



OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION SERVICE

## AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Fourth Quarter 2025 Issue  
Quarterly Agriculture Newsletter

### Knowledge is Power When Evaluating Cube Feeder Accuracy

Dana Zook, NW OK Area Livestock Specialist

I recently read an article that discussed a unique spin on how to use the profits from strong cattle prices. Typically, high cattle prices automatically jump-starts the expansion discussion. This author suggested that instead of automatically buying expensive additions to the herd, some people might be drawn to use extra profits to invest in their current operation. Now don't think I'm talking about upgrading your equipment (I'm looking at you, shiny '26 F-250), although that might be needed. One of his suggestions was addressing your winter grazing system. This could include adding fencing, watering infrastructure or planting cool season forage. I think these are EXCELLENT ideas, but I also like to look at simple things first. To me, testing hay, evaluating local supplement prices, and then making the most cost-effective supplement choice are easy first

steps. Another easy task would be testing your cube feeder for feeding accuracy. Based on local data collected at cube feeder calibration clinics, we feel that some producers might be overlooking the importance of confirming feed delivery.

Since 2021, OSU Extension Educators have been offering Cube Feeder Calibration Clinics to help producers better understand their cube feeders. In that time, 341 producers attended 50 clinics hosted at coops and extension offices across Western Oklahoma. These clinics are unique, providing insight into feed delivery in a drive-thru sessions that take no more than 5-10 minutes. We work with producers to confirm feed delivery with any commodity they have in their feeder while also providing insight into nutrition for their beef herd when needed.

Data from the last three years of clinics have revealed some

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## Cube Feeder Accuracy continued from page 1

interesting insight into the use of cube feeders. Our data shows that producers utilized a variety of ways to measure their feed delivery (digital counter, mental count, trip, stopwatch, scales), but digital counters were the best in improving consistency. A variety of brands were tested (3C, Trip Hopper, Bar-6, Crownline, Hydrabed, Deweese, and Bar-S) but the 3C Feeder stood out among those sampled being the most accurate (104%) only feeding 4% more than expected. Across all brands within our test, producers on average were overfeeding by 13%.

What is 13% to you? Well, a real-world example of this would be a producer feeding 50 cows 5 pounds of cubes per day that cost \$350/ton. By feeding an extra 13% per day, this producer would instead be feeding 0.65 additional pounds per cow or 32.5 additional pounds to the group per day. This extra cost would inflate a feed bill by \$5.68 daily or \$681.60 over a 4-month feeding season.

In addition to collecting data, Extension Educators and Area Specialists also address timely producer questions about hay testing, forage quality, and supplement options during feeding season. Knowledge is power. If you are looking to make an investment in your winter-feeding routine, consider attending one of the upcoming cube feeder calibration clinics in your area listed below. I have listed our clinics for the fall but if you don't see one in your area, contact your local county OSU Extension office for assistance.

10/1 at Dacoma Farmers Coop in Freedom, OK 9AM-12PM

10/7 at Stillwater Milling in Perry, OK 8-10AM

10/14 at Two Rivers Coop in Marland, OK 11AM-1PM

10/29 at Farmers Coop in Laverne, OK 8-10AM

10/30 at Farmers Grain in Nash, OK 9-11AM

10/31 at Farmers Grain in Nardin, OK 8-11AM

11/7 at Dacoma Farmers Coop in Waynoka, OK 11AM-1PM

11/10 at Crescent Coop in Crescent, OK 8-11AM

11/12 at Farmers Grain in Caldwell, KS 9-11AM

11/14 at Burlington Coop in Burlington, OK 8-11AM

11/20 at Two Rivers Coop in Newkirk, OK 8-11AM

# Free Ag Pesticide Disposals

**Josh Bushong, Area Extension Agronomist**

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (ODAFF) and OSU Pesticide Safety Education Program are teaming up once again to offer the opportunity for applicators, farmers, or citizens to properly dispose of any unwanted pesticides. ODAFF funds this Unwanted Pesticide Disposal Program to provide a free service to prevent unlawful disposal of pesticides.

The first event this fall will be in Pond Creek at the Grant County Expo Center on November 12, 2025. The second event will be in Clinton at the Custer County Fairgrounds on November 13, 2025. Both events will be held between 8am and 1pm. These are the final two events planned for this year, but any future events will be posted at the OSU Pesticide Safety Education webpage, <http://PestEd.okstate.edu/>.

Oklahoma commercial and non-commercial applicators and pesticide dealers may participate. Oklahoma farmers, ranchers, and homeowners can use this program as well. There is no cost for the first 2,000 pounds of pesticides brought in by a participant. Anything more than 2,000 pounds will be charged to the participant.

