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**Farm & Ranch
Monthly Magazine**

Published monthly by The Roundup
PO Box 1207 • Sidney, MT 59270 • 406-433-3306

Glyphosate-Resistant Russian Thistle Found In MT

Submitted by Ag Media

This article highlights the evolution of glyphosate (Roundup, RT3, and other generics)-resistant Russian thistle in Montana. Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus* L.), a native of southeastern Russia, is one of the most problematic broadleaf weed species in the dryland no-till cropping systems of Montana and the U.S. Great Plains. It is a summer annual weed belonging to the goosefoot family that reproduces by seed. Russian thistle commonly invades dryland crop production fields, irrigation canals, roadsides, railroads, ditch banks and other disturbed non-cropland areas in this region. It is known to reduce crop yields, hinder harvest operations and pose problems in summer fallow.

Russian thistle exhibits low seed dormancy and persistence in the soil seedbank. Seeds can germinate early in the spring, and seedlings can exhibit an extended period of emergence during the summer. Russian thistle plants are round in shape with a bushy appearance and can grow up to 4 feet tall. It has a deep tap root system that can extend up to 5 feet deep in the soil. Leaves are alternate and linear in shape. In general, Russian thistle exhibits indeterminate flowering that normally starts during mid-summer. At maturity, Russian thistle plants break off at the ground level and tumble with the prevailing wind, dispersing seeds to a long distance. A single mature plant can produce almost 250,000 seeds.

In the fall 2015, seeds of a Russian thistle population surviving glyphosate applications were collected from a chem-fallow field in Chouteau County, Montana. The field was under wheat-fallow rotation and had a history of repeated glyphosate applications. Almost 100 plants screened from the population survived the field-use rate of glyphosate (@32 fl oz/a of 4.5 lb ae/gal Roundup Powermax). Dose-response experiments conducted by Prashant Jha and Vipan Kumar, weed researchers at the MSU Southern Agricultural Research Center in Huntley, showed up to 4.5-fold levels of resistance to glyphosate. Furthermore, "the confirmed glyphosate-resistant Russian thistle biotype survived two times the field-use-rate (1 oz/acre) of Ally Extra (Group 2, Sulfonylurea herbicide), confirming multiple resistance to glyphosate and sulfonylurea herbicides," said Kumar. The demographic spread of glyphosate-resistant Russian thistle in Montana is unknown, and the underlying mechanism(s) of glyphosate resistance is under investigation at the MSU Southern Agricultural Research Center in Huntley.

"This report confirms the first case of evolution of glyphosate-resistant Russian thistle. In Montana, this is the third weed species (after kochia and marestail) that has developed resistance to glyphosate. The discovery of glyphosate resistance in Russian thistle is a concern for Montana producers," said Jha.

Growers need to be proactive in managing Russian thistle populations in their fields. Weed control efforts should aim at preventing the soil seedbank replenishment. Utilize multiple, effective modes of action herbicides to manage the problem. Glyphosate applications in fallow should include 16-26 fl oz/acre of 2,4-D LV6 (equivalent rates for other formulations). Incorporating spring or fall soil-applied residual herbicides can aid in reducing the weed seedbank. Gramoxone, Sharpen + 2,4-D, Distinct + 2,4-D can be used to control glyphosate-resistant Russian thistle (less than 5 inches) in chemical-fallow. Always follow the label for herbicide use rates and adjuvants.

"Diversification in crop rotation with the inclusion of pulse crops such as peas during the fallow period will aid in diversifying herbicide modes of action and using PRE soil-residual herbicides," said Jha. Russian thistle seed bank should be proactively managed (zero tolerance to seed production) with effective herbicides labeled in wheat.

For information on preventing and managing glyphosate-resistant weeds in Montana, please refer to the MSU Extension research bulletin No 4602: Glypho-

sate-resistant kochia in Montana: Herbicide Recommendations and Best Management Practices for Growers.

For further questions or testing suspected resistant weed samples, contact: Prashant Jha, weed scientist, at pjha@montana.edu or 406-348-3400; Vipan Kumar, research scientist, at vipan.kumar@montana.edu, MSU Southern Agricultural Research Center, Huntley, Montana; Peggy Lamb, research scientist, at plamb@montana.edu, Northern Agricultural Research Center, Havre, Montana, 406-265-6115.

