

April 23, 2021

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No news from Jody.

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Multi-stemmed Brush Species – Roughleaf Dogwood

While buckbrush is more commonly known to producers, another troublesome multi-stemmed species of concern in grazing lands is roughleaf dogwood. Reaching heights of up to 15 feet, it is often found in fence rows and along streams, first, spreading in to open areas as well.

Roughleaf dogwood comes on later than buckbrush, often not exhibiting its flat topped clusters of white flowers until late May or early June. In native grass pastures where regular burning occurs, fire may have prevented it from even getting started. In cool season forage stands, or unburned warm season prairies, however, roughleaf dogwood becomes very difficult to remove once it gets established.

Herbicide applications can be effective from the flower bud state through early seed production. Many common herbicide active ingredients have some activity – but seldom result in what we'd consider acceptable control. In fact, research with single active ingredient products like triclopyr or dicamba or picloram, even in combination with 2,4-D, seldom result in mortalities greater than 25 percent. Even 'good' control isn't great, with high volume treatments of multiple active ingredient products resulting in around 50 percent control. Single applications, even of multiple active ingredient products, likely won't eliminate roughleaf dogwood in a single year, instead requiring a multi-year effort, possibly in combination with prescribed fire.

Herbicides may damage desirable grasses under the right conditions and all of the herbicides above will do significant damage to desirable legumes and other broadleaf forbs in forage stands. *Always* read and follow label directions prior to application. For additional information on rates/timings/products, request a copy of (or link to...) the 2021 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide available through any District Office.

Bagworm Scouting – Put it on the Calendar

I blame it on mowing. When we start mowing each week, we see the 'after effects' of the previous year – and it gets us to thinking about what's ahead.

One previous year's pests that is noticed each spring is bagworms. It's hard to miss them if your control program wasn't 100 percent effective last year (it never is) – inch and quarter long brown colored inverted cones hanging from branch ends. They aren't active right now, but it is time to start planning for the next hatch.

That hatch typically begins in mid-May in to early June. Larvae will emerge from bags over two to three weeks, starting as small foliage covered cones that blend in with their food source. During early stages of growth, they're easily controlled – and that means preparing now.

Mark your calendar to start scouting in mid-May. Monitor trees on a weekly basis for bags smaller than the end of a sharpened pencil. If pressure is already high or has been heavy in the past, consider initiation of control programs in fairly short order. If pressure is still low and past damage wasn't bad, you can delay a bit longer until more of the hatch has occurred. Don't let bags reach much more than a quarter of an inch long, or control may become difficult. Bagworms will hatch over three plus weeks – and feed for almost three months, so repeat applications may be necessary.

Now is *not* the time for application, but make a note on the calendar to start scouting. The feeding season will be here before we know it.

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

Reduce Screen Time and Get Active!

Screen time is any time spent watching television and videos, playing video, computer or tablet games, and surfing the Internet. With more electronic entertainment options than ever before, it is harder to get children up and moving. Excessive screen time is linked to several problems for children such as childhood obesity, sleep problems, poor school performance, and behavior issues.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that screen time for children ages 2 to 5 should be limited to 1 hour a day of high quality programming. Here are a few tips to reduce children's time in front of the screen:

1. Keep devices out of your child's bedroom. Children who have TV's in their room tend to spend 1 ½ hours more in a typical day watching TV than kids without a set in their room.
2. Make mealtime, family time. Turn off the TV, cell phones, and video games and talk to each other during family mealtime.
3. Provide other options and alternatives. Watching a screen can become a habit, making it easy to forget what else here is to do. Give children ideas and alternatives, like playing outside, learning a new hobby or sport or doing puzzles or board games.
Make a list of all the fun activities that you and your child can do that does not involve a screen.
4. Set a good example. Be a good role model and limit your screen time. Instead of watching TV or checking email on your phone, spend time with your family doing something fun and active.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark District
Family Life

Brain Health

There are things you can do to live an overall brain-healthy lifestyle. Adopt these practices early and continue them throughout your life to help reduce your risk of cognitive decline as you age. The Alzheimer's Association offers 10 ways to love your brain.

Break a sweat. Get at least 150 minutes of exercise per week.

Hit the books. Take a class online or in your community.

Quit smoking now, as this increases your risk for many health conditions, including cognitive decline.

Risk factors for heart disease also increase your risk for cognitive decline. A heart-healthy lifestyle is also good for your brain.

Wear a helmet, use your seatbelt and prevent falls. Protecting your head can help reduce your risk of cognitive decline.

Fuel up right with a healthy and balanced diet,

A lack of sleep contributes to memory loss and thinking ability. Try to get nine hours per night.

Take care of your mental health. Depression could be linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline.

Strong social connections throughout life may support better brain health. Enjoy time with friends, volunteer, engage in hobbies, and be part of your community.

Challenge your brain with card games, puzzles, learning a new skill – these have brain-boosting benefits.

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