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What a difference a Year Makes - Feast or Famine!!
By: John Hobbs

Since the middle of July, cooler temperatures with widespread rainfall in the southern third of Missouri has maintained or improved forage conditions. At the time of this writing, rainfall reports have ranged from 6 to 9 inches in the last four weeks, from Barton to McDonald counties. Last year most counties had less than 1 inch of rain in July. The abundance of rain should lead to a tremendous fall forage growth. With the abundance of rain, farms will have their good side (increased forage tonnage) but a bad side (more weeds to control).

**Forages:** If we look back at this spring's wet, cool weather, it made for a tough start to the hay crop in a lot of areas, and the hay that was able to be baled may not have been in the best condition. But weather conditions — and the hay crop itself — have improved. If you want to extend your grazing season you can stretch hay supplies by stockpiling fescue. Stockpiling fall forage can stretch your hay supply by delaying how early you start feeding hay, plus reduce your harvesting costs. You can think of it as letting the cows do their own harvesting. Stockpiling pasture is a way you can do this. Tall fescue is the most desirable grass to stockpile for late fall and winter grazing. During the fall, this grass produces higher yields of stockpiled forage of superior quality compared to most other temperate grasses. The fall-saved forage is very palatable and high in digestibility (high in soluble sugars). Forage quality losses from leaf deterioration after frost are lower for tall fescue compared to most other forages. Winter grazing has minimal influence on yield or quality of this grass the following season. If you do stockpile, you may need to give it a nitrogen boost. A producer should put down 60 to 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre around the middle of August to get maximum growth of forage. Cattle should be removed from these fields no later than the first of August if maximum fall production is to be achieved and returned at the end of November. The best way to utilize this stockpiled fescue is to strip-graze or limit-graze.

**Weeds:** After the recent years of drought, weeds have taken advantage of weakened grass stands and many kinds of weeds are visible in fields throughout southwest Missouri. Although there are many nuisance weeds this year, I would like to comment on two of them. Numerous tracts of land in our region were inundated with heavy populations of *musk and bull thistles* this spring and will be back in September and October as rosettes, as this spring’s seeds germinate. The middle to late October is a good time to control thistle (1 pint of Grazon Next with surfactant or 1 quart of Grazon P&D per acre). If you do not get your thistle sprayed in October, you can spray in April. Another weed that is overly abundant this summer is *horsenettle*. Horsenettle is a persistent perennial that reproduces by seed and by its extensive root system. It is not a true nettle but belongs to the Nightshade (Solanaceae) family, which includes potatoes, tomatoes, and eggplant. Fruits are set about thirty days after flowering. They look like miniature tomatoes—smooth, juicy, round, and 3/8 to 3/4 inch in diameter. Green at first, they turn yellow when ripe and become wrinkled after drying. Inside the fruit, a foul-smelling pulp surrounds numerous flat, round, yellow seeds 1/16 to 1/8 inch across. The average number of seeds per fruit is about 85, and one plant may produce as many as 100 fruits. Horsenettle is a persistent weed because of its extensive perennial root system. The taproot often reaches 8 feet into the soil. Roots in the upper 18 inches can extend 4 feet horizontally from the main plant. Horsenettle spreads more quickly in cultivated land than in undisturbed areas because tillage distributes pieces of root throughout fields. New plants can emerge from rootstocks buried 12 inches below the soil surface, and pieces of root less than ¼ inch long can produce a new plant. Buried root fragments have remained viable for ten years, sprouting when uncovered. No amount of disking and plowing seems to cut horsenettle roots small enough or bury them deep enough to suppress this determined weed.

continued on page 3
All Need to Understand the Science of Food Production
By: Jodi Pennington

