Address

602 W. 5th St. Suite 2 Cherokee, OK 73728

Phone

580-596-3131

Website

extension.okstate.edu/ alfalfa

Social Media

Facebook: /Alfalfa County Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Services

Alfalfa County OSU **Cooperative Extension News**

Hold Your Horses!...and Cows

Dana Zook, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service NW OK Area Livestock Specialist



Spring is my absolute favorite time of year. The weather warms up, I'm able to get out in my garden, and my kids go outside with minimal footwear (moms everywhere know what I mean). For my day job, spring is the beginning of a new forage production season. "Green-up" is an exciting time but it's important to avoid grazing or haying too early. With the next grazing season around the corner, let's review some best management practices for our native grass.



Let's start by addressing native hay meadows. From a hay production standpoint, the key to managing native hay meadows is to maintain the balance between forage yield and forage quality (Native Hay Meadow Management, NREM-2891). Unfortunately, these two things never occur at the same time. Highest forage yield is in August while forage quality (protein and energy) peaks sometime in May. This guide recommends cutting meadows to no less than 4 inches to avoid cutting the plant growing points, which are elevated late in the season. I mention this because it is very possible to run hay-cutting equipment close to the ground and damage production

potential for the plants the following year. If using native grass for hay, it's ideal to cut in early July.

Unfortunately, it's very common to hay native meadows late in the season. This not only damages the plant structure and species diversity but also produces a low-quality hay

In native plant communities, 70% of the production occurs before July 1st. Whether haved or grazed, native plant communities are slow to re-grow. That being said, optimal forage utilization within a grazing system requires a balance of early year grazing with the ability to stockpile a portion of the forages for grazing in late summer and fall. Grazing initiation is very similar to native hay meadow management. Don't graze too early to minimize impacting future production. There is value to taking advantage of increased forage quality early in the season, however that impacts production later in the season. For this reason, it's best to be able to utilize several different grazing areas and/or apply a light stocking rate to gain year round or season long grazing.

The most productive livestock enterprises in our industry have a strategic plan to manage forages, utilizing annual and perennial sources for our livestock and minimizing expensive hay use. No one type of forage can be grown year-round in Oklahoma so it's important to have diverse grazing options for a livestock enterprise.

One of the best grazing practices is to evaluate your stocking rate. Oklahoma State University Extension educators across the state are

becoming more familiar with the Rangelands Analysis Platform (RAP) to evaluate stocking rate and woody encroachment. The RAP includes a stocking rate calculator that can evaluate a property for the proper stocking density. This tool can get very specific by using the animal size and grazing days to determine the average stocking rate based on historical forage production. Overgrazing doesn't just impact one year of forage production rather, impacting the future stand of native grass for several years. If damage has occurred due to overgrazing or cutting the forages too low, producers may see a variety of undesirable plants start to grow with a loss in the native plant diversity. If you are interested in evaluating your stocking rate, look up vour Extension educator for more information.

To wrap up, if you are interested in another management for range and pasture, consider attending the upcoming Musk Thistle Roundup held in Jet, OK on May 9th at 9AM. Here you can learn about the different ways to control musk thistles and then collect musk thistle weevils that you can take home and distribute in your own problem areas. To sign up and to get more information contact Alfalfa County Extension at 580-596-3131. Enjoy this spring season!



5TH ANNUAL CHEROKEE COMMERCIAL CATTLE GRADING CONTEST



& SCHOOL

FRIDAY JULY 11TH, 2025 **REGISTRATION 9AM-10AM** SCHOOL/CONTEST 10AM AT CHEROKEE SALES CO. 60902 HARMON RD CHEROKEE, OK 73728

LUNCH PROVIDED

DIVISIONS:

4-H

FFA

ADULT

COST:

- \$15 PER TEAM
- \$5 PER INDIVIDUAL

Plaques & Cash prizes to winners!

Questions?

Christy Snider (405) 747-8907



Hay Opportunity Costs

Alberto Amador, Area Ag Economics Specialist

Hay is a significant input in cow-calf operations, especially during winter or when pasture is unavailable. Precipitation in April and May is crucial in determining grazing management and hay production plans. According to the lasts report from Climate Prediction Center (CPC), there is 50-55% probability of rain above the normal precipitation levels across Oklahoma during the last week of April and first week of May. This would enhance pasture conditions for short-term grazing and hay planning for future threating scenarios. However, the broader seasonal drought outlook (April to June) indicates that drought conditions are expected to persist in Western Oklahoma.