Over \$1.6 Million Awarded To Combat Noxious Weeds In MT

Every county and tribal reservation is eligible for \$7,500 in funds

Submitted by MT Dept. Of Agriculture

Helena, Mont. - The Montana Department of Agriculture announced the award of over \$1.6 million for the development and implementation of noxious weed management programs.

The Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council reviewed 86 Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant applications requesting over \$2 million and recommended awarding over \$1.6 million for education, research, and cooperative noxious weed management projects.

The advisory council met the first week of March to review applications and make selections to assist counties, local communities, tribes, researchers and educators in efforts to combat noxious weed problems in Montana. In total, 83 grant proposals were awarded

funding, including 60 local cooperative projects, 13 research projects, and 10 education projects. In addition to the \$1.6 million awarded, each of the 56 counties and 7 reservations in the state are eligible to receive \$7,500 per year.

The Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant program was established by the Montana Legislature in 1985. The advisory council reviews applications, hears applicant testimony, and provides funding recommendations to the director for final approval. Funding is typically passed through a governmental organization, local weed district, conservation district, extension office, or university.

A compiled list of award recipients is available at <http://bit.ly/2016NWTF>.

Montana Department of Agriculture's mission is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries. For more information on the Montana Department of Agriculture, visit agr.mt.gov.



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MonDak Ag Days 2016 Highlights



The MonDak Ag Days & Trade Show took place at the Richland County Fair Event Center March 3rd and 4th. Speakers ranged from topics on sugar beet disease and health GMOs and Drones. Above, Fabian Menalled and Tim Fine hand out door prizes after discussing research on maretail/horsetail becoming Glyphosate resistant.



Mohammed Khan, Sugar Beet Specialist at NDSU and University of Minnesota, spoke at the MonDak Ag Days on optimum sugar beet health, sharing strategies on plant spacing and fertilizers, showing which mixtures work best. His take home message was to strive for 175-200 plants per 100 ft, Nitrogen rates of 130-160 lb/Ac works well, to use seed treatments for springtail management, and to rotate fungicides with different modes of action.



Wade Whiteman with Stockman Bank, left, emcee'd the 2016 MonDak Ag Days Banquet. Damian Mason, middle, was the entertainment of the night and delivered a timely message interspersed with ag-related jokes, causing some audience members to laugh so hard they cried. Tim Fine on the right, Extension Agent at MSU Extension office in Sidney, MT, worked hard to make sure that the MonDak Ag Days & Trade Show 2016 was the best year yet.



Joel Krautter had his own booth at MonDak Ag Days to discuss why he is running for House of Representatives and to share what he would bring to the stand. (Photos by Sheridan Martin)



Jessica Rupp with MSU Extension Office in Billings, MT spoke on the different diseases in sugar beets and how to spot them. Diseases such as Cercospora (spotting in the leaves) and Root Rot and Crown Rot were the main concerns in sugar beet disease.

Richland County LAND AUCTION

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SALE LOCATION: Elks Club 123 3rd Street SW, Sidney, MT 59270 (406)433-2406



OWNER: Terry Wink whose address is 3730 Lewis Drive, Billings, MT 59037 will offer the following property to the public at auction. The final bid will be subject to his approval. The owner reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids.

PROPERTY LOCATION: From Sidney, MT- Take Hwy 16 South for 9 miles to Road 116, turn left for ½ mile, turn right and property begins here.
From Glendive, MT- Take Hwy 16 North for 42 miles to Road 116, turn right for ½ mile, turn right and property begins here.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

TOWNSHIP 21 NORTH, RANGE 58 EAST
Section 14: NW4SW4, SW4NW4, Lots 2, 3 & 6
excepting from the above land the Northern Pacific Railroad right-of-way and that part of the SW4NW4 of Section 14 lying west of the Northern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

IMPROVEMENTS: 876 sq ft 2-bedroom Older House (hasn't been lived in since 1984)
22'x23' Garage, +/-114 acres of irrigated land.
Irrigation water is provided by Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project. Water costs of +/- \$40.00 per acre are included in the property taxes. Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project telephone: 406-433-1306. There's a self-flowing spring that stays open all winter.

