

## David Hallauer

District Extension Agent  
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

### **Poultry Litter**

Manure has long been a source of nutrients in our grain and forage production systems. The predominant products have come from beef, dairy, and swine systems, but from time to time, access to poultry manure is possible as well. If managed correctly, it is an excellent option.

Finding product, getting delivery, and determining pricing are the most typical ‘front end’ challenges, but storage site location, application uniformity, and odor are additional challenges to consider. Make sure storage locations are away from homes/public places and avoid potential runoff issues by staying back from drainage ditches and creeks/streams/etc.... Take time in advance of delivery to make sure your site is appropriate and won’t contribute to issues with neighbors or lead to water quality concerns.

Product analysis in Southeast Kansas a few years ago showed some variability across products (it’s always a good idea to confirm product analysis prior to purchase/pricing), with an ‘average’ value of around 56-53-46. Turkey and broiler products tend to be higher analysis. Layer, pullet, and breeder products trend a little lower. About half of the nitrogen will be available in year one (in cool season grass systems, it will be lower due to the reduced time for mineralization to occur). Potassium availability is close to 100 percent, with other secondary and micronutrients provided as well.

Phosphorous availability is based on soil test levels, but most of our soils would typically result in half of that P number available as well. Because phosphorous levels are a concern for surface water contamination, make sure you know soil test levels prior to application, then base application rates on crop P needs, rather than N requirements.

If considering poultry litter as a fertilizer source, check out this KSU Agronomy eUpdate for information: [https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article\\_new/nutrient-availability-in-poultry-manure-469-2](https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article_new/nutrient-availability-in-poultry-manure-469-2) or request a copy from any of our District Offices.

### **Excluding Rabbits**

As vegetation availability declines going in to winter, rabbits and other wildlife need to eat. Often, that comes at the expense of small trees and shrubs. To avoid the frustration of having your hard work sacrificed to feed them, now is a great time to work on excluding rabbits and other pests from those new plantings.

One of the most effective exclusion solutions is one-inch mesh chicken wire or a similar barrier at least two feet tall. It can be removed come spring – or left for an extended period of time, so long as it’s monitored and will be removed before it constricts the tree’s trunk.

Don’t want to mess with physical barriers? Plastic tree wraps might be a possibility, though they won’t likely be as effective as the wire mesh and will need to be appropriately anchored. Repellants are also a possibility so long as they are reapplied after a rain.

Landscape and windbreak plantings take a lot of work to get started. Plan now to protect them so you aren’t replanting again next year.

## Ross Mosteller

District Extension Agent  
Livestock & Natural Resources

### **Livestock Risk Protection-Management Considerations**

It seems each morning as I feed my weaned calves, I enter into the yearly battle with myself on “when is the right time to market those feeder steers”? When do you pull the trigger to sell? Is investing more feed going to give a better return? Do you have a marketing plan? What are the tax ramifications? What price do you need to receive to cover variable cost and yet have some comfortable level of revenue to address fixed costs and acceptable enterprise income? All good questions and just a few of many that livestock producers need to ask themselves.

There is no doubt that agriculture is a business with risk, seemingly with more volatility all the time. As I’m wrestling with all the above questions, the issue of price risk protection comes to mind as well. Dr. Jennifer Ifft, K-State Department of Agricultural Economics, has a wealth of information on this topic. Today I’d like to share excerpts from one of her articles from a series that looks at Livestock Risk Protection (LRP).

Cow-calf producers use various strategies to manage price risk, including futures and options. Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) is a type of livestock price insurance that typically costs less than a put option. LRP makes payouts (indemnities) that replace the income that is lost due to a price decline. For cow-calf producers interested in the price risk management and income benefits of LRP, some preparation is necessary before purchase.

Here are three main points to consider with LRP:

1. If price risk management is an unfamiliar concept, it might be useful to consider comparable expenses such as vaccines that are already common for cow-calf operations. Is the cost and benefit of LRP comparable to existing use of vaccines or other investments that decrease risk?
2. Find a trusted and knowledgeable livestock insurance agent. This is generally important but is especially critical for a producer that is unfamiliar with hedging and is considering LRP for the first time.
3. LRP requires an investment of time in understanding futures markets and selecting acceptable LRP coverage price. Further, LRP can be complementary to efforts to improve financial management and record keeping or develop a marketing plan. Many resources are available for cow-calf producers to aid in these processes, including contacting your local extension agent.

