

Extension Connection

AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

By: Katelyn Barthol

February 2017

Topics

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Garden City Water Talk 2017

The 2017 Water Talk Series will be hosted in six cities this winter. This series of talks will provide information on regional water issues, recent agricultural research, and resources available to support efficient irrigation in your area. Topics to be covered are the new for 2017 Limited Irrigation crop insurance option available for Kansas, locally developed goals for sustaining the water future, groundwater level changes, and Water Technology Farms. You are welcome to attend the meeting in your region or another.

2017 Water Talks Series stops:

- January 31st Concordia
- February 1st Goodland
- February 2nd Sharon Springs
- February 13th St. John
- February 14th Garden City
- February 21st Ulysses

The Garden City Meeting will be held at the Finney County Fairgrounds, 4-H Building beginning at 9 a.m. on February 14, 2017. The meeting will be followed by a lunch sponsored by Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No 3.

The location information for all meetings is available at <http://www.kwo.org/calender.html>. For more

information on the Water Talk 2017 Meeting, contact the Kansas Water Office at (785) 296-3185.

Western Kansas Forage Conference planned Feb. 20 in Larned



GARDEN CITY, Kan. – Growing cover crops as a way to protect and improve soil health is new to some High Plains farmers, but Jeff Rasawehr has been doing it for years.

Rasawehr, of Celina, Ohio, and co-founder of Cover Crop Ranch, will present “Making a Cover Crop Your Most Valued Crop” at the Western Kansas Forage Conference on Feb. 20. Sponsored by K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Forage and Grassland Council, the conference will be at the J.A. Haas Building, 400 E. 18th St. in Larned, Kansas. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with the program from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Cover Crop Ranch is a network of farms in Michigan and Ohio using sustainable farming practices of no-till, cover crops and a system called mob grazing to produce meat. Mob grazing involves moving cattle at least daily between small enclosures and split by electric fences. The plants in the enclosure are eaten, walked on and trampled, then allowed to rest for 60-120 days or more. Rasawehr will share his knowledge and experience in using cover crops and making them valuable in a crop production system.

“It is always good to hear from someone who is actually doing it and having success with it,” said A.J. Foster, area agronomist with the K-State Southwest Research and Extension Center, regarding Rasawehr’s experience growing cover crops. “We can always learn to improve our own system.”

Other conference speakers and topics include:

- ! Soil Management with Cover Crops – DeAnn Presley, K-State soil management specialist
- ! What Are We Learning from Integrating a Cover Crop into our Production Practice? – Dale Younker, U.S. Department of Agriculture soil health specialist
- ! Pasture Weed Management – Walt Fick, K-State range scientist
- ! Kansas Forage and Grassland Council Update – Mark Jensen, KSFGC board member
- ! Animal Health Concerns When Grazing Cover Crops – Jaymelynn Farney, K-State animal scientist
- ! Pasture Risk Insurance – Monte Vandever, K-State agricultural economist
- ! Producer Panel

Registration is requested by Feb. 10. Lunch is included in the registration fee, which is \$25 for KSFGC members and \$55 for non-members. Online registration and more information are available at www.southwest.ksu.edu. More information is available by contacting Foster at 620-276-8286 or anserdj@ksu.edu.

After the ice storm: Tending to damaged trees



MANHATTAN, Kan. – After the ice storm that struck Kansas last weekend, many people – especially in the middle of the state – are dealing with

damaged trees. Ward Upham, extension associate for Kansas State University, said tree damage often leaves homeowners with a decision about whether a tree can be saved. For those facing that choice, as well as cleaning up plenty of fallen limbs, the first step is to wait until all the ice has melted.

“Slippery ice and chainsaws don’t mix,” said Upham, home horticulture rapid response coordinator for extension agents across Kansas and

the state extension Master Gardener coordinator. “Check for downed power lines or hanging branches. Don’t venture under the tree until it is safe. If large limbs are hanging precariously, a certified arborist has the tools, training and knowledge to do the work safely.”

The next step is to remove debris to avoid tripping over it. After that, a careful examination of the tree is necessary to decide if saving the tree is feasible. Upham provided this checklist of steps to make that decision and give surviving trees the best chance to thrive:

