



Blaine County Agriculture Newsletter

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2021

Blaine County Cooperative Extension Service
212 N Weigle—Watonga OK 73772
Office: 580-623-5195 <https://extension.okstate.edu/county/blaine/index.html>

Dear Blaine County Ag producers,

I hope this finds each of you well and a Happy New Year! As you read through the newsletter, you will see that I have two upcoming in-person meetings scheduled. Both will be at the Fairgrounds, where we can social distance. We will be following COVID CDC guidelines at the meetings. If you are not comfortable attending an in person meeting, or just aren't available at that time and want materials from the meetings, just let me know. I want to remind you that Blaine County OSU Extension Office is here to serve you and help with your questions. You can still drop off your soil, forage or water sample. Hope to see you soon!

Becky Bedwell—Ag Educator

The Importance of Fire Meeting

When: **Thursday, Jan. 28th 12:00 Noon— Blaine County Fairgrounds**
Speaker: John Weir, OSU Extension Specialist in Natural Resources Ecology
In addition, Chad Scheihing, President of Canadian Rivers Prescribed Burn Assoc., will present information on prescribed burns. Come learn how fire effects plants, animals and livestock.

A light lunch will be served. Please RSVP by **Jan. 26th** to the Blaine County OSU Extension Office. COVID CDC guidelines will be followed.

Wheat Production Meeting

When: Thursday, February 25th—12:00 NOON
Where: Blaine County Fairgrounds—Watonga
What: Josh Bushong, Area Agronomy specialist, will share information about Herbicides, fungicides, last minutes top dressing and harvest aids.

Please RSVP by **Feb. 23rd** for meal count by contacting our office at 580-623-5195.

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Blaine County Cattlemen's Association

The Blaine County Cattlemen's association is taking orders for personalized 12 x 18 signs for your farm or Ranch. The cost of the signs are \$40.00 and you must be a member of the Blaine County Cattlemen's association. Yearly dues are \$40.00 to belong to the association. The association has a yearly meal and program, a spring tour, other producer meetings throughout the year and supports awards for 4-H and FFA members at the county fair and stock shows. If you are interested in a sign or joining the Blaine County Cattlemen's Association, call the Blaine County OSU Extension Office—580-623-5195. Sign order deadline is January 31st.

Take Inventory of Your Pond

Winter is a good time to consider your pond and how you use it. Here are four steps to making sure you get the most out of your pond:

Survey - Walk around it, look it over and ponder it...Make a list of good things about your pond.... Note anything that might be a problem or that raises a question in your mind.

Question - what is causing things like...

- An eroding dam, spillway or shoreline?
- A shallowed-out neck?
- A stand of plants that is growing larger each year?
- Muddiness or other appearance problems with the water?
- Poor fishing?

Plan – What are the good things you envisioned for your pond in the past? Should you move these higher on your list of priorities? Choose a direction and set some objectives:

- Better fishing
- Head off weeds before they take over this year
- Reduce the chances of a toxic algal bloom
- Repair eroding areas and revegetate bare soil
- Read – Go to facts.okstate.edu and search for “ponds” or drop by or call the Blaine County OSU Extension Office.

Reminder: Never Walk on Pond Ice

Warn children to never go onto frozen ponds, even to rescue beloved pets. A light ladder or sheet of plywood might be pushed out to a person or pet allowing them to distribute their weight and climb out. Consider keeping these close to the pond, as well as a rope tied to something that can be thrown to reach a person.

This newsletter is one way of communicating educational info to the citizens of Blaine County in the Areas of Agriculture & Rural Development.. For free subscriptions, contact the Extension Office at 580-623-5195. The information given is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service is implied. This information was produced at a cost of 1 cent per page for a total of \$13.20.

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Spring Management in Wheat

Josh Bushong, Area Extension Agronomy Specialist

For supposedly being in a La Nina weather pattern, late fall has been a blessing for most wheat producers in northern Oklahoma in terms of receiving moisture and even accumulating some good growing days. Time will tell in the rest of winter will turn cold and dry as predicted. Wheat grain producers are starting to initiate or at least plan out some spring management practices. Topdressing season has already started and potential weed, insect, and disease issues are on the horizon.

As far as how late can wheat be topdressed with nitrogen, field research conducted by OSU the past four seasons has shown it might be later than your think. These grain only trials have proven that topdress applications made 80-100 growing degree days after planting, typically early to mid-March, overwhelmingly yielded the same as early and late winter applications. Wheat quality, particularly grain protein, seemed to increase with later nitrogen applications as well.

This doesn't mean to wait till the last minute to topdress, but this supports extending the window to apply nitrogen. Applying later in the season can increase nitrogen use efficiency. As the crop progresses, a better estimation of grain yield can be more accurately determined and topdress rates can be altered accordingly. If covering large acreage, wheat producers should initiate topdress applications sooner to allow enough time to get the job done especially if weather delays application.

Topdressing tank-mixed with an herbicide can be an economical option. Since the sprayer will be using a broadcast nozzle, such as a flat fan, Urea Ammonium Nitrate (UAN) rates should be limited to 10 to 20 gallons per acre depending on conditions. Applications should be avoided when air temperatures rise above 70° and relative humidity is low. Applications should be made prior to jointing stage, which will limit yield loss by allowing more recovery time if crop injury occurs.

Disease management has shown to have good yield savings over the years. If applied timely, most commercially available fungicides have had good yield protection in OSU field trials. If only one application is budgeted, it is best to apply late and protect the flag leaf. Long-term OSU data typically average about 10 to 20 percent higher yield compared to no fungicide.

