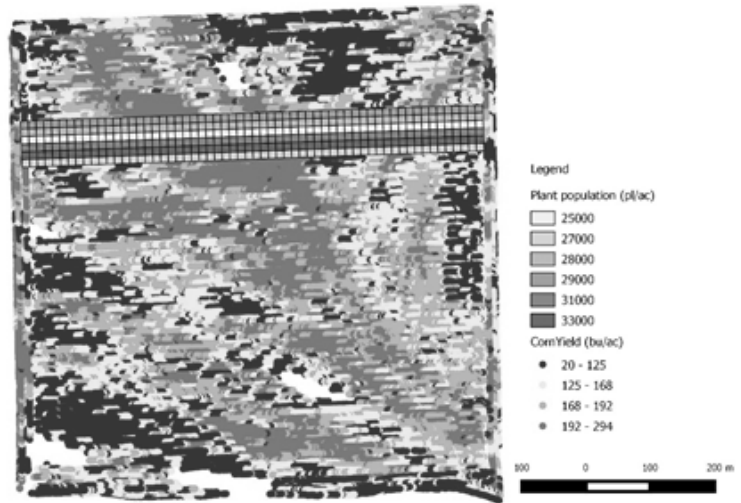
Field Variability:



Strip-trial, Plant Population:

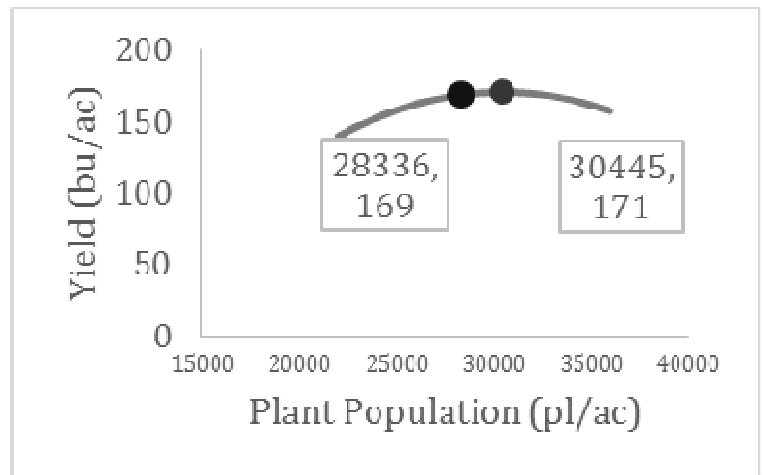


Position of Exp. Layout in the Field:



Optimum Plant Population:

Agronomically optimum population, plant population for maximizing corn yields was close to 30,500 pl/acre. The latter population was not coincident with the economically optimum plant population, which maximizes net profits, 28,300 plants/acre (2,200 plants/acre less).



Assuming a \$3.50 per bushel for corn and a cost of a seed corn bag of \$280 (80,000 kernels), cutting back in 2,200 plants/acre or 2,500-3,000 seeds/acre (assuming 80-90% seed emergence) could represent a seed saving close to \$10 per acre.

The on-farm project has as a goal to establish a network of on-farm research trials with the purpose of fine-tuning crop production recommendations to local environments.

Farmers interested in participating in this project can get more information by contacting Ignacio Ciampitti, Coordinator K-State On-Farm Project, or Kim Larson, River Valley District, Crop Production Agent.

PRAIRIE STAR & ALL-AMERICAN SELECTIONS RELEASED

All-American Selections tests and introduces new flowers and vegetables each year that have done well in trials across North America. The 2015 All-American Selections have been announced and include ten vegetables, two bedding plants, and two flowers that were either national winners or “Heartland” regional winners.

Vegetables include: Lettuce – Sandy; Radish – Roxanne F1; Pepper – Sweet Sunset F1; Basil – Dolce Fresca; Pepper – Emerald Fire F1; Pepper – Flaming Fire F1; Pepper – Hot Sunset F1; Pepper – Pretty N Sweet F1; Zucchini Squash – Bossa Nova F1; Butternut Squash – Butterscotch F1.

Bedding Plant & Flowers include: Impatiens - Bounce™ Pink Flame PPAF “Balboufink”; Impatiens - SunPatiens® Spreading Shell Pink; Petunia – Trilogly Red F1; Salvia – Summer Jewel White.