Applicators, homeowners, farmers, and ranchers are not required to pre-register. Dealers are asked to voluntarily pre-register with the OSU Pesticide Safety Education Program. Dealers are asked to pre-register to allow the hazardous waste company to properly plan for larger quantities.

So, what are unwanted pesticides? When pesticides become unusable as originally intended for various reasons, they are considered unwanted. Unwanted pesticides can result from both good and bad management practices. Leftover pesticides that have a limited shelf life may undergo changes rendering them unusable. Pesticides also become unusable when they are no longer registered in the state of Oklahoma. Unwanted or waste pesticides can also result from lost labels on the container making them no longer identifiable.

Pesticide is a general term for any chemical or product that is used to destroy, prevent, or control a pest. Herbicide, insecticide, fungicide, defoliant, desiccant, miticide, rodenticide, and nematicide are all examples of pesticides. Products that participants are not allowed to bring include fertilizers, micronutrients, waste oil, or any other non-pesticide material.

ODAFF will not use your participation to prosecute for illegal management or possession of pesticides. The main objective of this program is to remove unusable pesticides from storage and reduce the potential threat to public health and the environment. Participants using this opportunity to properly dispose of pesticides will not be asked to provide names or any other details on their chemicals.

Transportation of pesticides to these events is the responsibility of the participants. Wearing appropriate personal protection equipment is always recommended when handling pesticides. Inspect all unwanted pesticides to see that they are securely packaged. Do not transport pesticides in areas occupied by passengers. Lining the storage area or trunk with plastic sheeting is a good practice to prevent spillage. Containers 5 gallons or smaller can be placed in a bucket or plastic storage container if they show signs of leakage.

The Unwanted Pesticide Disposal Program has been very successful. Since 2006, this program has collected more than 1.5 million pounds of unwanted pesticides. The program is a service designed to remove unusable pesticides from storage and reduce the potential threat to public health and the environment and participants in the program will not be prosecuted for illegal management practices.

For more information visit your local OSU Extension office or visit the OSU Pesticide Education Safety Program webpage <http://PestEd.okstate.edu/>.

# Garden Corner

## Garden Tips for October

### Turfgrass

- You can continue to replant or establish cool-season lawns like fescue.
- The mowing height for fescue should be lowered to approximately 2 ½ inches for fall and winter cutting.
- Broadleaf weeds like dandelions can be easily controlled during October (HLA-6601).
- Mow and neatly edge warm season lawns before killing frost.

### Ornamentals

- Plant cool season annuals like pansies, ornamental cabbage or kale, snapdragons, and dusty miller when temperatures
- Begin planting spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, hyacinths, crocus and daffodils.
- Good companion plants for bulbs are ground covers such as ajuga, vinca, alyssum, moneywort, phlox, oxalis, and leadwort.
- Peonies, daylilies, and other spring-flowering perennials should be divided or planted now.
- Dig and store tender perennials like cannas, dahlias, and caladiums in a cool, dry location.
- Purchase trees from nurseries and garden centers to select the fall color you prefer.
- Many perennials can be planted at this time, and the selection is quite nice.
- Plant fall mums and asters and keep them watered during dry conditions. Don't crowd since they take a couple of years to reach maturity.
- Plant container-grown trees and shrubs this month.
- Check and treat houseplants for insect pests before bringing them indoors and repot rootbound plants.

### Fruits & Vegetables

- Dig sweet potatoes and harvest pumpkins and winter squash.
- Remove green fruit from tomato plants when frost threatens.
- Harvest Oriental persimmons and pawpaws as they begin to change color.
- There is still time to plant radishes and mustard in the fall garden.
- Use a cold frame device to plant spinach, lettuce, and various other cool season crops for production most of the winter.
- Plant cool season cover crops like Austrian winter peas, wheat, clover, and rye in otherwise fallow garden pots.
- Remove debris from the vegetable garden to prevent overwintering of various garden pests.
- Start new planting bed preparations now with plenty of organic matter.

# To Compost or Not – Garden Clean-Up Edition

Shelby Mendoza, Extension Assistant

As we approach the first frost date, many of us start thinking about cleaning out the garden for the year... or maybe, like me, you let plants start to fade back in July when the heat got the best of you and your garden.

Whether you're clearing out a vegetable garden or flower beds, some materials are perfect for the compost pile, while others are best avoided. Let's dig in!

## Things You Can Compost

- Fallen leaves
- Old potting mix from planters
- Plant clippings or trimmings
- Entire plants – such as frost-killed annuals or vegetable plants that have finished producing

## Things to Avoid (or Compost with Caution)

- Bermudagrass clippings – Use caution! Lawn clippings often contain rhizomes. A hot, well-maintained compost pile can kill them, but if your pile doesn't heat up enough, those rhizomes may survive and spread.
- Weeds with seeds – Many seeds can survive the composting process. If they do, you'll be pulling those weeds again once you spread your compost.
- Diseased plants – Avoid composting plants with fungal diseases such as rust, powdery mildew, or fusarium wilt.
- Plants with insect infestations – Some pests (like beetles, mites, and squash bugs) can survive in compost piles and may even thrive in the warm, protected environment.

