



EXTENSION

USDA - Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Amy D. Hagerman, Oklahoma State University Extension Policy Specialist

The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) opened up on May 26 for applications, and will close on August 28, 2020. Applications can be submitted by phone or email at Farm Service Agency county offices across the country. Producers can find their local FSA office, and much more CFAP information, at www.farmers.gov/cfap. In addition to the CFAP application, a producer may need to submit forms and documentation to determine their eligibility for the program and agree to basic conservation requirements, which are required for all USDA programs. There is also a form for direct deposit. Anyone who used the drought program (Livestock Forage Program, or LFP) in 2014 or other years will be familiar with the process.

Once a producer's total CFAP payment is calculated, they will receive a direct deposit for 80% of that payment relatively quickly. However, the remaining 20% will only be paid if enough funds are available. This assures that CFAP funds are spread across as many eligible livestock and crop producers as possible. (Continued Pg. 3)

Wheat Marketing: Selling at Harvest vs. Storing

Trent Milacek, West Area Ag Econ Specialist

Lower grain prices and concerning issues regarding trade have thrust farmers into a difficult marketing situation. Should I consider selling at harvest in a down market or wait and hope for a more lucrative situation later in the year?

Some producers are highly leveraged, others plan to expand their operations, and a few may be nearing retirement. How does this affect their marketing decisions? Debt obligations will account for some mandatory selling of wheat, and new land or machinery purchases could earmark several thousand bushels across Oklahoma. These individuals are probably less concerned with long-term price outlooks, because their need for funds in the operation determine when they sell. This is not necessarily a bad thing.

Marketing does not require that a producer predict price. First, what is their cost of production? Knowing how many dollars per bushel is required to cover the cost of production will at least help prevent them from selling wheat at a loss. Second, what is the historical basis? Basis information is generally easy to obtain and is a good indicator of the local demand for a crop. (Continued Pg. 5)

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David Hillock shares his monthly garden tips for Oklahoma in the month of May.



Native Grass Haying

Josh Bushong, Area Extension Agronomy Specialist

Early July is the optimum time of year to be haying native grass pastures for hay. There are some basic production practices to maximize production potential of these hay meadows. Since native hay meadows are a long-term investment, they should be managed in such a way to sustain long-term productivity.

The most important management practice is cutting date. In most years, the optimum cutting date will be between July 1 and 10. Harvesting native hay at this time will achieve a good balance of forage yield and forage quality while also allowing the native stand to recover the rest of the year to sustain production for following years.

The main key to managing any perennial hay field is to maintain a balance between forage yield and forage quality. Time of cutting will be the primary production practice that will determine the forage yield and quality. The maximum forage yield and maximum forage quality hardly ever occur at the same time. Hay

tonnage will typically peak in late August, while crude protein and digestibility are usually highest in May.

The second most important management practice is proper cutting height. Cutting height can easily be overlooked, but can be highly detrimental to the life of the stand. Native grasslands should never be cut shorter than 4 inches. Growing points on these grasses are elevated during this time of year. If the growing point is cut off, then production will be greatly reduced the following year.

Cutting height is also important because most of the native grass species need time to re-grow to build root carbohydrate reserves. To sustain a native hay meadow it is recommended to only harvest it for hay once a year. Native grass species grow rapidly through May and June, but will exhibit slow re-growth in July after harvesting a hay crop. In addition to the slow growth, the re-growth is often less palatable as well. Native species have adapted through natural selection for these traits to

ensure grazing animals will not exhaust the root carbohydrates prior to winter dormancy.

Field research conducted by Oklahoma State University has shown that forage tonnage can be increased with an application of fertilizer, however it is rarely economical to do so. When adequate moisture is available during spring and early summer, 30-80 pounds of actual nitrogen fertilizer can increase hay yield and crude protein. Herbicide applications are rarely warranted on native grasslands. If managed properly, there should be a mix of native forbs and legumes that benefit the grass production. (Continued Pg. 5)



USDA – CFAP program (Cont.)

Let's be frank, \$16 billion sounds like a lot of funds until you consider how much production of livestock, crops and specialty crops it is being spread across.

Let's break down the payments for cattle producers further. First, producers will need to know their sales and their inventory. USDA is allowing both to be self-certified, but have your documentation on hand and be prepared to produce it if asked. Cattle producers that sold cattle between January 15 and April 15 are eligible for a payment out of the CARES Act funds, provided those cattle were unpriced. USDA defined 'unpriced cattle' as those cattle that were 'not subject to an agreed-upon price in the future through a forward contract, agreement, or similar binding document'. However, if you had another risk management instrument such as a Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) or put option in place the cattle are still eligible sales under CFAP.

If you did not have any sales in that window, then you may still be eligible for receiving a payment on the highest daily inventory between April 16 and May 14 out of CCC funds. Again, this is a self-certified inventory. Cattle producers will receive \$33/head for that inventory.

Also, pay attention to the definitions of each category of cattle to sort them into the correct boxes. All of the breeding herd falls into 'all other cattle'. Cull cows and bulls fall into 'slaughter cattle – mature'. Calves, including unweaned calves, fall into 'feeder cattle under 600 pounds'. Stockers you may have sold will fall into one of the two feeder cattle categories, depending on their weight. Fed cattle with average weights until 1400 pounds fall into 'feeder cattle 600 pounds or greater' for now, although that definition is under review.

This program allows producers to offset market losses for those cattle that still had risk exposure during the 2020 market decline. Don't let the process scare you off, many producers have reported that, once they had their numbers in hand, it didn't take long to apply. Get your application in as soon as possible.

UPCOMING EVENTS and DATES

August 6th – Quality Beef Programs (RSVP needed) 11:30a.m.-2:30p.m.

