



GRANT COUNTY ROUNDUP

EXTENSION

86th Annual OHCE State Conference

August 1-3, 2021

You Hit a Home Run with OHCE

Conference Registration:

https://secure.touchnet.com/C20271_ustores/web/store_cat.jsp?STOREID=15&CATID=269

Early Registration Fee is \$120

After July 16 Registration Fee is \$140

- Christmas in August - Sunday Evening is \$20 (attendance limited to 100)
- No Refunds after July 16, 2021
- No walk-in registration will be accepted this year. Everyone will need to preregister.
- Register for the conference using our secure OSU online process. Credit card/debit cards accepted (Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express). You will receive email confirmation when you place your order. Please watch for a second email a couple of days later for your receipt.

For registration questions contact OSU Ag Conferences, (405) 744-6489, agconferences@okstate.edu

Hotel Reservations

Hilton Garden Inn
801 South Meridian Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK
(adjacent to the Champion Convention Center)
Phone: (405) 942-1400

Group Name: OHCE

Room Rates: Single \$104, Double \$114, Triple and Quad \$124 (plus tax). Rates include complimentary hot breakfast buffet for each registered hotel guest at the Garden Grille' located in the hotel lobby.

Reservation deadline for group rate: July 16, 2021.

Grant County Extension Office

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Top Honors at District Foods Contest

At the end of May, 4 Grant County 4-H members traveled to Fairview to compete in the District Foods Contest. The Intermediate/Senior Team was comprised of Reagan McReynolds and Macyn Thomas. The Junior Team was comprised of Levi and Kennedy McReynolds.

Food Showdown

Junior - 1st Place
Senior - First Place

Cupcake Wars

Junior - 3rd Place
Intermediate - 1st Place

Fruit/Vegetable Carving and Sculpting

Junior - 1st Place
Intermediate - 1st Place



GRANT COUNTY 4-H ACHIEVEMENT BANQUET

Originally planned for July 31st

RESCHEDULED TO TUESDAY, AUGUST 3rd

7:00 pm

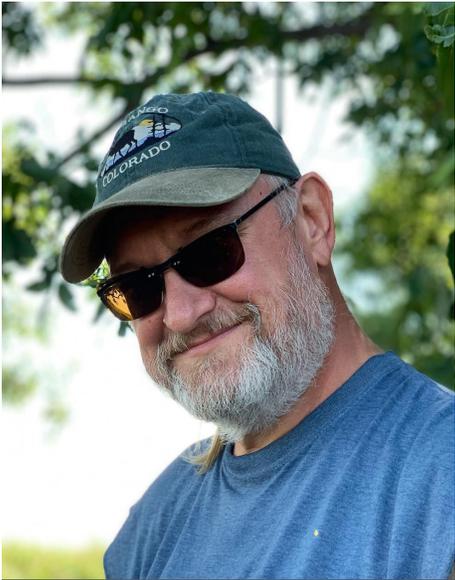
Grant County Expo Building



OUT AND ABOUT

Left: Community Work Day starting flower bed renovation at fairgrounds

Below: Flag Retirement Ceremony held on Flag Day



New Face in the Office
Eric Terrell

We would like to welcome the New Grant County OSU Extension Program Assistant, Eric Terrell!

Eric will be assisting Sarah and Kateena in the office, helping us promote Grant County OSU Extension in the community, and assisting Sarah with programs.

Eric and his family moved to Grant County about a year ago from South Dakota. He has an extensive background in teaching, beekeeping, and regenerative agriculture.



4-H Roundup Memories Contest

Trisha Gedon, Communications Specialist, OSU ACS

With the 100th State 4-H Roundup quickly approaching, it's a great time to dust off scrapbooks and scroll through smartphone files for photos of fond memories — and possibly win a cash prize for your county 4-H Youth Development program at the same time.

“We want photos from anyone who has a memory of attending State 4-H Roundup in any capacity — as a club member, a chaperone, a volunteer leader or an Oklahoma State University Extension educator,” said Kristin Young, marketing coordinator for the Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development state office. “This is a great way to see how 4-H Roundup has changed over the years and to reflect on how 4-H has influenced so many lives.”