I recently attended the joint annual national animal and dairy science meetings in Indianapolis. At the meeting, I attended a symposium concerning communicating science using media outlets. Excellent speakers outlined their methods of relaying to the public the importance of agriculture to rural communities where many jobs are created and to the national welfare as we are not dependent on food from other countries. The big emphasis was to say that science allows us to produce food more safely, more efficiently (e.g., less expensive to the public), more abundantly, and more environmentally friendly than in past years. All the speakers commented how animals had to have proper care or they would not be profitable for the producers. This food includes small ruminant products, one of the most environmentally friendly of all food commodities produced. Several items were covered in the talks but one topic that I found especially interesting was the perception that science and new technology should be communicated to the public and producers. We often think small ruminant producers are knowledgeable of the science behind routine recommendations. Like everyone, producers often need a refresher course. If information about a food or food animal production is unknown, indicate so. If there are concerns with a specific product, acknowledge those concerns. Do not make it sound as if all is well when proper scientific documentation for the results of production practices is lacking. The lack of long-term implications of new techniques in agriculture may not be well known for years, and it was mentioned that the lack of long-term facts should be acknowledged. Technology usually allows for more efficient and less expensive production of food, but not all consumers will choose products from new technology, i.e., the lack of acceptance of hormones in meat by some U.S. consumers. Most hormonal implants for animals are not permitted in European countries. There will always be new products as technology has changed dramatically in the last fifty years and that degree of change has increased in recent years. To illustrate change, let me reflect on a visit to a red Holstein herd 40 years ago. The owners said that, many years earlier in the 1930’s and 40’s, they would actually kill red calves when they were born and bury them as some thought that “the devil might have caused the red calves” rather than conventional black calves. Today, such an occurrence seems inconceivable as it is common knowledge that red recessive genes cause red color in calves and other species. With small ruminants, the available technology is only slightly less than technology available for cattle and poultry. However, some, but not all, small ruminant producers lack the knowledge of technology as full-time producers of other species. In part this lack of knowledge is because part-time producers do not have the time to learn information since many have off the farm jobs and also have not had the years of experience of full-time production of sheep and goats. Meat goat production is a new enterprise in this country. Many producers of small ruminants are extremely aware of various production practices and systems. Producers need the science of recommended management practices today as much as in the 1930’s and consumers certainly have access to greater information. One of the reasons that we have extension production meetings concerning sheep and goats is to provide producers and others in the industry the recommended practices for sheep and goats and the science behind those recommendations. Another interesting related issue at the symposium dealt with the knowledge of food origin and how to label food from different management techniques, countries, and types of animals. Country of origin labeling (COOL) is an important issue and has evolved in the last 10 years. Several years ago, some scientists opposed COOL as it might add to the costs of food. Now it is the law of the land for muscle cuts of meat as well as other foods. At the symposium, the speakers seemed to agree that consumers had a right to know where their food originated. However, it was noted that many consumers would not pay extra for locally grown food. With sheep and goats it is important to know if the meat is from Australia or your neighbor. Another discussion touched on labeling of different management systems for animals, such as those promoted by some large retail chains and restaurants. Such practices as space per animal or confinement versus pasture-based are less universally accepted in labeling but will probably be a greater part of marketing in the future. This probably will not be required by law except to distinguish terms. Organic, natural, hormone-free and other related terms have both promotional and a legal issue as organic is a legally defined term by U.S.D.A. while natural has little meaning in terms of specificity or legality. Origins of animals at birth is a relatively new concept given that most do not think of culture-tube animals as the norm but it is a possibility in the future—probably not the near future. Most “artificial” animals have had labeling requirements in the purebred industry where most of the science is used initially. For example, dairy cattle that are born via embryo transfer must have a suffix, e.g., ET, on their name in the pedigree if the animals are registered. Naming is less specific with small ruminants. Cloned animals have to be so designated and are now allowed to enter the human food chain. For years, they were supposed to be voluntarily withheld from the food supply. In time, these designations may change but all seemed to agree that full disclosure is good until more information is available on the animals. In hindsight, it is difficult to believe that artificial insemination was not used by some breeders in its early days as the animals were not “natural”. However, not all science is successful and accepted by consumers, and it is good to proceed with the safety of the food supply in mind.

![Porterhouse Steak](image)
Protecting Your Identity
By: Janet LaFon

Identity theft is mentioned often in the news, but does it really happen to very many people? The answer is yes, as the FBI estimates that 500,000 to 700,000 Americans are victims of identity theft each year! Most people who are victims have no idea how the thief got their information. It often happens when a wallet or purse is lost or stolen. But thieves also get information in other ways – from trash, by stealing mail out of home mailboxes, from businesses and through the Internet. Sometimes thieves gain access to places that keep records for many people, such as schools, hospitals, car dealers or fitness centers. They may use the stolen identities themselves, or sell them to other thieves. Who are these identity thieves? Unfortunately they are frequently someone we know. Family members, roommates, friends or hired help often have access to our private information and may be tempted to use it.

How do you keep from being a victim of identity theft? Following are some steps that can be taken to protect you:

- First and foremost, keep personal information safe. Don’t keep your personal identification numbers (PINs) with your checkbook, ATM card or debit card.
- It’s a good idea to shred any papers that contain confidential information before you throw them out or recycle them.
- Keep as few credit cards as possible in your purse or wallet.
- Never carry your Social Security number with you. In addition, be especially careful about giving out your Social Security number. There are some businesses that may have a legitimate reason for needing your number, but not all.
- Be cautious when giving out personal information on the telephone or through the Internet. If you didn’t initiate the contact, don’t give out confidential information. If using the Internet, check the security level of the website before giving personal information.
- Be sure to review bank and credit statements when they arrive to make sure all transactions are legitimate.
- Obtain copies of your credit report on a regular basis (preferably at least once a year) to check for suspicious activity.

Adapted from: Federal Trade Commission website.

