

## Blaine and Major Counties

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service - Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources - Oklahoma State University

December 2023– January 2024 Issue

### Winter wheat research educates producers on short-season crop

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

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Oklahoma State University 2020 winter wheat variety Butler's Gold is growing more prominent on the commercial market, and researchers want to ensure that producers know when and how to plant it.

"Wheat producers are interested in the late planting system," said Dr. [Amanda Silva](#), assistant professor and state Extension specialist for small grains. "There are producers in Oklahoma wanting to harvest cotton and soybeans in late October, so they need to delay wheat planting. It's important for them to find a variety well adapted for planting in November and December."

Silva's research shows Butler's Gold is the only short-season winter wheat variety in the U.S. In a recently completed three-year study, Silva and her master's student, Israel Cyrineu, compared the performance and seeding rate of the short-season variety with eight other varieties of winter wheat planted in October and December at two locations.

"Sometimes, producers plant late because they are trying to fit in double cropping systems, but sometimes weather or other factors prevent them from planting in time," Silva said.

She added that Oklahoma producers commonly increase the seeding rate when planting late due to having a shorter tilling period. However, more research is needed to understand optimal seeding rate at different planting dates using modern varieties.

In the previous study, Silva's team found the maturity pattern of the short-season variety was adequate for late planting and fared better when planted in December rather than October.

"Although we did not see yield differences among these varieties, the maturity differences are the most important thing with a late planting system, especially for producers who want to plant a summer crop afterward," Silva said.

After late planting, Butler's Gold grows fast and matures early before spring to avoid a delay in wheat harvest and soybean planting.

This winter, Silva and her team are comparing Showdown, Doublestop and Butler's Gold at three seeding rates for planting dates in October, November and December at separate locations.

"These varieties have different maturity patterns, so we can inform producers on how those varieties with different maturity patterns will perform when they are planted at different times," Silva said. "The more we talk about this type of research with producers, the more we find that it is very useful for them."

Wheat producers Brent and Zack Rendel in Miami, Oklahoma, provided their farm as one of the three locations for the research trial. Silva said due to having specialized equipment, the Rendel Farms location will study two wheat varieties with five seeding rates and three planting dates.

Brent Rendel said he has partnered with OSU Ag Research off and on for more than 20 years and has learned participation is the best way to collect new information about wheat production.

"I always have three to four ag research projects in any given year," Rendel said. "I value that the answers we come up with are always geared toward the questions I want to see answered as a producer. Hosting one of the research locations helps researchers get a state-wide view of the question while helping me get a local view."

# Oh Christmas tree, oh Christmas tree, how lovely are thy ... insects?

Thursday, December 7, 2023

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There's nothing like the pine scent of a fresh-cut Christmas tree during the holiday season. The aroma and beauty of the outdoors are welcome in homes, but a freshly cut Christmas tree may harbor something within its branches that's not so welcome.

It's not likely consumers will come face to face with a squirrel like Clark Griswold did in "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation," but dealing with a variety of insects and other arthropods isn't out of the question.

Real Christmas trees are grown outdoors and serve as a home for overwintering insects and other arthropods. These tiny creatures can remain on the limbs or under the bark after the tree is harvested and brought indoors, said [Andrine Shufran](#), [Oklahoma State University Extension](#) specialist and director of OSU's [Insect Adventure](#).

"In the fall, insects find places to overwinter or lay eggs in preparation for the winter weather," Shufran said. "It's not uncommon for a tree to harbor ants, bark beetles, aphids, beetle larvae, praying mantises or even spiders. They look for microclimates where humidity is high and the temperature is warm."

While they may not be apparent before the tree is cut down, these insects become active when they warm up inside the home. Shufran said a praying mantis can lay enough eggs to fill two to three egg sacs, which contain up to 200 eggs each. Look for egg sacs on the undersides of branches, and if one is found, cut off the limb and place it in a protected area outside — it should hatch in the spring. Protecting some species of insects is important because they're beneficial and eat invasive species that can harm a landscape.

"It's important to remember that the insects or spiders that might be on the tree can be annoying to have inside the house, but they're harmless," she said. "If a family happens to find some insects on the tree, take it as an entomological learning opportunity. Talk about the life cycle of insects and beneficial insects versus harmful insects. The insects can be vacuumed up if necessary to get rid of them."

In addition to insects, some trees may have a good amount of pollen on the branches. Even though most of it will fall off during the shaking process before taking it home, consumers may consider rinsing the tree once they get it home.

[David Hillock](#), OSU Extension consumer horticulturist, said for those visiting a tree farm or cutting their tree on open land, inspect the tree for signs of insects.