A title commitment has been ordered and will be available, at their request, to prospective buyers for inspection prior to sale day. The above may or may not be the proper legal description; it was taken from the Richland County tax receipts.

WILDLIFE & RECREATION: There are abundant pheasant, turkeys, ducks, geese and white tail deer. You can also fish for Northern Pike and Carp off the canal which is located on the border of the property.

NOXIOUS WEEDS: There is some Canadian Thistle on the property. The presence of other noxious weeds is not known. Prospective buyers are encouraged to inspect the property to their satisfaction prior to the auction.

WATER RIGHTS: Any water rights held on the property to be sold will transfer.

MINERAL RIGHTS: No mineral rights will transfer.

TAXES: Taxes will be prorated from the day of closing.

TITLE INSURANCE: Standard owner's title insurance will be provided by the seller through Richland County Title, 1050 S Central, Sidney, MT 406-433-8584

TERMS: Cash. 10% down sale day, the balance due at closing approximately 30 days from sale date at the office of Richland County Title, 1050 S Central, Sidney, MT 406-433-8584

BUYER'S PREMIUM:

A 2% Buyers Premium will be added to the winning bid price to arrive at the total contract price paid by the purchaser.

Your bid is considered acceptance of the terms of this auction. If you, the Buyer fail to close, the down payment is non-refundable. If the Seller fails to close, 100% of the down payment will be returned. At this time, there is no known reason that the Seller would not be able to close. All funds are held in the escrow account of Richland County Title, 1050 S Central, Sidney, MT 406-433-8584

All information is from sources deemed reliable, but is not guaranteed by the Seller or the Auctioneers. Offering is subject to error, omission, and approval of purchase by owner. We urge independent verification of each and every item submitted to the satisfaction of any prospective buyer. It is every potential bidder/purchaser's sole responsibility to accomplish his or her due diligence in whatever manner he or she deems advisable. Announcements made sale day take precedence over any printed materials. The property sells "As is-Where is."

R-K Statewide Auction Service and its auctioneers are acting solely as auctioneers for the Seller.



AUCTIONEER'S NOTE:

Terry has decided to liquidate his farm. This would be a great investment property with fantastic hunting. There are abundant pheasant, turkeys, ducks, geese and white tail deer. A hunter's dream! Bordering this property to the Yellowstone River is the Fish and Game, who allow "walk-in hunting". The irrigation is a profitable income that allows for great wildlife habitat as well.

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McGinnis Ranch Receives Co-Operator Award From The Richland County Conservation District

By Julie Goss

Richland County Conservation District is continuing their tradition of recognizing individuals and entities that see the importance of conservation. We are pleased to announce that the 2015 Co-operator of the Year is McGinnis Ranch Inc. Joe and Dan McGinnis have been co-operating with the Conservation District on their natural resources for over 20 years. McGinnis Ranch received their award at the Mon-Dak Ag Days Banquet Thursday, March 3. The two brothers have implemented several conservation practices on their land in the Sioux Pass area of Richland County.

They have planted over 5000 trees on their property. A cattle windbreak was planted around a dam to give the cows some protection. When Dan purchased a new house the district assisted him in planting a windbreak around his house. If you take a drive to Culbertson and pass the big curve at Sioux Pass you will notice the thousands of trees they planted along County Road 342. After major snow in 2009 they saw the need to put in trees to keep the snow off the county road. They planted 3 rows of trees, Lilac, Black Hills Spruce and Robusta Poplar and weed barrier fabric was laid to help capture moisture and to keep weeds down. Joe helped with the planting in 2010 and continued to help the district in 2011 and 2012 with other tree planting projects. They added other varieties of trees to the design in the following years.

Dan and Joe raise both sheep and cattle so they recognized a need to improve their rangeland, with the help of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program they improved their grazing techniques. In order to accomplish this they have installed several miles of stockwater pipelines and water tanks in order to better distribute the grazing on the rangeland and pastures. Cross fencing was also installed to improve range management. Wildlife have benefited from the addition of water tanks in remote areas.