The photo contest is open to the public. It begins at 8 a.m. June 1 and ends at 11:59 p.m. July 25. Winners will be announced via email, as well as the Oklahoma 4-H Facebook page at 10 a.m. July 26.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the county whose members upload the most photos to the online contest platform at <https://woobox.com/oov9f8>.

Prize awards are \$750 for first place, \$500 for second and \$250 for third place. Award money will be deposited into county accounts within the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation.

Participants may upload one photo per day to the contest platform; each entry requires a completed submission form to be counted toward county totals. An individual who enters the same photo multiple times will count as only one entry; however, multiple individuals may enter the same photo.

“We're so excited to be able to celebrate the State 4-H Roundup Centennial this year. We have former 4-H'ers all over the world, so it will be fun to see where the photos come from,” Young said. “The photos will remain online so everyone will have a chance to look at them and reminisce about 4-H Roundups gone by. You might even get a glimpse of a long-lost friend.”

By entering this competition, participants agree that OSU and its affiliates retain the right to unlimited use of the submitted photographs for university publicity and promotion, without compensation. A complete list of guidelines is available online at <https://4h.okstate.edu/events/site-files/docs/roundup-memories-contest-guidelines.pdf>.

For more information about the contest, contact Kristin Young via email (kristin.young@okstate.edu) or contact the nearest OSU Extension county office.



From Your Educator Sarah Donahue

After what has been a cooler than normal and moderately wet Spring, Harvest is finally here! We are anxious to start hearing production numbers for this year's wheat crop.

Please be mindful of equipment moving down the road! This is a busy time of year and everyone is doing their part to get wheat cut, summer crops in the ground, and hay put up so that our Grant County agriculture industry can thrive.

Our 4-H members have a lot of fun summer activities planned. They just recently began work renovating a flower bed at the fairgrounds, and held a flag retirement ceremony in honor of Flag Day.

Unused Items into Great Gardening Containers

Trisha Gedon , Communications Specialist, OSU ACS

By upcycling unused items around the home, gardeners can prove the cliché that one person’s trash is another person’s treasure while keeping those materials out of landfills and creating whimsical, decorative features. It’s a sure bet that nearly any gardener can find some really interesting things that can be repurposed into unique garden planters, said Keith Reed, Oklahoma State University Extension horticulture educator in Payne County. However, such a project does require consideration.

“A lot of ideas you may see online, such as using an old wagon or the bed of a child’s old dump truck as a planter, may look cute, but may not be very practical, especially in Oklahoma’s extreme summer heat,” Reed said. “You must keep in mind soil volume and temperature inside the planter. It may look cute in the garden, but the plants likely won’t survive our summers without extraordinary attention to watering and plant selection.” A good suggestion in the succulent family is the plant often referred to as hens and chicks, which has amazing tolerance for poor soils. In the same group is portulaca, which will add a lot of color to the landscape.

If the idea of an old dump truck or small wagon is appealing, be sure to select plants such as sedums that do well in shallow soil and are drought-tolerant because the soil will dry out quickly during an Oklahoma summer. Most plants need at least 4 inches to 6 inches of soil depth. Reed said draping a burlap bag or gluing rope around a container can help cut down the amount of heat created inside the planter by providing insulation spaces. “Not only do these

methods help with cooling, but they also can help soften the aesthetics of the garden space,” he said.

Casey Hentges, OSU Extension assistant specialist and host of the popular gardening program Oklahoma Gardening, said no matter what type of planters you have, make sure they have plenty of drainage holes already or drill some yourself. “Proper drainage is so important for good plant health. Plants that become waterlogged likely will experience root rot,” Hentges said. “When planting multiple plants in the same container, make sure they have similar moisture and sun requirements for optimum growth.”

Keith Reed goes on to say that objects from nature naturally make good landscaping elements. “Rotten logs and stumps make great planters for a few years. For example, if you lost trees on your property in the October 2020 ice storm, or even the deep freeze in February this year, and haven’t had time to get them removed, consider turning them into a planter,” Reed said. “Ask the tree company to cut down the tree to a manageable height and drill out some of the center. They really do look great planted with colorful flowers that cascade down the stump. Over the years as the tree decomposes, it will help improve the soil.”