Complete descriptions of these and former AAS winners can be found at <http://www.all-americanselections.org/winners/index.cfm> We always encourage selecting from current and past winners as you develop your plans for your summer flower and vegetable gardens. Look for the AAS on the labels of seed packages and plant containers.

The 2015 Prairie Star Annual Flowers publication has been released as well. RVED has participated in the state-wide flower trials for the past three years, growing and evaluating the flowers in locations across the district. The results from all the locations are combined with the K-State Research and Extension data to develop a list of those Annual Flowers that perform well in our Kansas conditions. The Prairie Star list has been developed for both annuals and perennials.

Stop by any extension office and ask for the Prairie Star Annual Flowers publication or go to www.ksre.ksu.edu and search for MF2769 Prairie Star Annual Flowers.

PLAN TO SPRAY FRUIT TREES NOW

For those home gardeners with fruit trees it is time to work towards a healthy crop of fruit this spring and summer.

While trees are dormant is a great time to scout for scale insects. Scale is often overlooked because they come in many forms and are small and immobile for most of their lives. Many resemble small shells that are oval or circular, while some resemble oyster shells. Coloring can vary from white to tan to brown. Plants that should be inspected include apples, pears, bush fruits, as well as landscape trees such as oak, ash, elm, maple, and linden.

Late winter is also a great time to complete that pruning that needs to be done on apples and other fruit trees.

Stop by the local Extension Office or go on-line and get C-631 Pruning Fruit Trees, and C-592 Fruit Pest Control for Home Gardens for more information on pruning and spraying fruit trees to maximize production and minimize disease and insect problems.

HONEY BEES-WHAT IS ALL THE BUZZ?

Since the beginning of agriculture we have likely taken for granted the value of the insect world in pollinating our agricultural and horticultural crops. The USDA reports that the number of managed bee colonies has decreased from 5 million in the 1940’s to only 2.5 million today. Beginning in 2006 beekeepers began reporting huge losses in colonies attributed to what was termed Colony Collapse Disorder. In 2006-2011 the disorder losses averaged 33% per year. The losses slowed a bit since that time with the winters of 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 reporting 22, 31 and 23 percent losses, a number that is better but still staggering when the consequences are considered.

The reporting of these losses has stirred a renewed interest in beekeeping. In fact K-State Research and Extension now keeps a list of those folks that are willing to trap and relocated hives that set up in unwanted areas around trees, homes, and buildings.

The Kansas Honey Producers Association has been working very hard to educate bee keepers and renew an interest in the industry. The Spring Meeting of the Kansas Honey Producers Association will be March 13 and 14 in Manhattan. The two days are filled with great educational opportunities around bee keeping.

Go to www.kansashoneyproducers.org for more information and registration details.

2014 RIVER VALLEY LEASE SURVEY SUMMARY RELEASED

The 2014 River Valley Lease Survey Summary was released in late January by the River Valley Extension District. This is the third annual survey that asks over 200 landowners and tenants from across the district specific questions about crop and livestock lease agreements and rates.

The data was compiled and presented by RVED agents John Forshee, Kim Larson, and Katelyn Brockus at public meetings on January 21 and 22, 2015. The pasture summary looks at “average rates” for leasing pasture on the district basis but is also broken out by county. The rates for grazing crop residue and such questions as water sources, fencing responsibilities, and tree and weed control arrangements were also addressed. The crop summary looks at common cash rent and crops share arrangements as well as production expense sharing. The crop survey looked at flex rent, field maps, cover crops and custom operations as well.

Both surveys looked at hunting rights and revealed that any landlords that wish to maintain hunting rights should make sure this is addressed in the lease agreement.

The summary is available in hard copy at any RVED office or on the River Valley District webpage: www.rivervalley.ksu.edu. Additional resources are available at www.AgManager.info, www.aglease101.org as well as other K-State Research & Extension websites.

FIREWOOD-TIPS AND CAUTIONS

Not all firewood is created equal. My grandpa preferred to burn green ash in the stove because he knew it split relatively easily and created more heat per cord than did elm or cottonwood.

The legal measurement of firewood is the cord. A cord is the amount of wood in a well-stacked woodpile measuring 4 feet wide by 8 feet long by 4 feet high. All wood being sold should be advertised in this manner.

My grandpa was correct in knowing that some types of wood created a higher heat value per cord of wood while others were just safer to burn in that old wood stove.

