

AGNOTES

footbaths is copper sulfate, followed by formaldehyde or formalin, and then oxytetracycline."

Garcia said the solution in footbaths should be replaced often and kept free of organic matter since that matter can deactivate the copper in the solution. In the August 2010 issue of the Journal of Dairy Science, a research trial compared the effectiveness of copper sulfate, formalin, and a new commercial disinfectant agent, T-Hexx Dragonhyde HBC. The results of the trial showed the new product to be about as effective as copper sulfate and better than formalin.

For more information on foot health and dairy herds, call Garcia at 605-688-5488.

Bio-Fuels Field Day Event Set For Aug. 16

BROOKINGS—A walk-and-talk field day focused on bio-fuels and prairie wildlife is set for Aug. 16 near Colman.

The tour begins at 1 p.m. and is entitled "Prairie Establishment for Bio-fuels and Wildlife." It will take place at EcoSun Prairie Farms, located at 46786 232nd Street, Colman.

The event is free but pre-registration is encouraged before Aug. 12. To register, call event organizer Jill Sackett at 507-238-5449, or e-mail her at sackett032@umn.edu. Or call SDSU plant science researcher Kurt Reitsma at 605-688-4594, or e-mail him at Kurtis.Reitsma@sdstate.edu.

EcoSun Prairie Farms, South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service, Minnesota Rural Advantage, and the University of Minnesota Extension are sponsoring and hosting the event.

Members of EcoSun Prairie Farms will share their experiences growing and managing grassland on former corn and soybean land. They also will explain how they market a range of grassland products including hay, grass-fed beef, native plant seed, bio-fuel feedstock, and carbon credits. The event includes a tour of the farm.

Researchers also will highlight two projects taking place at nearby South Dakota State University. SDSU professor Susan Rupp and her colleagues will describe how harvesting the prairie as a feedstock for potential bio-fuel development affects prairie wildlife and plant and animal diversity.

SDSU Professor Tom Schumacher and colleagues will highlight a project that examines the use of multiple sources of biomass for bio-fuel feedstock production and how these sources could improve productivity and the environment.

Attendees are encouraged to car-pool because parking is limited. Organizers have applied for continuing education units for Certified Crop Advisors. For more information on EcoSun Prairie Farms, visit its Web site at www.ecosunprairiefarms.org.

To reach the site traveling south on Interstate 29, take Exit 114 at Flandreau and then turn west on 230th Street. Drive three and one-half miles to 469th Avenue, then turn south on 469th Avenue and continue driving 2 miles to 232nd Street. Here, turn west and travel three-quarters of a mile. The parking area will be on the north side of the road. People attending the event cannot park at the farmstead.

Those attending who approach from the south can take I-29 Exit 109 at Colman, then drive west on South Dakota Highway 34 to reach Colman. Once in town, drive two miles north on Main Street to 233rd Street, then turn west. Continue driving three-quarters of a mile to 469th Avenue, then turn north and drive one mile to 232nd Street. Turn west on 232nd Street and continue one-quarter mile to the signs that indicate parking areas.

Attendees who use GPS can use these coordinates to get to the farm: 44° 1' 23" N. Latitude, 96° 50' 37" W. Longitude.

Horse Owners Warned Of Toxic Maple Leaves

John Ball, Extension Forestry Specialist at SDSU found some data from the University of Minnesota that indicates that maple leaves are in fact poisonous to horses.

The problem is primarily with red maple (*Acer rubrum*) a tree commonly planted in southeast South Dakota. Eating wilted red maple leaves, particularly older leaves, causes hemolytic anemia in horses.

Does eating sugar maple, silver maple, Norway maple or box elder leaves cause the same problem? They are not sure — the problem seems to occur only on maples that have the leaves turn red in the fall. The recommendation is to avoid having any maples planted where horses can reach them.

Black Farmers Still Waiting For Settlement Money In USDA Racial Bias Case

BY LYNN BONNER
McClatchy Newspapers

RALEIGH, N.C. — It was a big day for thousands of black farmers in February when the federal government announced an agreement to settle complaints of racial bias against the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

But so far, Congress has failed to back up the promise of the \$1.25 billion settlement with any money. The U.S. House has approved the spending, but the plan has stalled in the U.S. Senate.

