K-STATE Research and Extension | Meadowlark District

March 15, 2019

Jody G. Holthaus
District Extension Agent
Livestock and Natural Resources

Brutal Calving Season

This weather has been brutal for those trying to calve. First off, fighting the snowstorms each week, and now the rain and mud. I'm fearful that the results will be higher calf deaths. Surveys show that mortality in beef herds from birth to weaning ranges from 3 to 7 percent. A few years ago, when there was a USDA livestock emergency program, you had to have over a 4% loss to get payment. The majority of normal deaths occur within the first 24 hours of life. Slow and difficult births (dystocia) and cold stress are the leading causes of death, during this period. Proper care and treatment of the cold stressed calf can prevent this.

There are two types of hypothermia or cold stress, exposure and immersion. Exposure hypothermia is the steady loss of body heat in a cold environment through respiration, evaporation and lack of adequate hair coat, body flesh or weather protection. This type of hypothermia affects all classes of livestock but particularly affects young, old and thin animals. Immersion hypothermia is the rapid loss of body heat due to a wet, saturated hair coat in a cold environment. Immersion hypothermia often occurs after the birthing process because the calf is born saturated with uterine fluids. This also can occur if they are born in deep snow, or wet ground, falling into a creek or heavy rains.

What does hypothermia look like? The body tries to defend itself in two ways: shivering to increase muscle heat production, and blood shunting to reduce heat loss by diverting blood flow away from the body extremities to the body core. A cold nostril and pale cold hooves are early signs that blood is being shunted away from the body extremities. Erratic behavior, confusion, clumsy are all signs of mild hypothermia. We often call these "dummy" calves.
Severe hypothermia results as the body temperature drops below 94 degrees F. After the shivering stops, it is replaced by muscle rigidity. The pulse and respiration begins to slow as the body core cools to 88 degrees F. Below 94 degrees, the vital organs are beginning to get cold. As the brain cools, they become unconscious. Below 86 degrees, signs of life are difficult to detect and may be mistaken for dead. This happened just last week, I happened to see a movement. We were able to warm this calf up and save it (so far).

Warm these calves up to 100 degrees, feed them some warm colostrum as soon as possible. Warming and drying boxes are on the market, or make your own. I've seen plywood boxes 3 X 4 foot, I've seen totes turned into calf boxes, anything can work. Heat sources can be electrical heaters, heat lamps or propane. It is recommended that a fan be included in construction to circulate the warm air. Lack of ventilation and shut offs are often a problem, with homemade units. As the hair coat dries, moisture raises the humidity in the box. This can lead to pneumonia. If the calf is left unattended, that can suffer from heat stress or scorching, if there is not a thermostat shut off.

It's that time of year, when you don't have enough rags or old towels, or like me you've lost your hair dryer for the sake of drying off # 466.

K-STATE Research and Extension | Meadowlark District

March 15, 2019

David G. Hallauer
District Extension Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Early Season Cools Season Grass Lawn Calendar

Cool season turfgrass species are the norm for most all of our home lawns and athletic fields in northeast Kansas. That means they like temperatures ranging from the 40's to the mid-to-upper 70's. With spring (maybe?) finally here, they'll be taking off before long, and that means there are some 'chores' we might need to be prepared to get done.

Broadleaf weed control is one of those things that can really sneak up on turfgrass managers and homeowners alike. While fall applications would likely have been more effective from a broad spectrum standpoint for controlling winter annuals and weeds like dandelions, spring can be a good time for spot treatment. When necessary, spot treat broadleaf weeds on a day that is 50 degrees or warmer. Rain or irrigation within 24 hours of application will reduce effectiveness. Always read and follow label directions for best results.

If crabgrass is your nemesis, you probably have until April to apply treatment (products may vary – always read and follow label directions…). Many of our preventers are applied when the native redbud trees are in full bloom sometime in April. Moisture hasn't been a problem this winter, but who knows what spring will bring, so remember that the preventer needs to be watered in with about a quarter inch of water before it will start to work. NOTE: a good, thick lawn is the best weed prevention and may be all that is needed.

It gets warm. Grass starts to green up. We start to think about applying fertilizer. As with broadleaf weed control, fall is actually a better time to apply fertilizer than is the spring. In fact, applications in November and September will likely do more for your turf (both from a vigor and weed control perspective) than spring applications. If you didn't get a fall application applied – or just want to add a little more – May is probably your best option.

If you have a lawn that typically receives enough rainfall (or irrigation) that it doesn't go dormant due to drought in the summer, you can apply a light rate of a slow-release fertilizer once May arrives. If us are using a fertilizer that includes a weed killer for broadleaf weeds, you need to pay attention to how it is applied. Rain or irrigation within 24 hours of application tends to reduce effectiveness of the weed killer, yet the fertilizer needs to be watered in. If using a product with both fertilizer *and* weed killer, wait 24 hours after application before watering in.

All of our offices have a full complement of lawn care publications available either in the office or online from our KSU Bookstore. For those publications, contact a District Office or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu .

K-STATE Research and Extension | Meadowlark District

March 15, 2019

Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension District
Food, Nutrition, Health and Safety

Tobacco Use by Youth Is Rising

Tobacco product use among U.S. youth is increasing. More than 1 in 4 high school students and about 1 in 14 middle school students in 2018 had used a tobacco product in the past 30 days. This was a considerable increase from 2017, which was driven by an increase in e-cigarette use. E-cigarette use increased from 11.7% to 20.8% among high school students and from 3.3% to 4.9% among middle school students from 2017 to 2018. No change was found in the use of other tobacco products, including cigarettes, during this time.

There were 1.5 million more current youth e-cigarette users in 2018 than 2017. Four.9 million youth were current tobacco product users in 2018. Use of any tobacco product grew by 38.3% among high school students (2017-2018). E-cigarettes, specifically those shaped like USB flash drives, are the main reason for the increase.

So what parents should know about vaping and JUULing? JUULing is a teen phenomenon. It's a new way to consume—and get the buzz of—nicotine without the mess and telltale signs of smoking a cigarette. This trend can have serious negative side effects for youth. Elaine Johannes, K-State Research and Extension Specialist for Family and Youth Development offers these insights:

1. What is a JUUL? A JUUL, pronounced "jewel", is an e-cigarette that looks like a computer flash drive and charges in a USB outlet. Once powered, you can load the JUUL with tiny, refillable pods of liquid nicotine. One pod contains the same amount of nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. Just one quick "puff" can give youth the "feel good" sensation. A JUUL pod is no bigger than a soda can tab. The e-nicotine comes in appealing flavors such as crème brulee, mango and bubble gum.

2. Why is it so popular? Three words: Marketing and Peer Pressure. These terms are strategically sold with a very young audience in mind. The JUUL is often customized with a "skin" or decal with images of movies, TV shows, and pop stars. So it becomes the "cool" thing to do. Many kids don't realize that JUUL has addictive nicotine and other chemicals.

3. What are the possible signs that a child is using a JUUL? You may notice a sweet smell. Users will often have dehydration and nosebleeds due to a chemical that retains water molecules in e-nicotine. Also, users can experience a strong aversion to caffeine. Other signs include changing habits in grades or behavior, or disappearing regularly to take a hit.

K-STATE Research and Extension | Meadowlark District

March 15, 2019

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

No news from Nancy