The OSU variety trial near Lahoma has evaluated more than 45 wheat varieties with and without a fungicide applied around the boot to flagleaf growth stage. There was only an average of seven percent yield advantage this year, but specific varieties varied from zero to 17 percent difference. Including all varieties at Lahoma over the past seven years, there has been an average of a 19.2 percent higher grain yield over when a fungicide was applied.

Timely field scouting is the only way to determine if a pest is present and if an application of an herbicide, insecticide, or fungicide is warranted. The only way for one of these pesticides to protect yield and have a positive return on investment would be knowing what pests are present and knowing how much yield potential can be saved if applied correctly.

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Preparing for Breeding Season: Act 1

Dana Zook, Northwest Area Extension Livestock Specialist

Happy New Year! Since breeding season will be upon Oklahoma producers across the state, I thought it fitting to get a jump on what can be done to prepare cattle for this crucial time period. I will lapse back to my high school musical theater days and showcase the “Preparing for Beef Breeding Season Saga”. The headliner this month will be Bulls. A future article will complete the saga with Act 2 focused on cows. How do you prepare for breeding season? For some producers with a defined breeding season, it can happen almost simultaneously to calving season preparations. Each operation is different but there are many things that are constant. Proper bull management and preparation are a risk management tool for the cow calf producer.

Evaluate your bull battery. Do you have the correct number of bulls to service your herd? If not, take time to seek out one of the many seedstock breeders in Oklahoma. Look through the OCA Magazine for breeders or look at some of the breed association offerings. The number of bulls you need is directly related to the cow to bull ratio. The age of bulls will determine how many cows they can service. A good rule of thumb is to place about the same number of cows or heifers with a young bull as his age is in months. For example, a young bull, 15 months of age, should be able to handle 15 cows in his first breeding season. This applies until two years of age. Mature bulls that have passed a breeding soundness exam can be placed with 25-30 cows.

Bring home bulls in advance of breeding. Purchase new bulls at least 60 days prior to breeding. This allows bulls to adapt to their surroundings, establish social structure with other herd bulls, and adjust to new plane of nutrition. Nutritionally, bulls may need this time for a few extra groceries, or they may need to be slowly scaled back. Bulls sold at sales are often conditioned beyond what is needed during the season. Fat sells in this market but this isn't a bad thing. Once they are brought home, these bulls should be slowly adapted back to a more reasonable diet. Remember that during the breeding season, bulls will (hopefully) be doing their job and won't be receiving any more nutrition than the cows. Research has shown that bulls that are scaled back on nutrition gradually have no impact on fertility. Also note that along with proper nutrition continued exercise will help the bull get into shape before breeding.

Schedule Breeding Soundness Exams with a licensed veterinarian. A breeding soundness exam will check the reproductive capacity and physical soundness of each bull. This a risk management step that helps alert producers of any issues that may hinder a bull from performing his best. One of the more costly mistakes in the beef industry is going through breeding and then realizing your bull didn't get the cows bred.

Keep an eye on your bulls during breeding. Upon the start of breeding, beef producers expect bulls to get the job done. But issues can arise during breeding that can affect the number of cows that get bred. Bulls that are overworked or obtain an injury may be less likely to get cows bred efficiently. Keep an eye on your bulls and observe bulls while they are working. If any issues are observed, a replacement bull can be substituted to maintain breeding rates.

For more insight on preparing bulls for breeding season, check out the latest “Extension Experience” podcast. You can find our podcast on your smart phone on the Spotify, Apple Podcast, or Google Podcast Apps. Or access our podcast on our Spotlight blog by visiting <http://spotlight.okstate.edu/experience/podcast/>.

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How Long Should You Keep Income Tax Records and Related Documents?

J C. Hobbs, OSU Associate Extension Specialist

The length of time you should keep a tax related document is not clear cut. In general, the IRS states that you must keep the items that support your income, expenses, deductions, and credits claimed on your income tax return until the period of limitations for that return runs out. In most situations, the period of limitations is 3 years from the date the tax return was due. During this 3 year period of time, you may amend your tax return to claim a credit or refund or the IRS can assess additional tax.

The following information contains the periods of limitations that the IRS applies to income tax returns. Unless otherwise noted, the years refer to the period of time after the due date of the tax return. It is important to keep a copy of the supporting documents as this information will be helpful for preparing future tax returns and making computations if you need to file an amended return.

- You owe tax and you have accurately reported your income, deductions, and credits; then keep the records for 3 years.
- You do not report income that you should have reported, and it is more than 25% of the gross income shown on your return; then keep records for 6 years.
- You file a fraudulent return; keep your records indefinitely.
- You do not file a return; keep your records indefinitely.
- You file a claim for a credit or a refund after you file your original tax return; then keep these records for 3 years from the date you filed your original return or 2 years from the date you paid the tax, whichever is later.
- You file a claim for a loss from a worthless security or a bad debt deduction; keep these records for 7 years.

Keep all employment tax records for at least 4 years after the date that the tax becomes due or is paid, whichever is later.

In addition, there is a need to keep other types of records and information. You should keep records relating to property that you purchase or inherit until the period of limitations expires for the year in which you dispose of the property in a taxable disposition. You must keep these records to figure any depreciation, amortization, or depletion deduction allowed and to figure the gain or loss when you sell or otherwise dispose of the property.

When your records are no longer needed for tax purposes, do not discard them until you check to see if you need to keep them longer for other reasons. For example, your insurance company or creditors may require you to keep this information longer. It is always important to consult with your tax advisor about this and any other tax related questions you may have. Go to www.irs.gov and search for record keeping for more detailed information about what records to keep, why they are necessary, safekeeping recommendations for your tax records, plus other useful information.



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