- ! Decide whether it is feasible to save a tree. If the bark has been split so the cambium is exposed or the main trunk split, the tree probably will not survive and should be removed. If there are so many broken limbs that the tree’s form is destroyed, replacement is the best option.
- ! Topping, where all the main branches are cut and there are only stubs left, is not a recommended pruning procedure. Though new branches will normally arise from the stubs, they are not as firmly attached as the original branches and more likely to break in subsequent storms. Also, the tree must use a lot of energy to develop new branches, leaving less to fight off diseases and insect attacks. Often, the topped tree's life is shortened.
- ! Prune broken branches to the next larger branch or to the trunk. If cutting back to the trunk, do not cut flush with the trunk but rather at the collar area between the branch and the trunk. Cutting flush with the trunk leaves a much larger wound than cutting at the collar and takes longer to heal. Middle-aged or younger, vigorous trees can have up to one-third of the crown removed and still make a surprisingly swift comeback.
- ! Take large limbs off in stages. If you try to take off a large limb in one cut, it will often break before the cut is finished and strip bark from the tree. Instead, first make a cut about 15 inches from the trunk. Start from the bottom and cut one-third of the way up through the limb. Make the second cut from the top down but start 2 inches further away

from the trunk than the first. The branch will break away as you make the second cut. The third cut, made at the collar area, removes the stub that is left.

Upham also noted that pruning can be dangerous. “Consider hiring a trained, certified arborist to do major work,” he said. “Also, a good arborist knows how to prune trees so that storm breakage is less likely to occur. Preventing damage is better than trying to fix it once it has happened.”

KDA to Host Agribusiness Development Workshop in Liberal

MANHATTAN, Kan. – The Kansas Department of Agriculture will host an Agribusiness Development Workshop on Feb. 16, 2017, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. in room SW229 of the Seward County Community College Student Union, at 1801 N. Kansas Ave. in Liberal. This workshop will provide Kansas farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses with resources, current business development and organizational contacts to assist with start-ups or expansions.

Featured speakers at the event will represent KDA; Seward County Economic Development; USDA Rural Development; Kansas Department of Commerce; Network Kansas; Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism; Kansas Small Business Development Center; a local ag business; and a local financial institution.

The KDA Division of Agriculture Marketing received a U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Business Development Grant to help fund the workshop. Established in the 2014 Farm Bill, USDA’s Rural Business Development Grant is a program intended to help with technical assistance, training and other activities to allow small businesses in rural areas to expand.

“Agriculture is the largest industry, economic driver and employer in the state, contributing 43 percent of the state’s economy and 12 percent of the state’s workforce, including 30 percent of the entire workforce of Seward County,” said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey. “We are committed to economic growth, and these workshops will provide information and education to expand opportunities for small and rural agribusinesses across the state.”

KDA is also holding five additional workshops in the following areas: January 19 in Russell, February 2

in Emporia, February 9 in Winfield, February 23 in Norton and March 2 in Hutchinson.

KDA is committed to providing an environment that enhances and encourages economic growth of the agriculture industry and the Kansas economy. This workshop will provide support and assistance to help make Kansas businesses more successful.

A light meal will be available for those who register prior to February 13. To RSVP, email your name and workshop location to kda.events@ks.gov. Contact Lynne Hinrichsen at Lynne.Hinrichsen@ks.gov or (785) 564-6757 with any questions.

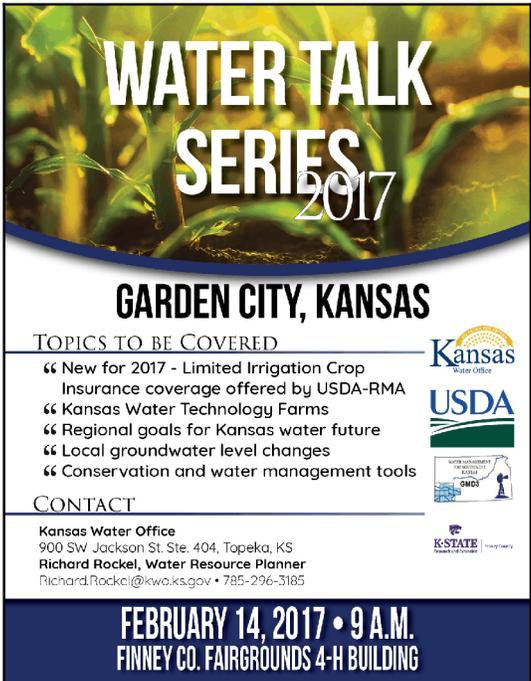
Calender

February:

- 7th:** Top 10 Considerations to Navigate a Struggling Farm Economy @ Dodge City
- 14th:** **Water Talk Series** @ Finney County Fairgrounds 4-H Building
- 20th:** Office Closed

Upcoming Events:

February 14, 2017



WATER TALK SERIES 2017

GARDEN CITY, KANSAS

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- “ New for 2017 - Limited Irrigation Crop Insurance coverage offered by USDA-RMA
- “ Kansas Water Technology Farms
- “ Regional goals for Kansas water future
- “ Local groundwater level changes
- “ Conservation and water management tools

CONTACT

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FEBRUARY 14, 2017 • 9 A.M.
FINNEY CO. FAIRGROUNDS 4-H BUILDING

Logos: Kansas Water Office, USDA, K-State