Despite in the last few years drought has been constant, Oklahoma has remained a significant contributor to national hay production, especially, in the "other hay" category (excluding alfalfa and alfalfa mixes). As consequence, in the last decade Oklahoma's hay supply covers the local consumption needs.

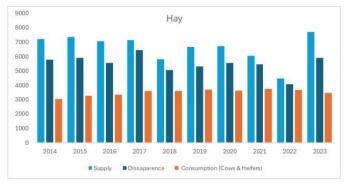


Figure 1. Hay Supply, Disappearance & Consumption

Source: Livestock Marketing Information Center

Figure 1 illustrates total hay supply, disappearance, and projected consumption (by cows and heifers) over the last decade. Although calculating the difference between consumption and disappearance, there is not enough data to determine the portion of hay used by other livestock, sold off-farm or wasted.

During my trips across Western Oklahoma, usually I see a significant number of hay bales along roadsides. Even though producers plan to use those bales at some point, those bales are losing quality and monetary value. Therefore, understanding the true economic costs of bailing hay is crucial. Knowing these costs allows producers make informed decisions about whether to purchase or produce hay

and to recognize the economic loss when hay bales are wasted on the field. Even without fertilizer application, forage crops consume soil nutrients. Hence, to know the real cost of producing one ton of forage, producers should determine the nutrients requirements per ton and multiply by local fertilize prices. OSU's factsheet <u>AGEC-338</u> is a great source for this analysis.

In addition to nutrients, opportunity costs related to harvest and post-harvest practices, and land use must be considered in the costs of hay. Even if producers are doing some or all the harvest operations, I suggest using local custom rates as a baseline to know the on the local custom rates, to estimate the opportunity costs of harvest operations. In the same way, even if the land is owned, producers should account for land opportunity costs, specifically, the income they could earn by leasing the land. A good source for custom rates in the different regions of Oklahoma is the OSU's factsheet CR-205.

Table 1. Bale and Ton Costs

Fertilizer	\$12.50
Machinery and Equipment	\$34.00
Land	\$14.30
Total	\$60.80

As an example, I've calculated bale and ton costs based on 1 ton of Bermuda grass per acre, with a bale weight of 1400 pounds, and 7.8% of crude protein. The results are summarized in the table above. However, it's important to keep in mind that the price index for haying machinery and equipment has increased 35% since 2021, when the custom rates were collected. To get an accurate cost estimate for hay production, I suggest reaching out to neighbors or local service provider to use update and local custom prices. In addition, if you need assistance with your calculations don't hesitate to visit your extension county office. We'll be glad to help you.



Alfalfa County Fairgrounds 602 West 5th Street Cherokee, OK 73728

Call the Alfalfa (580)596-3131 or Woods County Extension (580)327-2786 for more information.

RSVP by July 15th, 2025.



ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION

WOODS COUNTY EXTENSION



4-H Clover Connection

104th State 4-H Roundup: Lights, Camera, Action, 4-H!

Plans are underway for the 104th State 4-H Roundup and delegates from around the state will come together to celebrate accomplishments, make new friends and create memories that will last a lifetime. This year's Roundup will take place July 23-25.

Roundup is the culmination of the 4-H year, and as with years' past, there's much to be celebrated this year, said Cathy Allen, 4-H curriculum coordinator at the state 4-H office at Oklahoma State University.

"Roundup is an opportunity to come to the OSU campus, engage in educational workshops, make new friends, catch up with old friends and compete in state contests," Allen said.

With a sidewalk chalk competition, campaign speeches, district rallies, dances, board games, Pistol Pete's Premier, motivational speakers, a hypnotist and contests of all sorts, Roundup delegates will have ample opportunity to have fun and learn. FCS Skill-a-thon, Job Readiness, 4-H Food Showdown, Livestock Quiz Bowl, tractor contest and more will give club members a chance to

demonstrate their knowledge and skills against other 4-H'ers.

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma Honor Night will highlight the many accomplishments of club members. Two club members will be honored as the new Oklahoma 4-H Hall of Fame inductees. State record book winners will be announced, and winners will receive a scholarship, thanks to the generous donors who continue to support the Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development program. More than \$200,000 in scholarships will be awarded.

Club members will hear from peers who are campaigning for a spot on the state leadership team and have the opportunity to cast their votes. The current leadership team will bid their final farewell at the closing assembly.