Joe and Dan utilized the Conservation District dredge to improve the pumpsite and irrigation on a piece of irrigated ground they had rented.

The McGinnis Ranch was one of the first operations to allow the Weed District to release flea beetles to control leafy spurge on their rangeland. They continue to release beetles every year to keep the weeds in check.

Due to the current low crop prices, they have started to reseed marginal cropland back to grass to add in the grazing rotation. This also helps improve the soil health of the marginal cropland. They also participate in the Conservation Stewardship Program, with the local NRCS.

Dan's son Colby has joined the operation and they are looking to the future and continuing to improve the management of their natural resources.

Thank you to Stockman Bank for sponsoring the jackets for our winners.

A Steak in Ag

Submitted by R-CALF USA

R-CALF USA may be defined as a non-profit producer organization, but our work benefits anyone who eats meat and lives in an economy that includes agriculture. We're more than a producer organization; we're your organization!

In a letter sent recently to the members of the U.S. Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee (Committee) R-CALF USA urged the rejection of any effort to create a voluntary country-of-origin labeling (COOL) law.

The group's letter points out that Congress repealed the popular COOL law "pursuant to a directive by the World Trade Organization (WTO)." R-CALF USA has long been critical of Congress' capitulation to the WTO, calling it an example of how the U.S. has ceded far too much of its sovereignty to the international tribunal.

The group listed the following reasons why Congress should reject any attempt to create a voluntary COOL law for beef and pork:

1. Establishing a stop-gap, voluntary COOL law will foreclose our industry's opportunity to reestablish a workable mandatory COOL law for beef and pork in a new Congress. Thus, a voluntary COOL law will cause the U.S. cattle industry to suffer long-term harm.

2. Because four of the most powerful COOL opponents – Tyson, Cargill, JBS and National Beef – also control approximately 85 percent of all fed cattle slaughtered in the U.S., at best producers will have but a very small opportunity to voluntarily label beef.

3. "Even though about 15 percent of the fed cattle market may potentially be controlled by COOL-friendly packers, most cow/calf producers and backgrounders and stockers sell their cattle to feedlot operators. And, once their cattle are sold, they have no means to cause any downstream buyers to associate the beef from the cattle they have sold with a COOL label.

4. Indeed, of the 729,000 remaining cattle producers in the U.S., less than 4 percent are feedlot owners or managers that actually sell cattle directly to downstream packers. Therefore, a voluntary COOL law is likely to accord only a very small fraction of the nation's cattle-producing population with any opportunity to label beef, while effectively denying COOL for all the rest.

"I don't represent the beef industry," said R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard adding, "I represent the cattle industry. Our members sell cattle to beef industry packers. The TPP will impact the cattle industry very differently than it impacts the beef industry."

Bullard said this during a formal hearing held recently by the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC), Witnesses representing U.S. livestock and meat industries included R-CALF USA, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), Cargill, Inc., U.S. Dairy Export Council, and U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association, an affiliate of the North American Meat Institute (NAMI, formally AMI).

R-CALF USA was the only livestock industry representative that opposed the TPP during the hearing.

For additional information on any of the topics mentioned, please visit www.r-calfusa.com.

R-CALF USA is funded solely by donations and membership dues. Please consider becoming a member or giving a donation. For more info or to join, go to www.r-calfusa.com, 406-252-2516.

The logo for Roundup WEB.COM features the word "Roundup" in a large, bold, yellow-to-orange gradient font with a 3D effect. Below it, "WEB.COM" is written in a smaller, red, blocky font with a black outline.

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GMOs: The Good, The Bad, The Truth

By Sheridan Martin

In our agricultural industry, we get a lot of backlash on the use of GMOs, but GMOs have never been a problem until now. Why is that?

Let's start with livestock. A question commonly asked is, "Will genetically modified crops fed to livestock, effect the final product?" First you have to understand that cattle have been eating GM crops for nearly 20 years. The feed has included modified corn and modified soybeans; in this time, GMOs have never been detected in the milk or meat produced from the animals receiving GM feed. Another thing to understand that almost all food that both people and animals eat contains DNA and proteins. When these proteins are broken down during digestion into one or more of the 21 amino acids that exist in nature, studies have shown that none of these proteins are transferred into animal tissues. So, genetically modified crops are digested in the same way as conventional crops in animals. However, several studies have documented that small fragments of plant-derived, but not genetically engineered, DNA can pass into tissues of animals that consume the plants. In conclusion, feeds made from GMOs for livestock are safe and has never harmed the animal or their bi-products for human consumption. There have also been no documented case of human illness or allergen associated with GMO foods.