The following are heat values (in million BTU's) per cord for various species of tree and a few cautions or traits:

Osage Orange (Hedge) 32.6	Sparks
Locust, Black 28.3	Difficult to split
Honeylocust 25.6	
Oak, Post 25.6	
Mulberry 25.3	
Oak, Bur 24.9	
Oak, Red 24.0	
Maple, Sugar 24.0	
Ash, Green 22.8	
Walnut, Black 21.8	
Hackberry 21.0	
Elm, Siberian 20.9	Difficult to split
Elm, American 19.8	Difficult to split
Sycamore 19.5	Difficult to split
Maple, Silver 18.9	
Cottonwood 15.9	

The following are some quick tips and cautions for cutting, burning, buying, or selling firewood: Firewood cut from dead trees can be burned immediately. Firewood cut from live or "green" trees should be dried or cured for three to six months before burning, especially if the use is in a fireplace. Dry wood will be easier to light, will burn with greater heat, and will produce less creosote in the chimney. I discourage the use of most conifer/juniper types of trees, especially in fireplaces, as they have sap and moisture pockets that tend to pop and spark so maybe reserve this material for the firepit or bonfire. Many lumber scraps will be from coniferous trees and will do the same. Osage orange, or "hedge" will spark profusely so it should not be used in open fireplaces as well.

One should never burn treated lumber, plywood, or particleboard in stoves or fireplaces as they may give off toxic fumes from treatments or glues in the products.

Finally, one should never transport firewood from one area to another and follow the "burn it where you buy/cut it" rule. This helps prevent the spread of disease and insects such as pine wilt or emerald ash borer.

For pine trees that are suspected to have died from pine wilt last fall, it is best to cut those off at ground level and burn them on-site prior to March 1.

WALK TALL, WALK STRONG, WALK KANSAS!



That's the theme for Walk Kansas 2015. Walk Kansas will be starting March 15th and run through May 9th. This is an eight week fitness motivation and healthy lifestyle program. Participants will receive a weekly newsletter filled with tips on leading a healthier life by being more active, making better nutrition choices, including recipes, and learning positive ways to deal with stress.

Walk Tall emphasizes posture when standing, walking, and sitting. Walk Strong emphasizes strengthening muscles. A new strengthening exercise will be introduced each week in the newsletter. Walk Kansas encourages physical activity. Participants can determine the goal for their team.

Start gathering a team of friends, neighbors, co-workers, family, or church members with a maximum of 6 people. One member will need to serve as team captain and pick a team name. The team can strive to walk 423 miles across Kansas or 846 miles, the distance across Kansas and back, or 1200 miles the distance around the perimeter of Kansas, during the eight week period. Members report their number of minutes exercised to the team captain.

The captain will be responsible for registering the team and reporting the minutes exercised by team members each week. The team captain will pick up a team packet from the Extension Office closest to you as soon as packets are available. The captain also collects and pays the team members' fees when registering the team.

There is an \$8 registration fee per person. T-shirts or sweat-shirts can be purchased for an additional cost. K-State Research & Extension-River Valley District helps to sponsor Walk Kansas.

Do something for yourself. Form a Walk Kansas team. Your team might challenge another church, organization, or business to participate. All men, women, and children are encouraged to participate. Families are encouraged to form teams. Get moving with Walk Kansas!

Watch the newspaper, listen to the radio, and check the River Valley District website for more information. Complete details and team packets will be available soon.

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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT
“2015 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Feb.5-6		Women Managing the Farm Conference	Manhattan
Feb. 5-Mar. 12	3-8pm	Women In Ag Series	Belleville-Jensik Insurance Harvest Room, 1309 18th St.
Feb. 10	6:30-9:00pm	Beef Sire Selection Workshop	Clay Center, 4-H Building Meeting Room
Feb. 12	1-5pm	Regional Farm Bill Meeting	Frankfort
Feb. 13-15		Kansas Garden Show	Topeka
Feb. 17		Ag Succession Planning Conference	Emporia
Feb. 17&18		MAST: Management Analysis & Strategic Thinking	Manhattan
Feb. 19	10am-1:30pm	Crop Nutrient Management Meeting	Clyde Senior Center, Clyde
Feb. 26	10am-3pm	Prescribed Burning Workshop	Jewell
Feb. 28-Mar.1		State Farmer's Market Conference	Manhattan
Mar. 3	TBD	Canola Meeting/Field Day	Concordia
Mar. 3		Planning for Farm & Ranch Succession	Hays
Mar 13&14		Kansas Honey Producers Association Meeting	Manhattan
Mar. 15-May 9		WALK KANSAS	State-Wide Program

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