Senators have failed several times to approve the payment. Money for the settlement fund has been stripped out of some bills because of concerns that it would add to the deficit. Farmers and supporters in the Senate are pushing for a vote Wednesday.

Black farmers are becoming anxious, worried that the compensation that they have waited for will slip away. The Senate is set to begin its August recess later this week, and John Boyd, founder of the National Black Farmers Association, said he is concerned that the issue will be shunted aside if the Senate doesn't vote

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JOHN BOYD

before the break.

"Here we are with an admission of guilt — the Agriculture Department mistreated black farmers," he said. "We're having such a difficult time collecting."

Black farmers complained for years that they were not given a fair shake when they applied for loans from the USDA, according to a report this year by the Congressional Research Service.

A North Carolina farmer, Timothy Pigford, sued over unfair treatment in 1997 after he was denied a loan to buy land. Thousands of other black farmers came forth with similar complaints — that they were denied loans or forced to wait longer for money while white farmers had an easier time. Black farmers also said the USDA failed to investigate their allegations.

The case has lingered for years. The U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia first approved a settlement in 1999, but thousands of farmers' claims have not been paid.

Uzzell Barnes, 74, of Johnston County, N.C., hopes to be compensated through the settlement but has creeping doubts. He's skeptical that the Senate will take action after all this time.

"They're thinking about their own pocketbooks and keeping everybody else down if they can," he said.

Barnes tried in the early 1990s to get a USDA loan to buy 105 acres. He said his request was delayed and someone else bought the property.

A few months later, he bought 39 acres but had to get a bank loan, which carried a higher interest rate.

"It was 8 or 9 percent," he said of the bank's interest. "That's a whole lot of difference from 3 or 4 percent."

For years, he had problems getting timely loans to pay up-front expenses. His loan applications weren't approved until months after planting season, he said.

"I never got my money on time," Barnes said. "Everyone had their stuff in the ground."

Both North Carolina senators want the settlement money approved. Successful claimants could receive up to \$50,000 each.

U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, D-N.C., has been pushing the Senate to vote for it.

"This has been one of her major policy goals," said Hagan spokeswoman Stephanie Allen, "to ensure that approximately 4,000 farmers in North Carolina do receive their just settlements."

U.S. Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., said he also wants money in the settlement fund.

"I hope that the Senate can approve funding so that the USDA can process these successful legal claims as quickly as possible," he said in a statement.

Bon Homme Achievement Days Set For Mon. And Tues.



Achievement Days are this Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 9-10. All 4-H and Open Class exhibits are entered Monday morning by 11 a.m. Anyone can exhibit in the Open Class shows. Lots include artistic photography, visual arts (needlework and paintings/drawings), flower show, and pie baking. All exhibits are open to the public at 4 p.m.

The highlight of the event will be the chicken barbecue that is sponsored by the Tyndall Chamber of Commerce and local business

people on Tuesday from 5:45-7 p.m. They sponsored the first barbecue in Tyndall in 1967 and have not missed a year since. Their first barbecue was beef. They did pork and chicken in the early 90s and have done chicken all the other years.

This will be the 30th year of chicken. A special thanks to our chairmen Judy Mace and Sandy Slama and to Jon Vavruska and Jason Humpal Barbecue co-chairs.

The finale of the Achievement Days will be the "Judges Choice" program following the barbecue. The Fashion Revue will be in the park at 6 p.m. The Round Robin Showmanship Contest and Parade of Champions begin at 6 p.m. in the showing.

Hope you can join us that evening. Tickets for the barbecue are available from 4-H members and at our office.

Storm Damage Forces Farmers Into Tough Decisions

BEATRICE, Neb. (AP) — Should we replant or retreat to lick our wounds from the weather?

Experts say that's a question farmers in Nebraska and other ag-heavy states often ask themselves when a severe storm ruins a young crop.