"Most insects aren't active at this time of year, so they may be hard to spot," Hillock said. "The foliage should look clean, not sticky or like an insect has been sucking on the leaves or shoots. Families don't want to wake up and find aphids on the floor or covering the gifts under the tree."

When purchasing a freshly cut tree at a tree farm, make sure the tree stays on the shaker for 20 to 30 seconds. This not only removes loose needles but also most of the insects on the limbs.

"If consumers cut their tree and don't have access to a shaker, tap the trunk of the tree on the ground multiple times to disperse loose needles and insects," Hillock said. "Another idea is to use a leaf blower or compressed air to get rid of loose needles and insects. Also, shaking the branches over a piece of white paper before cutting it down can expose possible insects."

Once the tree is home, water it properly to help keep it as fresh as possible through the holiday season. A fresh tree can use up to a quart of water per day for each inch of diameter on the cut end. For example, a tree with a 3-inch trunk diameter can use up to 3 quarts of water per day.

# Introduction to Prescribed Fire Online Course Overview

Interested in learning how to conduct a safe and effective prescribed burn? Enroll in the OSU Extension Introduction to Prescribed Fire online course to learn best practices for conducting a safe and effective burn. The course features interactive learning activities and custom videos.

## Learning Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Explain why fire is a crucial part of a healthy ecosystem.
  - Identify key considerations for creating a fire plan.
  - Recognize safe practices for conducting a prescribed burn, including equipment, firebreaks and smoke management.
- Describe the best practices for meeting the land management objectives using prescribed fire, including ignition and season of burn.

## Course Outline

You can work on this course any time, 24/7 for up to 120 days. You will watch videos, engage in learning activities and take quizzes. The course is divided into nine modules, which can be completed at your own pace. Each module should take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete.

To complete the course, you must access all pages and earn at least 80% on all assessments. A certificate will be available to download after the course is completed.

**Total Time Estimate: 8 hours**

### Topic Overview

- Introduction to Prescribed Fire
- Prescribed Fire Law and Liability
- Fire Prescriptions
- Fire Effects
- Firebreaks
- Ignition
- Smoke Management
- Burn Seasons

Fire Equipment

## Quick Tips

- For the best viewing experience, use the Google Chrome browser.
  - First-time users will need to respond to a confirmation email from Canvas Catalog.
- If you miss the email, resetting your password will also work.
  - When logging in, use the **Public** Login option (unless you have OKey credentials.) Contact the [OSU IT Helpdesk](#) if you need assistance.

# **USDA cattle report shows strong market prices support higher feedlot numbers**

Monday, November 13, 2023

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Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist, said the U.S. Department of Agriculture's October cattle reports indicate markets have not yet recovered from drought in the southern plains.

Peel reviewed October market trends on an episode of "SUNUP," the agriculture television show of OSU Agriculture, with the following highlights:

## **Cattle on feed report**

- Placements were up 106% from 2022.
- Marketings were 89% of last year's total.
- The combination of larger placements and lower marketings resulted in a 1% increase from October 2022, the first monthly increase on a year-over-year basis reported in 2023.
- Lingering drought and strong market prices support increased placements at feedlots.
- Feeder cattle were sold earlier than usual to take advantage of high market prices.
- Feedlot supplies are going to be bigger than expected in the near future.

## **Quarterly heifer and steer report**

- Heifers on feed were up not only from July but also up slightly from July 2022.
- Heifers on feed are currently 40% of the total feedlot inventory — the highest feedlot level for heifers since 2001.
- High levels of heifers on feed and heifer slaughter along with strong levels of beef cow slaughter suggest the beef industry is still liquidating females.
- Beef cow inventory will be down on Jan. 1, 2024.
- The beef industry's tight supply situation has been extended.

# The Goat Barn

## **Finish the Fight Against Scrapie: Brains Needed!**

The United States is nearing the goal line after a 70-year battle against scrapie, a fatal disease that affects the brain of sheep and goats. While the current program has been very successful in drastically reducing the amount of scrapie in the US, we are still finding scrapie positive animals. The most recent two cases of scrapie found in the US were sampled at slaughter (a sheep tested in Wisconsin in 2021 and a goat in Indiana in 2019). However, we were unable to trace them to the farms of origin. It is likely there are still farms with cases of scrapie.

