

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

The Effects of Late Season Usage on Cool Season Grasses

Forage management this time of year is a balancing act: back off grazing and (potentially) give up forage we could really use right now or go ahead and use what we can hoping stands will come out on the other side as strong as ever. There isn't one right answer.

As a general rule, perennial forages will benefit from a period of rest and regrowth prior to fall dormancy. When moisture is adequate and temperatures optimum (remember: the optimum temperature for warm season grasses is vastly different than that for cool season forages), grasses grow rapidly. Photosynthesis occurs and green leaves transfer energy to leaves. When adequate leaf area is attained, energy is translocated to root systems. This maintains the plant through winter and initiates spring green-up. It's a simple, but often overlooked process that has a lot to do with how plants prosper/perish, and can be a tough one for forage producers trying to balance their forage need with their available forage resource.

Take the opportunity now to take a second look at pastures/hay fields. Four to six inches of green growth is the *minimum* suggested height prior to entering dormancy. Plants with less regrowth often don't have the photosynthetic capacity to simultaneously produce top *and* root growth, meaning root systems may be weakened going in to dormancy. A weakened root system now may result in slower green up – and potential yield reductions – in the future.

If you find forage growth less than desirable, consider steps you can take prior to dormancy to help with stand recovery. In pasture, it may mean reduced grazing pressure. In hay fields, there may be little you can do outside of forward planning for next season. Either way, knowing where you stand now can aid in your management of that stand well in to the future.

Sunscald Prevention

Planting trees is hard work: dig a hole the right size, plant at the right time, provide the appropriate amount of water, etc... Even if you do it all correctly, Mother Nature can throw us a curve. This summer, that curve was above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. It can also happen in winter, with damage in the form of sunscald and bark cracks to young, smooth, thin-barked trees like fruit trees, honeylocusts, ash, oak, and maple.

Research out of Georgia has shown that on warm winter days, the southwest side of a peach tree's trunk may reach temperatures as much as 40 degrees warmer than bark in the shade. When warming occurs, bark tissue loses cold hardiness and cells become active. Active cells are then susceptible to lethal freezing when temperature drops at night. The result: bark tissue that becomes sunken and discolored in late spring. This bark eventually cracks and sloughs off. While trees can recover, they often require watering when dry.

If you have any of the thin barked trees referenced above, consider preventative measures in the form of a light-colored tree wrap to young or recently planted trees. Apply the wrap in October/November, starting at ground level and extending to the start of the first branches. This will help protect the tree in winter. Remove the following March to keep the wrap from damaging bark during the next growing season.

Ross Mosteller
District Extension Agent
Livestock & Natural Resources

Veterinary Feed Directive

If you've been following my columns, you will have noted that I tend to write about what may be happening to me on a personal level. The theory is, if it is timely for me, it might just be for others? That is the case again this week, as I got to go through the process of working with my veterinarian on a veterinary feed directive (VFD) this week. This is likely old news for most, but hopefully a good refresher none the less. Information in this article comes from Dr. A.J. Tarpoff and the publication, *Veterinary Feed Directive: What Producers Should Know about Antimicrobial Use in Feed* <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3289.pdf>

The current rules on VFD have been in place since January 2017. A VFD is a written statement authorizing the use of a medically important antibiotic in or on the feed (*this includes milk and milk replacer*). The VFD form, either in print or electronic formats, will contain the veterinarian and client's contact information, the location of the animals, date of approval, expiration date of the order, name of VFD drug, type of animal being fed, number of animals to be fed, indication for the drug, level of the drug in the feed, any withdrawal or special instructions, number of refills if ordered, correct statement indicating no off label use, and the veterinarians signature.

VFD drugs are antibiotics that are used in food producing animals that are medically important in human medicine. The most common drugs that will be affected are the tetracyclines (*chlortetracycline, oxytetracycline*), Sulfas, Tylosin, Neomycin, and Virginiamycin. The directions on the label are for the indication (*treatment or control of a disease*), dose (*the amount fed each day*), and duration (*days the animals are fed the drug*). Veterinarians can only issue a VFD for labelled directions. Many of these products were previously, widely available over the counter medications; easily being able to be purchased and fed according to label.

VFDs contain an expiration date. The expiration date on the VFD is not the same as the duration of use. Duration of use is the period of time which the animals should be fed the VFD drug for label indication. The expiration is the last day of the authorization to feed a VFD. The FDA has set a maximum of 6-month expiration on a VFD order. If a producer has VFD feed on hand, but the expiration date has passed, a new VFD must be made to legally continue to feed.

Three copies of the VFD order are made. The original will be kept by the issuing veterinarian, one copy will be sent to the feed distributor, and the other copy will be given to the producer. These orders must be kept on file by the producer for 2 years after the issuing of the VFD. If an FDA inspection occurs, the VFD order must be provided upon request.