On June 20, for example, powerful thunderstorms raged through Gage, Johnson, Lancaster and Pawnee counties in southeast Nebraska.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency said later that plants were ravaged across 125,000 acres — mostly corn and soybeans.

The question arose for many farmers: Should we replant our corn and soybeans at this critical juncture in their growth cycles? Or should we give up for the year, use the damaged plants for silage and hope for the best from our crop insurance?

Terry Hasenkamp, manager of Crop Production Services in Beatrice, said crop insur-

ance will help.

"But it's like anything else: You never have enough, and you end up losing on a deal like that," Hasenkamp told the Beatrice Daily Sun.

Timing was key, he said, as the storm date of June 20 was near the end of planting season in southeast Nebraska.

It was too late for corn, Hasenkamp said he told his customers as he suggested replanting with soybeans. Most of them did, he said.

Farmer Gary Harms said that with the help of friends and neighbors, he replanted 570 acres with soybeans. The new crop has nearly reached the height of his old crop on June 20, before it was battered by hail.

The looming question now, he said, is whether the weather will prove to be his ally.

"There's three things that are important to raising good soybeans," Harms said: "Rain in August, rain in August, rain in August."

YOUR VIEWS

BY JOHN CRABTREE
Center for Rural Affairs

I hate to say I told you so, but I did. In June, USDA published a new draft rule regarding how meatpackers must deal with farmers and ranchers in the procurement of livestock and poultry. But the packers don't like it and are pitching a fit, just as I said they would.

As my mother used to say, "So, what's all the yellin' about?" For four decades USDA has allowed packers to discriminate against family farm and ranch livestock producers by paying them less than they pay mega-producers for the same quality hogs and cattle. These purely volume-based premiums that packers give to large-volume producers are violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act, despite USDA's lackluster record of challenging such price discrimination.

The Packers and Stockyards Act specifically prohibits price discrimination by meatpackers, making it unlawful for packers to "...make or give any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any particular person or locality in any respect whatsoever..." USDA's draft rule provides a fighting chance of enforcing that law for the first time in 40 years (see the rule at www.cfra.org/competition).

The packers and their allies at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Pork Producers Council can whine and complain all they want. But competitive markets are the foundation of America's economy and family farmers and ranchers asking for a level playing field where the value of their livestock determine price, not the volume, are making a request that is not only eminently reasonable, but long overdue.

RANGE

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the process.

Efficiency success in reproduction, weaning weights, mass of calves produced per cows exposed to breeding, and mass of calf produced per hectare or acre were all tracked throughout the seven-year study. The amount of supplemental feed was also recorded and studied to see if the amount of feed varied when the herd was rotated into a new paddock.

For the first two years, supplemental feed was increased as the herd went through an adaption process to the paddock system. Moving the herd more frequently adds stress to the animals but after the initial acclimation to the rotational grazing program, the animals' behavior adjusted to the movement through the pasture of paddocks.

When comparing the efficiency ratings of the cow-calf pairs, it was noted the livestock showed greater production in the four paddock system in the early years of adaption rather than the eight-paddock setup. Since post adaption results for production showed little difference between the four and eight paddock setups, livestock producers are encouraged to begin a herd on the smaller four-paddock system and then move them to the eight-paddock cycle when they have adapted to the rotational grazing process.

After all the data was compiled, the researchers concluded the livestock were not nearly as affected by the prescribed burn practices or the integrated grazing process. The herd was affected in measurable levels when management skills were poor and the stocking rates were higher in rotational grazing practices.

Long-time grazer and UNL Extension Educator in Knox County, Terry Gompert, spent time in Texas working with the types of plants native to the grass-

lands. He begs to differ with the burn philosophy.

"Everyone hates some types of plants," said Gompert. "Texans hate mesquite. It's just as simple as that." He remembers when he was in Texas, he observed wherever the woody plant thrived, the grass was taller and more nutritious.

Gompert dug a trench under a fence line where there were no mesquites. He found there weren't any earthworms and less plant mass.

"We need to be careful how we approach a problem," said Gompert. "We are only on the land for a very short time and we really need to examine a new species before we condemn it."