An episode of the Oklahoma Gardening TV show features Hentges making a fallen tree into a planter. Hentges also shows viewers how to make a raised bed out of an old dresser and wooden dresser drawers and provides guidance on how to plant the raised beds.



Join us every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 8:30-10:00 am in the Grant County Extension Office during our come and go Breakfast with Extension event to see what we have going on!

Supporting your Growing Tomato Plants

Eric Terrell, Grant County Extension Program Assistant

I grew up knowing the pleasure of stepping out into my yard and picking fresh veggies off the plant. It's been my experience that nothing beats the flavor and texture of home grown produce, especially tomatoes. My goal is to do everything I can to help support home producers and spread the joy of locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Last month's newsletter covered how to transplant tomato plants and mentioned a 'stake and weave' system to hold up the plants. I thought a more in-depth explanation of one of these methods, the Florida Weave or basket weave, would be helpful. It's quick, easy, and cost effective.

Using some type of trellising offers many advantages. Keeping crops upright creates better airflow. This lowers the chance of disease and offers greater access to pollinators which increases yields. It also makes it harder for ground dwelling bugs to get to the fruit and leaves, lessening or eliminating the need for potentially toxic inputs. In addition, trellised plants are easier to harvest, hold up better in the wind, are kept out of walking paths, and lessen the chance of vining plants taking over your garden.

The idea is to sandwich the plants between lengths of twine supported by stakes placed every 4 feet, or between every two or three plants. Trellis tomato plants when they get about 2 feet tall. Larger plants can be unruly and there is increased risk of damaging roots when driving in stakes or damaging branches when weaving the twine.

Start off with stakes at least 6 to 7 feet in length and sink them about 12-18 inches. Stakes can be 2x2 wood, 3/8 inch rebar, or fencing T-posts. I use T-Posts on the ends and wood stakes in between plants to keep the costs down.

For the twine, I use a natural, weather resistant material with minimal stretch, like a

3-ply jute or heavy duty hemp cording. If cotton or sisal is used, the cords will tend to stretch and sag requiring tightened later. Using a natural material means you can just cut your lines at the end of the season and let them decompose in your beds. It also keeps nylon lines from tangling up in farm equipment.

Tie twine to the first stake at about 6 to 8 inches high, run the twine down one side of the plants, and loop it around the next stake at the same height. The goal is to keep the plants from flopping over. Keep tension on the twine and continue looping it around the other stakes until you get to the last stake. Make a double loop around the end stake for strength, and loop your way down the opposite side of the plants, making sure to keep tension on the line all the way down. When you get back to the first stake, tie off the twine, and cut it.

As the plants grow, add rows of twine up the stakes at about the same 6 to 8 inch distance or at whatever distance gives the plants stable upward support. Tuck the larger lower branches into the weave to providing stable support.

While the focus has been on tomatoes, the Florida Weave can be used to support cucumbers, peppers, eggplant, pole beans, peas, and other small fruiting plants, as well. For cucumbers and beans, training the plants sooner rather than later will take full advantage of this support system.

I hope this method will be useful and will encourage getting your hands in the soil to grow your own food.



Oklahoma Welcomes Backyard Beekeeping Trend

Gail Ellis, Communications Specialist, OSU Agricultural Communications Services

Backyard adventures and DIY projects are all the rage right now, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic prompted people to rediscover some of the joys of being at home and pass the time with new hobbies. First, it was gardening, then chickens, and now the latest backyard buzz is bees.

Courtney Bir, Oklahoma State University Extension farm management specialist, has studied how small-scale agricultural projects appeal to residents with extra space and time on their hands.

Already an avid gardener, Bir became so curious about the rising number of bee inquiries that she decided to establish her own hive. The first step involved understanding her city's rules on backyard beehives. Oklahoma is a beekeeper friendly state; beehives are governed by the Apiary Act, which states Stillwater or any other community in Oklahoma cannot prohibit bees within city limits. "Urban beekeepers are protected by this law, and a housing subdivision can't restrict bees," Bir said. "Having said that, it's good to be a good neighbor. Make sure that when you install your hive, it's in a spot that's not going to greatly impede your neighbors."