"One of the favorite activities of Roundup is Pete's Premier.
Because Roundup takes place on the OSU campus, it's a great time for delegates to learn more about the opportunities available to students at OSU," Allen said. "Representatives from the various colleges on campus will be on hand to share more about different majors and

what college life has to offer. It's a great opportunity to start thinking about what their future could look like at OSU."

To help delegates learn more about the campus, various tours and workshops from university departments will also be offered.

"State 4-H Roundup is the biggest event that takes place each year and we're excited to have the delegates on campus," Allen said. "For more than a century, the OSU campus has been the gathering place for thousands of youth to come learn, create memories, forge friendships and make the most of their 4-H membership."

Check with the local OSU Extension office for additional information about the 104th State 4-H Roundup.

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Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, disability, or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit https:///eeo.okstate.edu.





JUNE 13TH, 2025 9AM-2PM

RSVP BY JUNE 6TH TO THE ALFLAFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE (580)596-3131 \$5 REGISTRATION INCLUDES LUNCH



WEST DISTRICT 4-H

OSCOVERY DAY JUNE 24TH, 2025

WOODWARD, OK

REGISTRATION FORMS AVAILABLE AT THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

DUE BY JUNE 13TH, 2025

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE WHAT ALL 4-HHAS TO OFFER!





JUNE 23RD, 2025 JUNE 30TH, 2025

2-4PM

AT THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

LEARN THE BASICS OF LEATHERWORKING AND MAKE A FEW FUN PROJECTS TO ENTER IN THE FALL FAIR!

RSVP TO THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE BY JUNE 16TH (580)596-3131





OSU EXTENSION

ALFALFA COUNTY

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Introduction to Dog Obedience & Agility Series

June 12th, 2025 & July 22nd, 2025 At the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds 6 PM

Bring your canine partner to learn basic dog obedience commands and be introduced to dog agility.



Must have 5 participants to hold the class.

Questions? Call the Alfalfa County Extension Office (580)596-3131

** All canine's must be up to date on vaccinations and deworming**







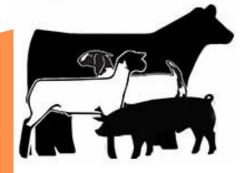












We are proud to introduce the

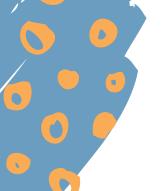
4-H LIVESTOCK CLUB

Join us monthly for a chance to learn ALL things livestock with a hands-on, engaging approach!

June 11th, 2025 2-4PM

at the Alfalfa County Extension Office 602 W 5th Street Ste 2 Cherokee, OK 73728

Call the Alfalfa County Extension office with questions (580)596-3131 or email erin.metcalf@okstate.edu.



ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT BABYSITTING?



BABYSITTING SAFETY

with Friends and Family CPR

*NORTHWEST TECH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OSU EXTENSION



MONDAY, JUNE 9TH TIME 10AM-3PM

COST \$20

*STUDENTS NEED TO BRING A SACK LUNCH.

LOCATION:

ALFALFA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS ENROLL:

ALFALFA COUNTY OSU EXTENSION
580-596-3131

Join us for a fun and informative Pabysitting Safety Class with Alfalfa County Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Educator, Megan Ferrell.

Learn essential babysitting skills, safety tips, and gain confidence in caring for young children. Plus, you'll earn your Friends and Family CPR Certificate!









5TH ANNUAL CHEROKEE COMMERCIAL CATTLE GRADING CONTEST



& SCHOOL

FRIDAY JULY 11TH, 2025 **REGISTRATION 9AM-10AM** SCHOOL/CONTEST 10AM AT CHEROKEE SALES CO. 60902 HARMON RD CHEROKEE, OK 73728

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Plaques & Cash prizes to winners!

Questions?

Christy Snider (405) 747-8907





West District 4-H CONTEST DAY

JULY 1ST, 2025

- FOOD SHOWDOWN
- DUDS TO DAZZLE
- CUPCAKE WARS
- FCS SKILATHON
- LIVESTOCK SKILATHON
- LIVESTOCK QUIZBOWL
- EDUCATIONAL BOOTHS

ENTRIES ARE DUE TO THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE BY JUNE 16TH.



Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications, program information or reasonable accommodations, need to contact Jim Rhodes at (580)233-5295 at least two weeks prior to the event.