GMOs get a lot of hate because people do not believe that there have been long-term health studies on GMO plants, but believe it or not, GMOs have a long and safe track record for the last 17 years and health studies have been conducted in

this time. Genetically modified crops are extensively tested for consumer and environmental safety, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration review these tests, along with several international organizations as well. Citizens can go to geneticliteracyproject.org to find a complete list of 1,783 studies done on genetically modified organisms, as well as many articles and blog posts on GMOs. On biofortified.org, people can research a constantly growing list of independent studies being done on the topic. In the end, all the research conducted by every major scientific body and administrative agency on GMOs, has openly declared that crop biotechnology and the foods available for sale are safe. With all of the extensive research and testing, scientists can openly say that GMO foods are no more risky than non-GMO foods, and do not differ in nutritional value.

Another question being asked on GMOs is, "Are GMOs causing an increase in allergies?", which is one of the leading anti-GMO campaigns. First of all, eight major food groups mainly cause food allergies: milk, eggs, peanuts, wheat, soy, fish, tree nuts and shellfish. It is crucial to point out that the only one of these major allergens which is a potential product of biotechnology is soy. The other allergens are not commercially available in GMO varieties. Another thing to note is that if a person is allergic to a non-genetically modified plant, he or she will also be allergic to the plant's genetically modified counterpart. But, any new allergens are not being introduced by GMOs, and in fact, researchers are working on new GMOs that

have the potential to help people with allergies to certain foods. More information on those studies can be found at dailymail.com on an article titled, "GM Peanuts Could End Danger To Children".

When it comes to GMOs and cancer, it will be kept pretty short. The 1,080 studies (genera.biofortified.org) about the health and safety of GMOs, along with a decade of research, finds that GMOs pose no greater risk than their conventional counterparts.

Much can be said on genetically modified organisms, either good or bad, but the bad rap on GMOs is mainly worry. Many people do not realize that much of the food we eat today is GM, and just because a food product may be labeled organic, does not necessarily mean GMO free. GMOs today are being used to improve food allergies, food supply and more. The important thing to say now is to always do the research and always know the facts about what you are putting in your body.

**work cited: Community Manager "Top 10 Consumer Questions About GMOs, Answered". GMO Answers. Council of Biotechnology Information. Tuesday, March 18, 2014.*





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Richland Co. 4-H Livestock Judging Team Takes 1st Place in Miles City

By Meagan Dotson

The Richland County 4-H Livestock Judging Team has been busy competing around the area; at a Livestock Judging Competition in Bowman, ND, February 20th, the team placed 5th overall in a competition of about 90 kids.

February 4th the team went to Miles City, MT and took 1st place overall, with all four of the participating members placing in the top 10. Garrett Larson placed 2nd, Grady Larson placed 5th, Emma Torgerson placed 6th, and CJ Nevins placed 10th. The team then competed in Dickinson, ND the following day with the team taking third overall and CJ Nevins placing 2nd.

The Richland County Livestock Judging Team has between 12 and 15 members ranging in ages of 9 to 17 years old. Laura Schieber has been the team coach for the last 7 years and originally became involved with livestock judging in high school FFA. Schieber received a Livestock Judging Scholarship and attended Northwest College in Powell, WY and later transferred to Oklahoma State University where she continued livestock judging at a collegiate level. Schieber notes that many Junior Colleges and Universities offer scholarships to compete on livestock and meat judging teams and provide great travel experiences and offer phenomenal opportunities especially for those who are pursuing a career in agriculture.

Shortly after moving to the Sidney area, Schieber was contacted by the parents of 4-H members who were in need of a coach and asked if she was interested.

"Richland County has always had an active Livestock Judging Team and I have really enjoyed getting to know the kids, watching them improve, and getting to witness their success," Schieber said.