Hives are available commercially at farm and ranch supply stores, online or at specialty beekeeping shops. They are comprised of bees that have been collected from the wild, split from another hive or marketed as a package or nucleus. A nucleus looks like a tote with bees and wooden frames on which the bees draw comb. These cells of wax store everything they need to survive including pollen, eggs, the larvae or brood as well as honey. A package includes just the bees so they can be sent via mail.

Native Oklahoma bees were sold out when Bir attempted to order some early in the spring, so she purchased a package of them from Texas. Her 3 pounds of bees arrived in April via U.S. mail.

When building a hive from scratch, Bir said

it's important to allow enough space for bees to move around, but not too much that they begin building comb in unwanted areas. The first level of the hive — the brood box — houses the queen, her army of worker bees and male drones whose primary purpose is to breed. Worker bees live at least 28 days, and queens can live up to two years or more.

The basic list of items required to start a hive is estimated to cost \$400 to \$500. While a basic package of bees ranges from \$80 to \$100, a nucleus, like what Bir purchased, costs between \$150 and \$250. As the hive grows, additional wooden frames and boxes, treatment for mites and other supplies can rise to \$700.

Oklahoma crops do not require exclusive bee pollination like California and other states where pollination is critical to production in almond tree groves. Bees sleep five to eight hours a night, allowing farmers to transport them to different fields for pollination with little disruption during the evening hours. "Native pollinators in Oklahoma do a great job, but crops like watermelon, cantaloupe and seed alfalfa do better when there are more pollinators," Bir said. "This poses an opportunity for larger beekeepers and farmers to team up for increased pollination that can help crops produce higher yields."

Oklahoma is home to several beekeeping clubs and organizations including the Oklahoma State Beekeepers Association. To learn more about establishing a new hive and beekeeping in your own backyard, see the bee fact sheets available through OSU Extension Agriculture publications.



Beef Exports Bounce Back

Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

The April trade data shows that beef exports for the month were up 22.1 percent year over year and up 18.0 percent compared to 2019. Year to date total beef exports for the first four months of the year were up 7.9 percent year over year and 14.9 percent over the same period in 2019.

Beef exports to Asia (including Vietnam) account for 71.7 percent of total beef exports thus far in 2021. Japan, while still the leading beef export market, is down 15.7 percent thus far in 2021 compared to last year but is up 3.3 percent over year-to-date 2019 levels. Japan accounts for 24.6 percent of total exports, barely ahead of South Korea, which has a 24.0 percent share of beef exports thus far in 2021. Beef exports to South Korea are up 17.0 percent year over year and up 25.4 percent over 2019 for the year to date. Monthly beef exports to South Korea have exceeded exports to Japan in January, February and April this year. The combined China/Hong Kong market is the most rapidly growing beef export market, up 189.4 percent year over year and up 161.6 percent over 2019 for the year to date through April. The China/Hong Kong market represents 17.2 percent of total beef exports thus far in 2021, making it the number three beef export market. Taiwan, the number six beef export market, is down 14.3 percent for the year to date compared to last year and down 4.6 percent from 2019. Taiwan represents 5.1 percent of total beef exports for the year to date.

Beef exports to Mexico remain sharply reduced since the pandemic began. Beef exports to Mexico began to drop in March of 2020 and after a brief recovery in November and December 2020 have continued at reduced levels. Year to date beef exports to Mexico are down 2.1 percent year over year but are down 23.6 percent compared to the same period in 2019. Mexico remains the number four beef export market accounting for 10.4 percent of

beef exports thus far in 2021. Beef exports to Canada are down 13.5 percent year over year for the first four months of the year but are up 7.9 percent compared to 2019. Canada ranks number five as a destination for U.S. beef exports with an 8.2 percent share of total exports thus far in 2021. The top six export markets represent 89.5 percent of total beef exports for the January through April period in 2021. Smaller markets include the Philippines (1.3 percent of exports) and Indonesia, Guatemala, Vietnam, Chile, and the Netherlands, each with less than one percent shares, rounding out the top 12 beef export markets.