OSU is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, E-Verify Employer.



at the alfalfa county fairgrounds



\$5 registration fee includes snacks & supplies RSVP by July 3rd, 2025 to the Alfalfa County Extension Office



Record Book INTERVIEWS

July 7th, 2025

Did you apply for a special award? Then these interviews are for you!

Schedule of interviews will be posted after all record books have been recieved.

Interviews are held at the Alfalfa County OSU Extension Office.

Questions? Call the Alfalfa County Extension office at (580)596–3131





OSU EXTENSION
ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



All adults involved in or wanting to be involved in Alfalfa County 4-H are welcome to attend!



"Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit https://eeo.okstate.edu."



July 7th, 2025 10am-12pm at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds

RSVP to the Alfalfa County Extension Office by July 3rd, 2025

\$5 Registration fee includes snacks & supplies





OSU EXTENSION

ALFALFA COUNTY

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



MEAL SPONSORED BY THE ALFALFA COUNTY 4-H PARENT VOLUNTEERS



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Tuesday, August 5th, 2025 6 o'clock in the Evening The Alfalfa County Fairgrounds Exhibit Building





OSU EXTENSION

ALFALFA COUNTY

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Training Certification Training for 4-H Adult Volunteers in the 4-H Shooting Sports Program

The 4-H Shooting Sports program is one of the largest 4-H programs in the nation. Community-based and family-oriented, it offers a diverse curriculum that not only helps young people develop good citizenship, personal responsibility, and leadership skills but also teaches shooting safety and gun owner responsibility. Leaders will be trained to help youth learn self-discipline, sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and an appreciation for the great outdoors.

Training Dates: August 16-17, 2025 Location: Fairview, OK – Major County Fairgrounds and Historical Society

Cost: \$100, registration fee covers instructor manual, class materials, meals, snacks, and insurance.

Courses: Shotgun, Archery, Rifle/Pistol, Muzzleloader, Hunting Skills, Western Heritage

Registration fee must be paid online or to your County OSU Extension Office by August 4, 2025.

Requirements: Shooting Sports Instructor Training Participants must be a certified 4-H Volunteer in their home county. All adults serving as county coaches in any discipline or as the county coordinator of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program must complete and pass the entire training in their discipline or as a coordinator and the Youth Development/Risk Management component. The instructor in each class reserves the right to NOT certify a person if he/she feels the candidate will not be a competent instructor or coordinator.



Strengthening Oklahoma Families

Strong Dads program positively impacts Oklahoma families

It's no secret that parenting is a daunting task. Ask any parent and they're sure to agree that parenthood could be easier with an instruction manual. But in all honesty, would parents have the time to read it?

Here's a news flash – Oklahoma State University Extension has incorporated an instruction manual of sorts to help parents. Through a relatively new program called Strong Dads, this program is an option for those who want to be the best parents ever, said Rob Bodick, OSU Extension Strong Dads program coordinator. Currently, the program is offered in nine counties, including Carter, Creek, Garfield, Kay, Muskogee, Oklahoma, Payne, Rogers and Tulsa.

"Strong Dads is a father-forward initiative started by Gov. Kevin Stitt in June 2023," Bodick said. "Extension educators in each of these counties have been recruiting and facilitating 12-week sessions geared toward increasing the fathers' involvement in their families by utilizing the 24/7 Dads curriculum published by the National Fatherhood Initiative. Our motto for the course is 'Strong dads make for strong families; strong families make good communities."

The overall goal is to increase father involvement by equipping communities and human service organizations with father-engagement training, programs and resources needed to be father-inclusive. If Strong Dads isn't available locally, dads are encouraged to seek the program in a nearby county.

Participants meet for two hours once a week for 12 weeks, share a meal and have discussion-based class. Dads receive research-based information to help them become better dads, as well as incentives such as gift cards and gas cards for participating.

Research shows that children who have warm, involved and consistent parenting have a better chance of thriving

in life. This holds true for both moms and dads.
Unfortunately, sometimes dads may feel they're not as important as other parents because they don't spend as much time with kids as the other parent. Also, dads may not feel as valued by society or they don't feel like they know how to be a good parent.

"This is where the Strong Dads program comes in," Bodick said. "We provide dads with the tools they need to clear the path for successful parenthood, which leads to a lifetime of benefits for the dads and their children."

To date, more than 1,000 dads have graduated from OSU Extension's Strong Dads program. Bodick said these dads have become more involved, are better communicators and are being more intentional with their children, coparents and the communities in which they live.

"There's no perfect way to be a parent, but the possibilities are endless to be a good one," he said.