Horsenettle hosts several enemies of its crop plant relatives, including leafspot fungus of tomatoes, verticillium wilt of eggplant, and mosaic virus of tomatoes and potatoes. It also attracts the potato flea beetle, the Colorado potato beetle, potato stalk borer, onion thrips, red spider mite, and the potato psyllid, a flea-like insect that transmits psyllid yellows disease. A mechanical control of horsenettle is to mow at thirty-day intervals and treat the final regrowth in fall with a systemic herbicide. Rotating an infested field into grass or clover hay for one year allows this combination of treatments. The best time for the first mowing is right after horsenettle has come into full bloom, about thirty days after shoot emergence. Root reserves are at their lowest right after flowering, and forcing the plant to produce new top growth will further deplete its energy reserves. Continually cutting off the top growth during regular hay harvest will weaken the root system, making it more vulnerable to herbicides. Systemic herbicides (Grazon P&D and Grazon Next are examples) are effective against horsenettle and should be applied to mature plants in late summer or fall. After herbicide treatment, horsenettle should not be mowed for at least two weeks—the time required to translocate the chemicals into the roots. Similarly, fall herbicides should be applied at least two weeks before expected frost. There could be other weed problems as we approach the fall season. Be vigilant, in order to control weeds and enhance your forages.

School is starting in your area soon so lets remind our kids of school bus safety.

Master Gardener classes being offered: Classes will begin September 5 and held each Monday and Thursday nights from 6 to 9 PM through October 7, (10 sessions) Subjects covered include soils and composting, plant basics, turf, trees in the landscape, vegetables, perennial and annual flowers, woody ornamentals, plant insects and diseases, roses and fruit crops. Enrollment forms may be obtained by contacting the McDonald County Extension office at 417-223-4775. The classes will be held at the Newton County Extension office on the NW corner of the Crowder College campus. Cost of the class per person will be $135.00. Deadline for registration is August 26th. There needs to be a minimum of 12 people enrolled for the class to proceed so contact your friends and neighbors to join you.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Informational Meeting for Fall Thistle Control Scheduled

Newton/McDonald Missouri Cattlemen’s Association is sponsoring a “Fall Thistle Control Program” this September 17th, 6:30 PM in the Agriculture Building at Crowder College. A program on chemical control of thistle will be presented by Jon Person, Representative of Dow Agrosciences. Dow Agrosciences will be sponsoring a meal before the meeting. Representatives from the prosecuting attorney’s office and county commissioner’s office will be there. Since there is a meal, please RSVP by September 11th to (Jeff Wilkins) 417-455-5648 or (Karen or John) 417-223-4775

BEEF-FORAGE TOUR – AUGUST 24
Starting Time: 2:30 p.m.
University of Missouri Southwest Research Center, Mt. Vernon
(2 miles S & W of I-44 exit 44 on State Road H)

Featured Stops:

- Making Good & Not-So-Good Baleage
- Heat Synchronization
- Artificial Insemination
- Fall Weed Control-Musk Thistles, Spotted Knapweed, Poison Hemlock, etc.
- Residual Feed Intake Study
- Fescue Toxicity Study

A ribeye steak sandwich supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. To reserve yours, RSVP by August 19 to 417-466-3102.

Supper is sponsored by Genex Cooperative, Inc. Dow Agrosciences and Main Street Feeds

September Field Day
9/20/13
David Collingsworth Farm

Join local producers, NRCS conservationists, OK State Extension, McDonald County SWCD technicians, and fencing product representatives, for a field day discussing ways to improve forage growth and grazing on your farm. NRCS and SWCD staff will be discussing programs available through their office to assist with increasing the productivity of your farm and representatives from Gallagher and Stay-Tuff fencing products will be displaying their products and offering demonstrations. Lunch will be provided courtesy of David and Kitty Collingsworth.

9:00 Stockpile of fescue for winter grazing - Nathan Witt NRCS
9:30 High tensile electric and woven wire fencing demonstration Adam McCall (Gallagher) and Jade Jennet (Stay Tuff) product representatives
11:00 NRCS and McDonald County SWCD farm programs – Nathan Witt (NRCS)
11:30 Inter-seeding winter annuals to extend the grazing season - Jeff Parmley (OK State Ext.)
12:00 Lunch (provided by Collingsworths)
Feel free to bring lawn chairs

Directions to the Collingsworth farm near Southwest City, MO: from Hwy 43 take Miller Rd East 1.75 miles, farm is on the S side of Miller Rd. If coming from Hwy 90 take Duncan Rd. N 1/2 mile to Miller Rd. head W 1/4 mile, farm is on S side of road.

Contact David Collingsworth 417-762-3215 or Nathan Witt 417-451-1007 Ext 3 for any questions.

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Farmers Markets in a town near you! Contact your County Extension office for locations and times. Support these local folks as they bring you homegrown produce straight from their gardens to you.