



May 2024

Carter County Ag Advisory

**CARTER COUNTY
EXTENSION**

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

Upcoming Events

May 4th:

- **Earth First Expo**- Ardmore Beautification Council's annual expo will take place from 10am-2pm at Thompson Square in Ardmore with fun booths, recycling, and our 4-H Plant Sale Fundraiser. The 4-Hers have grown a variety of veggies from seed to offer at this fundraiser!

May 9th:

- **Pontotoc County Cattlemen's Meeting and CEU credit opportunity** (Private Applicator, 1A, 6-Roadside). 6-8pm at the Agri-Plex in Ada. Call 580-332-2153 to RSVP.

May 14th:

Master Gardeners Meeting- 6-8pm at the OSU Biosciences Building in Ardmore.

May 23rd: Two Separate Events!

- **Free Drinking Well Water Testing Event**- Bring samples of your drinking water to the Carter Co Extension Office from 12-1pm for a free event. See a attached flyer for additional details!

- **Pescide Applicator Exam Study Workshop**- Join us at the Carter Co Extension Office from 6-8pm. We will be discussing topics for the applicators' core exam and answering questions.

May 27th:

- **Office closed for Memorial Day**- Enjoy the holiday! Extension office will re-open Tuesday, May 28th at 8am.

Your Local Office

Address:

25 A ST. NW Suite 200
Ardmore, OK 73401

Phone:

580-223-6570

Website:

<http://extension.okstate.edu/county/carter/>

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MEMORIAL DAY





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Ag News

Update on Soil Sampling Handling Guidelines

Soil samples should not be brought to the office in a sealed container, as that allows the soil microbes to rapidly break down organic matter. This leads to higher levels of NO₃ in the tests than would actually be found in the field itself. To increase the accuracy of your soil tests, bring samples in UNSEALED containers, such as paper bags, small buckets, or unsealed plastic baggies.

It's Not Too Late to Start Thistle Control!

By this time of year, most thistles are well past the optimal spraying stage, but its not too late to start controlling them.

Herbicides such as *Perspective*, *Streamline*, and *GrazeonNext* are good options for spraying thistles while they are actively growing, even if they are past the rosette stage.

Other options include manual removal such as pulling them up by hand or cutting them below the soil surface with a hoe.

Eradicating thistles may take several years' worth of planning and control methods, but putting in the work will be worth it.

Controlling Horn Flies Starts Now— Notes from Dana Zook, OSU Extension NW Area Livestock Specialist

Insects will be taking advantage of the extended spring weather. One in particular to watch out for is the horn fly.

Horn flies increase stress in beef cattle due to their painful bite. Elevated stress reduces milk produce on, efficiency, and rate of weight gain. A 2017 collaborative research study between Kansas State and Oklahoma State Universities determined stocker cattle with an insecticidal ear tag gained 0.21 more pounds per day compared to their counterparts with no horn fly control. This weight gain resulted in a \$12 net profit over the cost of the ear tag during a 90-day summer grazing period (Yin, 2021).

What are options to control horn flies?

Dust bags, back rubber/oilers, spray-on repellants, pour-on products, ear tags, and feeds/tubs with IGRs (insect growth regulators) are several options that all work well in Oklahoma.



Rotation is important with all horn fly controls due to the potential development of resistance. Due to the short lifespan of horn flies (as little 14 days) many generations of flies are produced in one season, potentially allowing chemical resistance to develop quickly. To avoid this, rotate products from different chemical classes each year. Keep in mind, that just because a product has a different name doesn't necessarily mean it contains chemicals from different chemical classes.

Early spring is the best time to implement horn fly control and prevent major losses caused by these pests.



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Hort Notes

Favor Native Trees over Bradford Pears

Bradford pears are common in Oklahoma, but you'll likely recognize their stench before the tree itself. The terrible smell but isn't the biggest issue with these trees. Bradford pears are considered invasive all over the United States, and here in Oklahoma, they are invading open spaces like our pastures and grasslands. They grow quickly and form dense thickets, ultimately out-competing native species and negatively affecting plant and wildlife communities.