The Richland County 4-H Livestock Judging Team practices as often as their schedules will allow and have been very fortunate to have many local ranchers volunteer their beef, sheep, hogs, and goats to be judged during practice classes. Classes are set up on private, volunteered land and team members can come and practice their judging skills as well as their reasons for judging the way they did. Otherwise, the team meets at the Extension Office and Schieber will make up a class scenario for students to practice with.

"I love the fact that kids are learning without even realizing it by working on their critical thinking and decision making skills," said Schieber of her involvement. "It gives them a chance to present their opinion in a positive and professional way. They're also learning a lot about the livestock industry in general and specifics about the breed and species of the animal. It's a unique experience."

The team has livestock judging competitions coming up this spring in Miles City, MT, Powell, WY, and Big Timber, MT.



Members of the Richland County 4-H Livestock Judging Team, from left to right, Liam Steinbeisser, Corbin Steinbeisser, CJ Nevins, Garrett Larson, Cooper McNally, Grady Larson, and Emma Torgerson.

MSU Spring Rodeo set for April 7-10

Submitted by MSU News Service

BOZEMAN — The 2016 Montana State University Spring Rodeo will run Thursday, April 7, through Sunday, April 10, at the Brick Breeden Fieldhouse.

The action begins at 7 p.m. on Thursday, with performance rounds followed by the slack rounds. On Friday, slack begins at noon, with the performance at 7 p.m. On Saturday, short-go action begins at 7 p.m. On Sunday, slack gets underway at 8 a.m., with the matinee at 2 p.m.

The four-day rodeo will feature the nationally ranked men's and women's Bobcat Rodeo teams competing against nine other regional teams: University of Montana, UM Western, Great Falls College MSU, Miles Community College, Glendive Community College, Rocky Mountain College, Blackfeet Community College, MSU Northern and Northwest College.

Ticket prices range from \$7-\$12 for students (age 7-college), \$13 to \$15 for general admission, \$17 to \$18 for premium. Sunday tickets before 1 p.m. are \$6. Children six years and under are free.

For tickets, call (406) 994-CATS (2287), or for more information please visit http://brickbreeden.com/events/rodeo_2016/, the Montana State University Rodeo page on Facebook or the Montana State University Rodeo website www.montana.edu/rodeo and click the "Spring Rodeo" link.

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Robert Fischer, MD
Ear, Nose and Throat

April 18th

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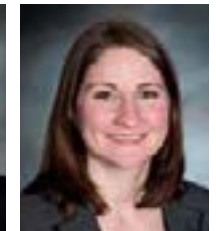
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Demings Offer an Opportunity for In-Town 4-H Members to Raise Livestock

By Meagan Dotson

When Kelly and Jason Deming got their kids involved in 4-H, they quickly realized that it was something that was very rewarding and lots of fun. Kelly Deming, who was a member of McKenzie County 4-H for ten years, put the word out, contacting five in-town families that they are friends with and encouraged them to get their kids involved in Richland County 4-H. The Demings offered to house the livestock animals for kids that would otherwise be unable to raise and show goats, sheep, hogs, and cattle.

Five years later, they have had five different families take them up on their offer, sometimes accommodating three to four families at a time. While some have moved on from 4-H and others have moved to rural property that allows for livestock, the Demings continue to welcome interested families. This year they have five 4-H members from three different families plus two of their own kids involved and some of the kids have multiple animals.

“We try to help out however we can whether that’s assisting families that are new to 4-H with their animal’s shots or being given a budget to pick up livestock for families that aren’t available to do it themselves,” Jason Deming commented.

Having outgrown their space, they built a large pig and lamb barn with eighteen individual pens and two wash bays, a steer barn, and a show ring with the help of the involved families in 2015.

“Our kids never complain about chores because it’s a social time,” said Kelly Deming. “They’ve gotten a lot out of having other kids here; it gives them a chance to mentor younger kids and new members and teaches them leadership skills.”