The National Fatherhood Initiative was founded in 1995 and is the nation's leading provider of research on father presence and father involvement.

For more information about OSU Extension's Strong Dads program, visit the <u>Strong Dads program website</u>, or contact Bodick at 405-744-6581or <u>rbodick@okstate.edu</u>.



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SUMMER BACK TO BASICS CREATIVE COOKING WORKSHOPS







Brought to you by OSU Cooperative Extension Centers in Alfalfa, Major and Woods Counties.

Thursday, July 10: **Biscuits, Jams & Jellies** Cost: \$15, 1:00-5:00 p.m. in Fairview

Saturday, August 9: **I Only Have Pies for You** Cost: \$20, 1:00-5:00 p.m. in Alva.

Please RSVP and pay the fee no later than the Monday prior to the workshop. Contact the OSU Extension Center in your county:

Alfalfa County-580.596.3131 Major County-580.227.3786 Woods County-580.327.2786

OSU is an Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, E-Verify Employer.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodations, please contact Dana Baldwin at 580-227-3786 at least one week prior to the program.



Alfalfa County OHCE

BLOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED

SUMMER NEWS

June/July



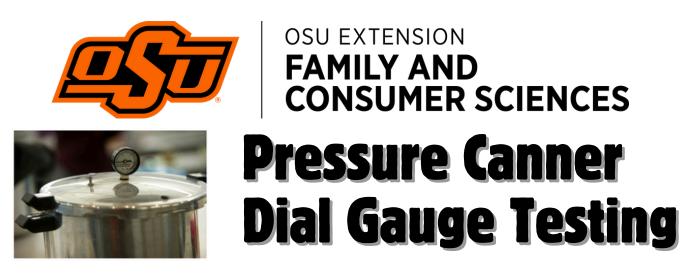
- June 20th at 2:00pm- July Leader Training, Aging with a Purpose
- July 10th- Biscuits, Jams & Jelly, Fairview RSVP by July 7th please
- July 13th-15th- OHCE State Meeting, OKC
- July 18th at 2:00PM- August Leader Training,
 Health Benefits of Plants and Trees
- August 9th 1:00-5:00pm I Only Have Pies for You- RSVP August 4th
- Pick-up Lesson for September late August -How walkable is your community?
- Sept 2nd at 2:00PM- Superintendent mtg
- Sept 3rd- 6th -Alfalfa County Free Fair



90th Annual OHCE State Conference

July 13-15th at the
Champion Convention Center,
OKC with connected lodging:
Hilton Garden Inn
OKC Airport
Early Bird Register
by June 19th
More info available at
ohce.okstate.edu or
use the QR code below:





Get your Dial Gauge tested at the Extension Office

Today's pressure canners either have a dial gauge or a weighted gauge, for indicating and regulating the pressure of the inside of the canner. Serious errors in processes that can result in spoilage or foodborne illness can happen in pressure canners if an inaccurate dial gauge is used.

Dial gauges should be checked for accuracy each year before use. This can be done for free at your Oklahoma State Cooperative Extension office. Contact the FCS Educator to schedule an appointment to have yours checked or bring it by.

If a dial gauge reads high or low by more than two pounds pressure, replace it. If it is less than two pounds off in accuracy, you can make adjustments needed to be sure you have the required pressure in your canner. The County FCS Educator can help you find parts to your canner by knowing the model number on the canner. Often, the rubber gasket or the small gasket can go bad and they are easily replaced.

Dial and weighted gauge pressure canners work differently. Weighted gauges are usually designed to "jiggle" several times a minute or to keep rocking gently when they are maintaining the correct pressure. Read your manufacturer's directions to know how a particular weighted gauge should rock or jiggle to indicate that the proper pressure is reached and then maintained during processing.

Dial gauge canners will usually have a counterweight or pressure regulator for sealing off the open vent pipe to pressurize the canner. This weight should not be confused with a weighted gauge and will not jiggle or rock as described for a weighted gauge canner. Pressure readings on a dial gauge canner are only registered on the dial and only the dial should be used as an indication of the pressure in the canner. One manufacturer now makes a dual-gauge canner.

Always read the manufacturer's user manual for the pressure canner you are using for information on when and how to use a weighted or dial gauge pressure canner.

For any canning questions, recipes or information, please contact Megan Ferrell. Additionally, visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation at the University of Georgia for anything and everything you need to know. Visit: nchfp.uga.edu



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