## A Quick Reminder

Successful composting is about balance. Aim for a good mix of green materials (like fresh plant debris and kitchen scraps) and brown materials (like dried leaves and mulch). This balance supports the microbes that break everything down into compost.

That said, most home compost piles aren't closely monitored with thermometers, moisture checks, and frequent turning. Unlike commercial composting systems, backyard piles often don't heat up enough to reliably kill all plant pathogens, weed seeds, or pests. That's why it's smart to be cautious about what you add.

Because let's be honest—gardening in Oklahoma summers is already challenging enough without reintroducing last year's problems into next year's garden!



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FARM FORWARD SERIES

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# CATTLE NUTRITION



**Dana Zook, OSU Extension Area Livestock Specialist**

Thursday, November 6 at 7:30 AM

Northwest Technology Center

801 Vo-Tech Drive, Fairview, OK

RSVP:  
580.227.0754

Presented By:  
Farmers & Merchants National Bank, Sooner Plains Ag,  
Major Co. Economic Development, Fairview Savings & Loan,  
Guardian Mineral Management, Red Hill Watusi Ranch,  
Community National Bank, Major Co. OSU Extension,  
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# NEW WORLD SCREWWORM FACT SHEET

Last Updated: May 2025

## WHAT IS NEW WORLD SCREWWORM?

New World Screwworms (NWS) are larvae or maggots of the NWS fly (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*), that cause the painful condition NWS myiasis. NWS flies lay eggs in open wounds or orifices of live tissue. These eggs hatch into dangerous parasitic larvae, and the maggots burrow or screw into flesh with sharp mouth hooks. The wound can become larger, and an infestation can often cause serious, deadly damage. NWS primarily infest livestock, but can also affect mammals, including humans, and birds.

The parasite was last eradicated from the United States in 1982, with costly efforts by federal and state animal health officials, livestock producers and veterinary practitioners. Eradication efforts have continued in Central America, but the pest is considered endemic in Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and South America.

## CLINICAL SIGNS

- Irritated or depressed behavior
- Loss of appetite
- Head shaking
- Smell of decaying flesh
- Evidence of fly strike
- Presence of fly larvae (maggots) in wounds
- Isolation from other animals or people

## TRANSMISSION

NWS infestations begin when a female NWS fly is attracted to the odor of a wound or opening of a live warm-blooded animal to lay eggs. These openings can include wounds as small as a tick bite, nasal or eye openings, umbilicus of a newborn, or genitalia. One NWS female fly can lay 200-300 eggs at a time and may lay up to 3,000 eggs during her lifespan.

Eggs hatch into larvae (maggots) that burrow into an opening to feed. After feeding, larvae drop to the ground, burrow into the soil, and emerge as adult NWS flies. Adult NWS flies can fly long distances, and the movement of infested livestock or wildlife can lead to spread of even longer distances.

## DIAGNOSIS

There are several flies associated with wounds, but only NWS feed on living tissues, compared to dead tissues and fluids. The identification of NWS is done by larvae collection and evaluation. NWS larvae have a series of backwardly protruding spines around a tapered body, giving a screw-like appearance, helping to identify the pest. Anyone who suspects suspicious wounds, maggots, or infestations should notify a veterinarian immediately.

## REPORTING NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

All suspected and confirmed cases of NWS must be reported immediately to the State Veterinarian's Office at 405-522-6141 upon suspicion of clinical disease.

Reports can be made by anyone, not just veterinarians or diagnostic laboratories.

## PREVENTION

To avoid introduction of NWS keep open wounds clean and covered. When traveling, especially in NWS-infested areas, ensure pets and vehicles are inspected for NWS flies and larvae and treat clothing, gear and people with proper repellents. Monitor pets and livestock for clinical signs of NWS.

## TREATMENT AND ERADICATION

Animals infested with NWS, myiasis, or secondary infection should be immediately treated with an appropriate method by a veterinarian. Left untreated, animals may die within one week of infestation.

Eradication of NWS infestations is accomplished through the sterile insect technique. Sterilized male flies are released to mate in an area with an established NWS population. Females, only mating once in their lifetime, then lay nonviable eggs. The population decreases without the addition of new larvae and dies off naturally over a few lifecycles.

To report possible sightings of NWS, scan here or call 405-522-6141



OKLAHOMA  
Dept. of Agriculture,  
Food and Forestry

REPORT DISEASES IMMEDIATELY TO THE  
STATE VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE AT 405-522-6141

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