In addition to leadership skills, 4-H instills in its members a sense of responsibility, work ethic, and demonstrates the importance of serving others. Whether they are a Clover Bud, ages six to eight, raising bum lambs or a Senior member with multiple animals, the expectation is the same when filling out paperwork such as their Project Journal, Market Project Record, or Breeding Record. Kids get an understanding of the expense vs. profit



Exercising 4-H animals is a group activity at the Deming home; pictured are some of last year’s members walking their hogs.

ratio and selling livestock can be a great way they can take an active role in adding to their college fund.

If you are interested in raising 4-H livestock on the Deming’s property, contact them at 406-480 -3239. 4-H members will need to come out at least three times a week during the school year to tend to their animal, five to seven days a week in June, and seven days a week beginning in July when they start exercising the animals. There is no boarding cost, but each family must provide their own feed.

“We understand that people get busy during the school year and we don’t mind helping out. 4-H takes dedication from the kids and the parents, so if they are willing to come out here, we are happy to have more families,” said Kelly Deming.

County Agent Update

By Danielle Steinhoff

Square Foot Gardening

Gardening has been a great outdoor activity for many for years, but there is a new trend in gardening that is allowing those with little room to have successful gardens. Many of us love to have fresh produce every summer, but some that live in an apartment or confined spaces might have some difficulties. Square foot Gardening (SFG) is a trend that we are seeing pop up more and more. Square foot gardening is a method of intensive gardening, which is very practical for residential areas. To simply state, SFG allows the vegetable and flowers to be planted very close together in raised beds that are framed with natural, non-rotting wood. These beds can be built with pressure-treated wood, which is free of arsenic. The soil used for these beds is specially designed to have optimal drainage; soil usually consists of a combination of sandy loam and a generous amount of sphagnum peat moss or well-matured compost. The soil should be mixed four parts sandy loam with one part sphagnum peat moss or compost. If you are not interested in making your own, you can purchase high-quality bagged soil. Using lawn soil or heavy soils will not work for your square foot garden.

Constructing a square foot garden is relatively easy. In most cases they are 4 feet by 4 feet by 12 feet, but these are designable to fit your need. You can use as little as 6 inches deep, but 12 inches is better for accommodating root crops such as carrots, potatoes and parsnips. After you add your correct soil to your container, you add in your dividers; the dividers are one square foot. Square foot gardens are an option for those who love gardening but are unable to get down to the ground. These gardens can be built high off the ground with the ability of using a false bottom. Here are six examples of what you can plant in each square foot; example 1- nine onions, beets, bush beans, bush peas, garlic or spinach. Example 2; 16 carrots or radishes. Example 3; 4 lettuce, chard, marigolds or kohlrabi. Example 4; 1 tomato, pepper, eggplant, broccoli, cabbage or corn. Example 5; 1 squash, cucumber or melon per 2 square feet. Example 6; vining plants such as beans or peas.

To learn more about square foot gardening visit, www.squarefootgardening.com. All information was gathered from the North Dakota State University Extension Service publication, The Facts of Square Foot Gardening. This publication was written by Esther McGinnis, NDSU Extension Horticulturist, Department of Plant Sciences. If you are interested in more information please call the Williams County Extension Office at 701-577-4595.



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BeefTalk: Are You Feeding and Keeping an Eye on the Bulls?

Bulls that are underconditioned, overconditioned, underweight and lackluster need to be dealt with now.

**By Kris Ringwall, Beef Specialist
NDSU Extension Service**

Sometimes beef producers overlook the obvious: bulls.

If the bulls are not in a separate pen, now is the time to separate them from the cow herd and take a good look at their condition.

Bulls actually enjoy a solitary life, absent from all the comings and goings in the cow herd. Bulls in a bullpen are much easier to monitor and watch while feeding, lest one of them decides to challenge you at the feed bunk.

Bull docility often is mentioned as a critical talking point when bulls are bought, but it's often simply accepted once they are unloaded at home. Never trust a bull! That is a story in itself, but the point today is the current bull inventory and the condition of the bulls.

Are the bulls in shape for breeding? Once the bulls are turned out to pasture, you have no opportunity to fix a problem. Every time a bull fails to settle a cow, more than 50 pounds of production is lost, never to reach the pocketbook. Simply put, if a cow does not get bred when she expresses estrus the first time and conceives to the next ovulation 21 days later, and the benchmark for summer average daily gain is 2.5 pounds per day, then those 21 days of lost gain are a loss of more than 50 pounds.

