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Crops & Soils/Horticulture

2023 Dicamba Training Resources

There are a couple of herbicides in Kansas requiring additional training beyond the private and/or commercial pesticide applicator licensing requirements outlined in last week's column. Paraquat (paraquat dichloride) is one. There's also the restricted use dicamba containing products Engenia, XtendiMax, or Tavium with VaporGrip, where we'll focus this week.

The labels of the aforementioned dicamba products outline annual training requirements. Even if trained previously, all applicators must complete dicamba or auxin-specific training prior to purchase/use of these products in the 2023 growing season. Product labels state formulations are for *retail sale to and use only by* certified applicators. In Kansas, this means everyone purchasing/using these products has to obtain a private (application to agricultural lands owned or operated by individual) or commercial (applicators applying to other people's land for compensation) applicator license *and* complete the annual training requirements.

If you have been applying under someone else's license you will need to get your own if you are applying these products. If someone has been applying for you under your license, they, too must meet the requirements for application of the restricted use dicamba products, namely completion of an approved dicamba training and holding either a private or commercial applicator license. Training opportunities are available (in multiple formats) as follows:

BASF: <https://www.engeniaherbicide.com/training.html>

Bayer/Monsanto: <https://www.roundupreadyxtend.com/stewardship/Pages/default.aspx>

Syngenta: <https://www.syngenta-us.com/herbicides/tavium-application-stewardship>

NOTE: drop me a line at dhallaue@ksu.edu if you want web addresses e-mailed to you.

Pruning Overgrown Apple Trees

It's been said the best pruning cut for an overgrown apple tree is at ground level. What if you really want to save it, though? The answer: start slowly and be realistic. You can only remove no more than 30 percent of the tree in one year, so being patient is key.

After removing dead wood (it doesn't count toward the 30 percent), start removing suckers at the tree's base. Then, choose six of the best branches to keep as scaffold branches and remove the others (good candidates for removal include those with narrow crotch angles). Make cuts flush to the branch collar and do not paint wounds – they'll heal more quickly if left alone. If you've reached the 30 percent threshold, stop for the year and pick up again next year.

If you still have room to prune, thin back branches on each scaffold branch, removing crowded branches and opening up the tree to light and reducing the potential for humidity issues. When you are through, the tree should have enough area removed so a softball can be thrown it.

When you prune severely, you'll likely cause the tree to produce vigorous side shoots from the trunk (suckers) and main branches will produce water sprouts. While one of the more time consuming and difficult practices necessary to bring an overgrown apple tree back into shape, this pruning is key to tree survival and production. Remove suckers/sprouts throughout the growing season so the tree's center stays open (waiting until spring will only stimulate the tree to produce more).

Ross Mosteller

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Livestock & Natural Resources

Lice in Winter

Insect pests can be an ongoing challenge to livestock producers throughout the year, so you have to be continually on the lookout for signs of problems. This time of the year it can be easy to forget about insect pests because we might not directly see them like flies or mosquitos or other insects in the other seasons. But, what can be lurking in a thick winter hair coat??? LICE! Dr. A.J. Tarpoff DVM, Beef Extension Veterinarian for K-State Research and Extension, shared a good article several years ago in Beef Tips. His work serves as the basis of the article.

In general, every herd has some level of lice infestation. Lice are carried from season to season by a small percentage of the herd that act as a host reservoir. Adults lay eggs on the hair of infected animals. The overall lifecycle for an egg to mature into an adult, and lay eggs is roughly 28 days. Most females lay 1 egg per day. Cattle lice infections can affect the health and performance of our cows and stocker cattle during the winter months. This time period generally ranges from December through March. The USDA has estimated that livestock producers lose up to \$125 million per year due to effects of lice infestations.

Clinical signs of lice infection generally begin with constant rubbing and scratching within the herd. Fences, posts, water troughs, trees and any other stationary object could be subject to damage from this rubbing. Damage to these physical structures can present as much of an economic loss as reduced animal performance does. As the infection and irritation continues, large hairless patches will become evident on animals. Further diagnosing the issue beyond the clinical signs requires seeing the adult lice on the skin. Parting the hair will reveal the lice. They are very small but can still be seen. They are roughly the size of a grain of sand. The economic threshold for treatment is roughly 10 lice per square inch.

There are two different types of lice that infect cattle. Biting lice feed on the skin and secretions on the outside of the animal. The other type is known as sucking lice. These species are blood feeders and pierce the skin. Both types of lice spend their entire lifecycle on the cattle hosts. Off of cattle they survive very poorly and generally only last a few days. Lice are very species specific. So, cattle lice cannot affect people, horses, or any other species.

There are several options when it comes to treatment of lice in cowherds. One option is the avermectin endectocides. These products come in pour-on formulations and injectable formulations. It is important to note that the injectable formulations do not work on biting lice since they do not blood feed. The other options are topical treatments that are non-systemic. These products are typically pyrethroid products similar to what is commonly used to control horn flies during the summer months. These products are very effective against the adult lice, but do not affect the larvae or eggs. Retreatment is often indicated 14 days after initial treatment. There is a product available that is a pyrethroid in combination with an IGR (insect growth regulator) that not only works very well against the adults, but also works against the eggs and larvae. Use of this particular product eliminates the need to retreat in 14 days. As always consult with your herd health veterinarian for products that best fit your situation.