BQA training

OQBN Protocol and Vaccination training

Lunch Provided to those that RSVP

Limit 50 participants due to CDC guidelines

Contact Kay County OSU Extension to RSVP

Southern Plains Livestock Auction, Blackwell, OK

August - November 2020 –Master Gardener Volunteer Training

More Details TBA

\$100/per participant

Once a Week Gardening Training Course

Pioneer Technology Center, Ponca City, OK



GARDEN TIPS FOR JUNE!

David Hillock, State Master Gardener Coordinator

General Landscape

- Find someone to water plants in the house and garden while on vacation. Harvesting vegetables and mowing the lawn are a must and imply that someone is home.
- Mulch ornamentals, vegetables, and annuals to reduce soil crusting, and to regulate temperatures and moisture during hot summer months. Mulching will reduce about 70 percent of the summer yard maintenance.
- Remain alert for insect damage. Add spider mite to the list. Foliage of most plants becomes pale and speckled; juniper foliage turns a pale yellowish color. Shake a branch over white paper and watch for tiny specks that crawl. Watch for first generation fall webworm. ([EPP-7306](#))

Turfgrass

- Fertilize warm-season grasses at 1 lb. N per 1,000 square feet. Don't fertilize fescue and other cool-season grasses during the summer.
- Dollar spot disease of lawns can first become visible in mid-May. Make certain fertilizer applications have been adequate before applying a fungicide. ([EPP-7658](#))
- Seeding of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of June (through July for improved varieties such as Riviera and Yukon) to reduce winterkill losses. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. ([HLA-6420](#))
- White grubs will soon be emerging as adult June Beetles. Watch for high populations that can indicate potential damage from later life cycle stages as grubs in the summer.

Fruit and Nut

- Renovate overgrown strawberry beds after the last harvest. Start by setting your lawnmower on its highest setting and mow off the foliage. Next thin crowns 12-24 inches apart. Apply recommended fertilizer, preemergence herbicide if needed and keep watered. ([HLA-6214](#))

Trees and Shrubs

- Vigorous, unwanted limbs should be removed or shortened on new trees. Watch for forks in the main trunk and remove the least desirable trunk as soon as it is noticed. ([HLA-6415](#))
- Pine needle disease treatments are needed again in mid-June.
- Remove tree wraps during the summer to avoid potential disease and insect buildup.
- Softwood cuttings from new growth of many shrubs will root if propagated in a moist shady spot.
- Protect trees from lawnmowers and weed eaters by mulching or using protective aerated covers.

Flowers

- Pinch back leggy annuals to encourage new growth. Fertilize and water appropriately.
- Feed established mums and other perennials.
- When picking fresh roses or removing faded ones, cut back to a leaflet facing the outside of the bush to encourage open growth and air circulation.
- Stake tall perennials before toppling winds arise.

Wheat Markets (Cont.)

Kansas State University maintains a website called agmanager.info that provides valuable information on basis. Their crop basis tool tells us that the 5-year average basis for wheat at Medford, OK is approximately -45 cents/bushel near the first of July. Currently, the basis is -20 cents/bushel. When the basis is stronger than the historical average, the local market is actively seeking grain. While basis is just one part of the equation where $\text{Cash Price} = \text{Futures Price} + \text{Basis}$, it is fairly predictable and easy to spot increased demand in the local market. Periods of increased demand are generally good selling opportunities.

A farmer asks, “What will the wheat price be in December?” Large stocks of grain in the world make it difficult to predict rallies in prices. For the past few years rallies have come after harvest, but were short lived and difficult to capture. Storage is a silent enemy that is likened to paying interest to own wheat. The past has proven that it can be lucrative to store wheat beyond harvest, but generally farmers who store wheat through December of the current marketing year receive a lower actual price than farmers who sold before that time.

Another way to look at this is to compare storing wheat to paying off loans. Will storing wheat make more money than your highest interest rate loan is costing you? Today a 1,000 bushels of wheat will be worth roughly \$4.50/bushel for a total of \$4,500 dollars. Assuming a 3.5 cent/bushel monthly storage cost, storing 1,000 bushels of wheat until December 31st will result in 6 months of storage at \$210. Borrowing \$4,500 dollars at 4.5 percent interest for 6 months will cost \$100. If the wheat is sold on December 31st it will have to bring \$4.31/bushel to overcome the opportunity cost of capital (interest on \$4,500) and the 21 cents/bushel storage cost to be worth more than selling at harvest. Keep in mind that on average the basis will decrease another 10 cents/bushel between July 1 and Dec. 31st. If that happens, then the futures price will have to increase another 10 cents to make up for the loss in basis.

Native Grass Hay (Cont.)

Some small plot studies conducted by OSU has shown an increase in grass production is possible when broadleaf weeds (forbs) are controlled with an herbicide application. However, increases varied depending on growing conditions and thickness of grass stand. Previous mismanagement of the pasture often leads to more weeds. Herbicides such as 2,4-D and/or dicamba are effective when applications are made to small weeds. As weeds get bigger, more costly herbicides are often needed.

Good management practices include harvesting prior to mid-July, leave at least 4 inches of stubble, harvest only once during the growing season, and manage the re-grown forage in the dormant season with either fire or grazing.

For more information about harvesting native grasslands for hay, contact your local Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Office. Information can also be found from the OSU factsheet “NREM-2891 Native Hay Meadow Management”. <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/native-hay-meadow-management.html>

Shannon’s Kay County Corner

If you have not had a chance to check out our videos on YouTube, please look. Right now, there are videos on native pasture flowers, barbed wire fence tips, and fruit tree diseases. We plan to put more subjects up throughout the year, and are always up for more suggestions!

Kay County OSU Extension YouTube Channel Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8PF4BmW9J4fslUsidEvEFw/featured>

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