The use of antibiotics in feed for food producing animals has come under scrutiny over the past decade or so. The growing issues with bacteria developing resistance to medically important antibiotics in human medicine have been a major driver of these changes. The FDA has put the use of medically important antibiotics under the guidance of veterinarians.

The Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) is the way in which veterinarians will work with producers to ensure the judicious use of these antibiotics with FDA oversight. Use of these antimicrobials by producers must be authorized by their veterinarian in the form of a VFD. For more general information on antibiotics, K-State has developed the following website as a resource: <http://www.ksuantibiotics.org/>

Teresa Hatfield
District Extension Agent
Family and Community Wellness

Why Preventative Healthcare is Important

We can do many things to try and stay healthy. We can get plenty of exercise, eat vitamin-rich fruits and vegetables, main an active social life, and avoid smoking and drug and alcohol abuse. Getting preventative health screenings to prevent illness or detect it early is also vital. Preventive screenings can help you find potential health problems early and receive treatment. They can also prevent you from getting certain illnesses. Receiving regular preventative services could reduce your risk of disability or even death.

Most health insurance plans provide preventative services. Your doctor can advise you on when to start getting preventive screenings and how often they should be performed. Sometimes, your risk factors for certain diseases may mean you have a greater chance of developing a specific disease. In this case, your doctor may recommend you be screened more frequently. Below is a list of some preventative screenings you may want to discuss with your healthcare provider. This list is not all-inclusive. Check with your insurance provider to see if and how often the screening is covered.

Bone Mass Measurements: A test to see if you are at risk for broken bones due to osteoporosis. The lower your bone density, the higher the risk of fracture.

Breast Cancer Screening: Mammograms check for breast cancer that you or your doctor may not be able to find by a manual examination.

Colorectal Cancer Screening: Helps to find pre-cancerous polyps before they become cancerous. Several types of screenings are available.

Diabetes Screening: These screenings determine whether or not you are at risk for developing or might have diabetes.

Prostate Cancer Screening: Measures the amount of Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) in the blood.

Cholesterol Screening: a blood test that checks the amount of cholesterol and triglycerides in your blood. High cholesterol can lead to heart disease.

It is essential to see your healthcare provider regularly, even if you are feeling well. Preventative screenings are a vital tool to help you maintain your good health.

Upcoming Events

Medicare Options Class-Brown Bag Lunch and Learn

October 13, 2022

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Oskaloosa Office

100 E Washington

Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326

Phone: 785-863-2212

Cost: Free--Call to register

Stay Strong Stay Healthy-16 Sessions

Begins October 24, 2022

9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.

Seneca Office

1500 Community Dr.

Seneca, KS 66538-9786

September 23, 2022

Phone: 785-336-2184
Cost \$20 (all 16 sessions) Call to register

Medicare Open Enrollment Plan Review
October 15-December 7, 2022
Appointments are available in all three district offices:

Holton Office

114 W 5th St.
Holton, KS 66436-1778
Phone: 785-364-4125

Oskaloosa Office

PO Box 326
100 E Washington
Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326
Phone: 785-863-2212

Seneca Office

1500 Community Dr.
Seneca, KS 66538-9786
Phone: 785-336-2184

Cindy Williams
District Extension Agent
Family & Community Wellness

Balancing Marriage and Work Not an Easy Task

In many two-earner families today it becomes difficult to fully meet the demands of work and to give the necessary time to create and maintain a satisfying and intimate partnership. Here are some ideas.

1. Separate work and family activities. Establish rituals that signal the end of the working day and leave business behind. Focus on love life, children and what to have for dinner---anything so long as it isn't work. Take vacations. Though it's hard to take time off, vacations break the routine and give a fresh perspective. Pursue non-work-related activities. Take a class, engage in a sport or hobby, or volunteer time to an organization. Stick to work tasks while on the job. Compartmentalize personal and professional roles. Realize that those two roles are different, and enjoy the diversity.
2. Talk honestly and often. Get disputes out in the open. Putting something aside and avoiding it, which is common with couples, ensures that it will come back magnified. Listen without being critical. It's important to listen without getting defensive or assuming you're being criticized. Express needs in a positive way. Be very specific about explaining wants and needs. Avoid blaming the other person for not meeting them. Learn that reciprocity is the best approach for a true partnership.
3. Resolve all disputes---at home or at work. Focus on priorities. Don't be sidetracked by extraneous issues. Learn how to develop a win-win situation. Lose-lose situation occur when trying to "win" out of pride, arrogance or need to be in control.
4. Divide home work carefully. Define areas of responsibility at home. Determine who has the skills to be in charge of what. Help each other when needed.

Balancing work and family demands require both skill and commitment from all parties. Remember the best intentions without appropriate action can lead to difficulty.