Beef exports, which have declined each of the past two years, are forecast to increase above 2019 and 2020 levels and possibly exceed the record 2018 level. Beef exports represent a component of total beef demand in terms of quantity and value. Moreover, beef exports represent a wide range of product types and qualities exported to various markets and augment domestic beef demand by providing markets for products less desired in the U.S. Exporting products with lower U.S. demand allows domestic beef demand to focus on encouraging consumers to purchase more of the products they prefer more highly and thus maximizing domestic beef value. All beef products produced will be consumed somewhere but it adds value both in the domestic and global market when we have a diverse portfolio of beef markets to market the wide range of beef products produced by the industry.



Cool Spring, Late Summer, High Fertilizer Prices

Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

Even though we know what is going to happen to us in July and August, it is difficult not to complain about the unseasonably cool and wet spring we have had in Oklahoma. But, most of the grazeout wheat and annual ryegrass planted for spring pastures are played out, the wheat hay season is not going well, and our warm-season grasses haven't really started growing yet.

On top of everything else, fertilizer has seen price increases reminding us of the price increases we saw in 2007 (and again in 2012). Earlier this spring retail diammonium phosphate (DAP) went up 22% in one month while urea went up 18%. As of the last week of May, the average retail price of urea was \$523/ton (39% higher than last year), DAP was \$652/ton (59% higher than last year), and potash was \$443/ton (21% higher than last year).

When prices increased so rapidly earlier in May, one COOP manager I talked to said he had a shortage of fertilizer spreaders because everyone was trying to get their summer pastures fertilized before prices went even higher. While it is often a good idea to fertilize your bermudagrass and Old World Bluestem pastures in early May, this year it may have caused more problems than solutions.

Bermudagrass and other warm-season perennials grow well when daytime temperatures are over 80°F, but do not start rapid growth until nighttime temperatures are higher than 60°F for a consecutive week. Fertilizing bermudagrass early will actually provide nutrients to cool-season annuals, many of which are short lived or low in nutritive quality like cheat, Japanese brome, or little barley. When the cool-season annual grassy weeds take up fertilizer they will outgrow the warm-season perennial grasses and shade them out, further slowing their growth and reducing early summer production.

With higher fertilizer prices, is it even worth fertilizing our introduced warm season grasses?

As a rule of thumb, for bermudagrass and other introduced warm-season perennials, each pound of N fertilizer will add about 30 to 40 pounds of forage production per acre, a boost which can double carrying capacity of your pastures.

Generally, a calf value to N cost ratio of 2.5 would indicate fertilization is potentially profitable.

With N fertilizer costing about \$0.57/lb of actual N, if calves are sold next fall at an average price of \$1.60/cwt the ratio is 2.8. So, if long term prices of fertilizer are increasing or prices of calves fall, adjustments in fertilization, addition of legumes, and changes in grazing management would be warranted.

If cow stocking rates currently in use are based on fertilized pastures, stocking rates will need to be reduced in unfertilized pastures or weaning weights and rebreeding percentage will suffer. Another rule of thumb is that for each pound of actual nitrogen we can expect stocker calf gain per acre to increase by 1.5 to 2 pounds.

At the current price of urea (\$0.57/pound of actual N) each additional pound gain from N fertilization will cost 30 to 40 cents, which will be profitable if the value of stocker gains are higher.

Stocking rates of growing cattle will need adjustments without fertilization or rates of gain will decrease, unless extra supplementation is provided.

All rules of thumb are based on soils with adequate phosphorus (P) and potassium (K). If additional P and K are needed costs will increase. Which goes back to the old recommendation, build up soil fertility (especially P and K) when cattle prices are high or fertilizer is cheap, then when things get sideways you can mine the excess that was built up.

This cannot be emphasized enough...soil test and use these recommendations to make the most effective decisions.

Upcoming Events

Be sure to mark your calendars!

JUNE

22-24 - GR-AY County Camp, Ponca City

JULY

1 County Record Books Due

5 Office Closed

7 Junior STEM Camp, Grant County Expo Building

8 County Record Book Interviews

12-13 Leadership Team Retreat

27 Sew Camp, Grant County Expo Building

29-30 State Roundup

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