When treating livestock, it is important to treat the entire group. Missing one animal could allow it to serve as the reservoir for reinfesting the entire herd. The same thought should be given to new additions to the herd from an outside source. Basic biosecurity such as treating and segregating new additions for 30 days is not only good to reduce risk of lice, it is also a great tool in decreasing introduction of other diseases. Our neighbors to the north have a good reference for all livestock pests: <https://entomology.unl.edu/livestock/livestockpestcontrol.pdf>

Teresa Hatfield
District Extension Agent
Family and Community Wellness

Check Your Credit

Periodically checking your credit report can help protect you against identity theft and help you to spot errors in your credit history. You will want to ensure the information is accurate, complete, and current. If you find errors on your credit report, it could be a sign of identity theft. Identity theft is when someone gains access to your personal information to gain access to your bank accounts, make charges on your credit card, or open new credit card accounts without your knowledge. Identity theft harms your credit by showing you have unpaid bills and past-due accounts. You may only know it happened once you receive notices of unpaid bills.

There are three nationwide credit bureaus—Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. You can order a credit report from each of these once a year. You can get a free copy of your credit report every twelve months. This year through December 2023, you can also get a weekly free credit report from the three credit bureaus. You can get a report from all three at once or stagger them and get one from each company every four months. Each credit bureau obtains information from different sources, the information in your report may differ from one company to the next.

To access your report, you can:

- Visit AnnualCreditReport.com
- Call 1-877-322-8228
- Complete the Annual Credit Report Request Form and send it to:
Annual Credit Report Request Service
P.O. Box 105281
Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

When requesting your report, be aware that they will confirm your identity. They will ask for your name, address, Social Security number, and date of birth. If you have changed addresses in the last two years, you may have to provide your former address. They will also ask you a question only you would know, like the monthly mortgage payment amount.

According to federal law, you can dispute information you believe is incorrect. Contact the reporting company if you see something inaccurate on your credit report. The credit bureau must investigate and inform you of the result. The Federal Trade Commission's website has information about resolving errors on credit reports. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's website provides additional guidance about disputing information on credit reports.

After reviewing your credit report, if you feel you have been a target of identity theft, you will need to report this immediately to identitytheft.gov. They will give you a list of recovery steps to take. These steps might include closing accounts, adding a fraud alert or credit freeze to your account, and reporting a stolen or misused Social Security number.

Regularly checking your credit report could save you some headaches later. For more information, visit the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov.

Cindy Williams

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Family & Community Wellness

Making a Meal from What's on Hand

Wondering what to do with meal leftovers? If you have leftovers from get-togethers or from meals at any time, you may want to consider mixing them together into some type of casserole. Try this “Make-Your-Own-Casserole” recipe from Alice Henneman, MS, RD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension-(retired), as a guide to help you turn leftovers into favorite family foods.

“Make-Your-Own” Casserole

General Directions:

Select food(s) from each category or use your own favorites. Combine in a buttered 2- to 2 ½-quart casserole dish. Cover and bake at 350°F for about 50 minutes to 1 hour. Or microwave using 50% power for about 15 to 30 minutes, rotating or stirring as necessary. Heat until steaming hot (165°F) throughout. This recipe makes six servings.

Starch—Select ONE:

- 2 cups uncooked pasta (macaroni, penne, spiral, bow tie), COOKED
- 1 cup uncooked long-grain white or brown rice, COOKED
- 4 cups uncooked noodles, COOKED

Protein---Select ONE:

- 2 cups cooked ground beef
- 2 cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, or pork
- 2 cups chopped hard-cooked egg
- 2 (6 to 8-oz.) cans fish or seafood, flaked
- 2 cups cooked or canned dry beans (kidney, etc.)

Vegetables---Select ONE:

- 1 (10-oz.) pkg. thawed and drained frozen spinach, broccoli, green beans, green peas
- 1 (16-oz.) can green beans, peas, carrots, corn, drained
- 2 cups sliced fresh zucchini

Sauce---Select ONE:

- 2 cups white sauce or 1 can sauce-type soup (mushroom, celery, cheese, tomato, etc.) mixed with milk to make 2 cups
- 1 (16-oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice

Flavor---Select ONE or MORE:

- ½ cup chopped celery, ¼ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup sliced black olives
- 1-2 teaspoons mixed dried leaf herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram, tarragon)
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Toppings---Select ONE or MORE: If desired after heating, place on top:

- 2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup shredded Swiss, Cheddar, or Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ cup buttered bread crumbs
- ¼ to ½ cup canned fried onion rings

Return casserole with topping(s), uncovered, to oven for about 10 minutes or to microwave for about 2 minutes.