One of the most difficult aspects of an eradication program is finding the last few cases of the disease. This involves testing sheep and goats that are showing signs suspicious for scrapie but also testing those mature animals that may be incubating the disease. Here is where we need your help! If you have an adult sheep or goat that is exhibiting signs of scrapie such as incoordination, severe continuous rubbing or other neurologic signs, or an adult animal dies or is euthanized, or is being culled (even if you know the cause of death) please contact the State Veterinarian's office at 405-522-6141, or the USDA Veterinary Services office at 405-254-1797 right away. There is no charge for the collection or testing of the samples for scrapie. In addition, producers providing samples may be eligible for free official plastic tags as long as supplies last.

For a country to be considered free of scrapie, international standards require that no sheep or goats test positive for classical scrapie for

# The Hog Pen

As a reminder, the time is approaching for show swine to be getting ready for the winter and spring show season. Swine must be tested negative for Brucellosis and Pseudorabies on or after November 10 to be eligible to show through OYE without additional testing. Please make sure you collect enough blood to leave at least 2 ml of serum so the lab has enough to send for confirmation if initial tests are inconclusive. Making sure your samples are clean and unhemolyzed will help ensure the samples can be tested quickly and results processed in a timely manner.

At the time of testing, the pigs must be identified with an electronic official ID tag, which are commonly known as "840 tags". 840 tags can be ordered by a veterinarian, by an individual producer, by a 4-H or FFA Chapter, or by a County Fair or Livestock Association. The person or organization who orders the tags must order them using a Premises ID Number. Here is a link to a list of available official ID tags for livestock: [OFFICIAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER \(AIN\) DEVICES WITH THE "840" PREFIX \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/animal-identification/official-animal-identification-number-ain-devices-with-the-840-prefix) Swine must also be identified by age, sex breed, ear notch, and the Premises ID number of the location the pig is housed must be listed as well. If your clients need Premises ID numbers, an application is attached.

Our lab at ODAFF closed effective July 1, 2023. Samples can now be sent to OADDL. Their Swine Test Chart can be accessed here: [swine-chart\\_sept23.pdf \(okstate.edu\)](https://okstate.edu/swine-chart_sept23.pdf)

## **GARDEN TIPS FOR JANUARY!**

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

- If precipitation has been deficient (1” of snow = ~ 1/10” of water), water lawns, trees, and shrubs, especially broadleaf and narrowleaf evergreens. Double check moisture in protected or raised planters.
- Check on supplies of pesticides. Secure a copy of current recommendations and post them in a convenient place. Dilution and quantity tables are also useful.
- Check that gardening tools and equipment are in good repair—sharpen, paint, and repair mowers, edgers, sprayers, and dusters.
- Inspect your irrigation system and replace worn or broken parts. (HLA-6615)
- Control overwintering insects on deciduous trees or shrubs with dormant oil sprays applied when the temperature is above 40°F in late fall and winter. Do not use “dormant” oils on evergreens. (EPP-7306) •
- A product containing glyphosate plus a postemergent broadleaf herbicide can be used on dormant bermudagrass in January or February when temperatures are above 50°F for winter weed control.

## **Applicators Alley**

# **ODAFF Private Appl. CEU Summary**

### **2019-2023 Cycle**

16 Total, at least 1 CEU prior to 2023

### **2024-2028 Cycle**

20 Total, earned in 3+ of the 5 years

## **Conference Set to Bring Together Oklahoma Local Agriculture Community**

EDMOND, Okla. — The 10th annual Oklahoma Local Agriculture Summit is set for Feb. 28 – March 1, 2024, at the Edmond Conference Center located at 2833 Conference Dr, Edmond, OK 73034. The focus of the conference is to increase the availability of local food in Oklahoma communities and strengthen farmers markets and agritourism sites through education and networking opportunities.

The conference is made possible by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, ONIE Project, Langston University, and key stakeholders from agricultural, community, and public health agencies.

Two in-depth workshops will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 28, including hands-on marketing training and a workshop sharing best farm practices. The full summit with more than 20 breakout sessions is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 29 followed by the agritourism bus tour and innovative farm bus tour on Friday, March 1.

Most of the events associated with the summit are free to attend, however, registration is required for each event. Registration is open online at <https://oklac.org/oklas> and will close on Feb. 28, or once capacity is met.

The conference has five tracks addressing topics of special interest to farmers market managers, growers, agritourism producers, Christmas tree growers, and community support organizations. Topics will include accepting SNAP/EBT, growing practices, marketing to consumers, and more. A meal on February 29 will be provided to all registrants.

There are more than 45 registered farmers markets and 400 agritourism producers in Oklahoma, providing quality and tasty local food and enjoyment to communities across the state. Information on Oklahoma's agritourism industry can be found at [www.oklahomaaagritourism.com](http://www.oklahomaaagritourism.com).

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