Cattle and grass production can work hand in hand said Gompert. He believes grazing a paddock for a day, twice a year, will heal the land and maintain it in a better condition than when it was found. But it has to be very intensive grazing. Increasing the herd in smaller paddocks pushes the animals to chew up the grasses, weeds and dirt. It actually gives the grasses a new birth so they can divide and multiply, eventually overcoming the weeds. Giving the grasses a longer resting period between grazing also keeps nutrients in the ground and makes the underground mass stronger.

If there is ground cover, water will be better contained and there will be more earth worms and tongue beetles. Noxious weeds will also be reduced because the livestock can be trained to eat any plant.

"If you burn an area and the fire leaves bare ground, the only thing which will grow is weeds," said Gompert. "That is definitely the wrong direction to go."

Gompert quotes one of his favorite grazing specialists, Allan Savoy, expert on Holistic Management. Savoy said different tools can be used in different ways to improve the environment. High stock density rates can heal the land.

Gompert advises cattlemen to let their animals have an impact on the land. Let them do the dirty work.

Energy Independence Workshops To Be Held In S.D.

Brookings — Dakota Rural Action is hosting a free, public energy fair with workshops on Saturday, Aug. 14 at the Strawbale House in McCrory Gardens in Brookings. An informational fair will last from 1-7 p.m., with the energy workshops running from 1-4:30 p.m. Following the workshops, DRA will provide a free SDSU Ice Cream Sundae Bar, with refreshments, for people that attended.

"With energy rates going up and wages not, a lot of folks are looking for ways to spend less on energy," said, DRA member, Cory Heidelberg. "So there's a lot of excitement about learning about practical steps people can take right now to reduce the amount of energy they have to buy."

There will be four workshops and one panel discussion. The workshops will concentrate on how people can create home grown renewable energy projects and increase energy efficiency in their home, on their farm, or at their business.

The fair will be open throughout the afternoon and will be a chance for people interested in creating their own renewable energy / energy efficiency projects to get in contact with businesses and organizations which have the resources and knowledge to help them achieve their goals.

"(The speakers) have experience with real, practical energy projects and the policy and financ-

ing involved with some projects." Cory points out, "We won't be talking about wishes and dreams. We'll be talking about projects and products that homeowners and communities across South Dakota can take advantage of right now."

Pat Spears, President of Intertribal Council on Utility Policy, will kick off the event at 1 p.m. speaking about the opportunities for strawbale house construction. Straw bale buildings are incredibly efficient and literally use home grown technology that supports South Dakotan farmers.

Robert Byrnes, owner of Nebraska Renewable Energy Systems, will follow up at 1:45 p.m. with a presentation about integrated farm energy systems. Robert has been developing a demonstration project on his off-grid farm in Lyons, Neb. which displays a wide variety of technologies suitable for farm and home energy production. He prides himself on his systems' functional application of renewable energy production and utilization in an agricultural environment.

After a brief intermission, Chris Johnson, of Alternate Energy Professionals (a Green Certified Builder), will present at 3 p.m. about different renewable energy and energy efficiency options. Chris works with people across the U.S. integrating energy efficient technologies and renewable energy projects into homes and businesses. He specializes in energy

audits, energy consulting, maintenance programs and design.

At 3:45 p.m. the keynote panel discussion featuring three speakers will take place. All three speakers will talk briefly about their experiences, and then it will be open for audience questions. Featured speakers are:

Darlene Bresson, an Area Specialist for the USDA Rural Development office in Watertown, S.D. She has extensive experience with USDA's energy programs and works with individuals wanting to develop and fund small wind farms.

Tom Holt, the Member Services and Marketing Manager for East River Electric Cooperative. Tom has been involved with and oversees East River's energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.

Don Amert, a citizen from Madison, who has been trying to start his own wind turbine project. He has gained a lot of practical technical, legal and political knowledge from his experience as an interested citizen trying to get his foot in the door.

This event will connect people with businesses and opportunities to move toward greater energy independence.

For more information and/or directions please access our Web site at www.dakotaural.org, or contact Luke Temple at: luket@dakotaural.org or (605) 697-5204.

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