For all types of producers, it is important to keep a realistic perspective on price risk management and LRP. Research has shown that many producers adopt crop insurance only *after* they experience a drought. Focusing on recent events can bias insurance decisions and lead to disappointment. Some years will have no payouts because prices do not decrease, while large payouts occur infrequently. A long-term perspective, combined with understanding of how LRP works, will make price risk management decisions easier.

LRP has been available for two decades, recent policy changes make it more affordable for producers to consider. This might be a tool that is valuable to your operation, but you have to know your cost, needed revenue, cost/return benefit and personal acceptable level of risk. This article and additional information on LRP can be found at: <https://www.agmanager.info/crop-insurance/livestock-insurance-papers-and-information>

**Teresa Hatfield**

District Extension Agent  
Family and Community Wellness

### **November is National Family Caregivers Month**

Rosalyn Carter said, “There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need a caregiver.” November is National Family Caregivers Month. Over 65 million people across the U.S. are caregivers to a friend or family member who is chronically ill, disabled, or an older adult. The dollar amount for the care they provide is estimated to be around 375 billion a year. It is time to thank our family caregivers for the support they provide to our communities.

Family caregivers experience significant stress due to caregiving’s emotional and physical challenges. Caregivers have higher levels of stress than people who are not caregivers. They often report that it is challenging to take care of themselves. Many caregivers report a lack of sleep, poor eating habits, and lack of exercise. They also say that they often provide care when they are sick. They are at a greater risk of depression and a greater risk to abuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. These are just a few risk factors faced by caregivers.

Caregivers report facing barriers to self-care. Personal attitudes and beliefs can get in the way of caregivers caring for themselves. Many people believe that they are being selfish and that the person they care for is the one that needs care, not themselves. They may feel like they are not a good caregiver if they ask for help or feel they can only care for Dad properly. However, caregivers who fail to care for themselves set themselves up for becoming ill and unable to care for the person they are trying to help.

It is essential to recognize the early signs warning signs of stress. For instance, you may feel frustrated and angry one minute and helpless the next. You may make mistakes when dosing medications or turn to unhealthy behaviors like drinking too much alcohol or smoking. We are all different, so it is vital to know your stress symptoms and take care of them before they become a health issue.

To manage your stress, consider what kind of stress is affecting you. If your stress is physical, like high blood pressure, digestive problems, headaches, or pacing, try physical relaxation activities like walking, swimming, gardening, or a massage. Or suppose your stress is mental, like worrying or having difficulty concentrating. Try mental relaxation, like listening to soothing music or reading for pleasure. You may need to use a combination of physical and mental relaxation techniques. Remember, there are some things you can’t change.

Lastly, don’t be afraid to ask for or accept help from others. If someone tells you, “let me know if you need my help,” be prepared to give them something to do. You can say, “yes can you sit with Dad for a few minutes while I take a brisk walk.” And don’t be so hard on yourself; know that you are doing your best under challenging circumstances.

Community resources are available for caregivers.

## Cindy Williams

District Extension Agent  
Family & Community Wellness

### **Have A Safe and Healthy Thanksgiving**

Keeping your family safe from foodborne illness is more important than ever. With the healthcare system fully employed to help people have serious health issues, it is important to stay healthy and stay out of the hospital emergency room.

For your household-only Thanksgiving meal, here are a few ideas for keeping it simple and setting yourself up for success:

Prepare a smaller traditional turkey:

- A small turkey of 8-pounds will feed 8 people and take 2.5 hours to roast. Remember, a food thermometer is essential to successful turkey roasting. The internal temperature should reach 165°F. Once it does, remove it from the oven, and let it rest for 20 minutes.
- A bone-turkey breast of 4 to 6 pounds is a great option for a household meal and can feed up to 6 people. It will take between 1.5 to 2 hours to roast and ---again---it is only done when your thermometer reaches 165°F.

Focus on favorite side dishes:

- Choose your two favorite sides to prepare. Keep things simple, and set yourself up for success by limiting the number of side dishes you make.
- When using delicious frozen options, remember to serve them safely by following package and preparation instructions.

Follow the Core Four practices for safety:

- Clean: Every recipe begins with handwashing before starting food prep.
- Separate: Prevent cross-contamination from harmful bacteria by separating raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags and in your refrigerator. Use one cutting board for fresh produce/cooked meats and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Cook: Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause food borne illness. Use a food thermometer to make sure your food is thoroughly cooked.
- Chill: Refrigerate foods quickly because cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Keeping a constant refrigerator temperature of 40°F or below is one of the more effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.