Top: Bradford Pear

Bottom: American Plum



Options for beautiful native trees to plant in place of Bradford pears are:

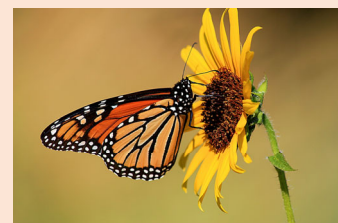
- American Plum (very similar look to the Bradford pear, but native!)
- Mexican Plum
- Carolina Buckthorn
- Eastern Redbud (NOT red cedars—these are also invasive!)

April Lawn and Garden Tips

- Wait until May to treat nutsedge/ nutgrass even if it is starting to appear this month
- Keep an eye out for aphids, spider mites, lace bugs, bagworms, grubs, etc
- Begin planning summer flowering bulbs and annual flowers in mid-April once there is no longer danger of a frost
- Establishment of bermudagrass zoysiagrass, or St. Augustine should be started via plugs or sod in mid-April for best results

Butterfly Habitats

Did you know that as many as 90% of monarch butterflies have been destroyed? Butterflies have an important job of pollinating flowers and vegetables, so you can imagine the detriment caused by their decline. This spring, consider creating a butterfly habitat. This is easy! Especially if you're already planning beautiful flowers around your home or garden. Incorporate plants like dill, Italian flat-leaf parsley, and fennel which all serve as host plants for monarch eggs and chrysalises. Be careful not to squish monarch caterpillars! Flowers like black-eyed susans, cleome, cosmos, goldenrod, liatris, yarrow, veronicas, and salvias are all wonderful options that will attract and help feed pollinators like butterflies.



R. Jellery



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Featured Article

Pasture Management

Adapted from an article written by

Josh Bushong, Area Extension Agronomist

It's time to start getting hay and pastures set up to make good forage. Increasing fertility and pesticide use on Bermudagrass pastures leads to significant responses in production. While tonnage can be increased with added fertility to native grass pastures, often it can be hard to justify economically since the total season production is usually less than introduced species like bermudagrass. When deciding on how much fertilizer to apply, it is always recommended to base the application rates off a soil sample. A \$10 soil sample through the OSU Soil, Water, and Forage Analytical Laboratory collected every few years will almost always pay for itself.

In grazed pastures, forages are growing and being removed concurrently making it impossible to estimate forage production. Less fertilization is expected in grazed pastures since some nutrients are returned to the soil through the grazing livestock. Grazing to produce 500 pounds of beef requires approximately 4 tons of forage production per acre.

As for weed control, it is all about proper identification and application timing. There are many pasture herbicides on the market and the price differences vary widely. Knowing exactly which weeds are of significance in a particular pasture will determine which herbicide options are appropriate and the optimum timing for application. Many annual broadleaf weeds can be controlled with less expensive herbicides, such as products containing 2,4-D or dicamba, if applied when weeds are only a few inches in diameter or tall. Presence of brush, woody weeds, abundant winter weeds before summer weeds have emerged, or perennial weeds generally call for the use of more expensive herbicides.

Weed management costs are often more justifiable in haying operations as heavy infestations of weeds in a grazing pasture are often a symptom of excessive grazing. Proper use of stocking rates and achieving adequate fertility in introduced pastures are the most economical weed management options for grazing pastures. While weeds can be unpleasant to the eye, many times weed infestations are below application thresholds.

From field trials comparing doing nothing to only applying an herbicide, only fertilizing, or fertilizing with an herbicide application, we can generally predict forage production outcomes if inputs are removed. If broadleaf weeds are present, addition of fertilizer will increase total forage production, but mainly just from the weeds and not from the grass. If only an herbicide is applied, the total forage tonnage was the same as doing nothing. Every pound of weeds removed only increased grass production by one pound (1:1 ratio).

To optimize pasture or hay production through increased forage growth, both fertilizer and an herbicide will need to be applied.