Bulls that are underconditioned, overconditioned, underweight and lackluster need to be dealt with now. The penalty is low fertility and open cows.

Bull functionality is best gauged by simply monitoring body condition. Bull conditioning is a fine line between improving body condition without adding fat, in other words "getting in shape," which is a balance of activity and proper nutrition.

The challenge is preparing bulls to go from a relatively docile, frisky life of sitting in a pen, eating, to breeding several cows upon turnout with no warmup period. The key to meeting the nutritional requirements of bulls is to know their mature weight because bulls continue to grow throughout their breeding years, most likely up to 5 years of age.

Essentially, the bulls need to consume just less than 2 percent of their body weight to hold even while consuming good hay that is at least green. Just to maintain weight, a:

1,700-pound bull needs a daily intake of 33 pounds of dry matter that is 7 percent protein and 46 percent total digestible nutrients (TDN)

2,000-pound mature bull needs a daily intake of 37 pounds of dry matter that is 7 percent protein and 46 percent TDN

2,300-pound mature bull needs a daily intake of 45 pounds of dry matter that is 7 percent protein and 46 percent TDN

If the bull's body condition has slipped, improving the forage quality to 50 percent TDN and increasing the intake by 3 pounds for the lighter bulls and 2 pounds for the 2,300-pound bulls should put on 0.5 pound of gain per day.

The key is adequate forage intake. By feeding better-quality hay, bulls should pick up in condition.

The Dickinson Research Extension Center overwinters bulls. Historically, the 2 1/2-year-old bulls have averaged 1,650 to 1,850 pounds in the fall. The 1 1/2-year-old bulls have weighed in at around 1,350 pounds, all with a good condition score of 5 to 7.

Reviewing the center bulls through the years - and I must admit to some fudging - the bulls at the center have gained approximately 300 pounds per year of life. A 1,300-pound yearling bull would be expected to weigh 1,600 pounds as a 2-year-old, 1,900 pounds as a 3-year-old, 2,200 pounds as a 4-year-old and 2,500 pounds as a 5-year-old.

The center focuses nutritional inputs for bulls with a mature weight of 2,000 to 2,300 pounds. Experience would say that bulls should be gaining muscle throughout the year, which means between 0.5 and 1 pound a day of gain in body weight to maintain good shape without excessive condition.

For many, bulls are not weighed. Bulls are hard on equipment and, in some cases, will not even fit on the scale. Width, neck muscle and shear strength are good indicators that perhaps the bulls should just be left in the pen. So from a practical aspect, body condition and general luster will tell a lot as well.

Although the exact body weight may not be known, bulls all should be condition score 5 or better. So project a reasonable weight and feed accordingly. Good grass hay goes a long way, but remember, nutrition is more than energy and protein. Consult your nutritionist for input on a complete supplement to ensure maximum bull fertility.

Money invested in a good bull does little for the operation if the bull cannot keep up with the cows. And while one looks at the bulls, do not forget the cows because they, too, should be in that 5 to 6 condition score and have some brightness to them as they await the bull.

May you find all your ear tags.

Changes Proposed For Sidney ARS Under New Budget

Submitted by ARS Research Leader John Gaskin

As stakeholders and supporters of agricultural research in general, and our research here at Sidney ARS in particular, our goal is to keep you informed of items affecting the lab and its research programs, as well as reporting on research accomplishments. Consequently, we want to let you know about proposed changes for Sidney ARS in the President's budget for FY2017.

In that budget, ARS as a whole has received a \$17.5 million increase from FY2016 totals, a 1.5% increase over last year. At the same time, ARS has been asked to redirect \$66.3 million of existing funds into five research priority areas, including climate change, clean water, foreign animal diseases, antimicrobial resistance and avian influenza. To meet that directive, USDA and the Office of Management and Budget have identified several research programs/facilities across the country whose research will be redirected to address these new priorities.

The Sidney, MT lab has been identified as one of those facilities.

Under the President's FY2017 budget, the changes to the Sidney lab are significant and include: 1. Redirection of our Insect Pest Unit (currently working primarily on grasshopper, Mormon cricket and wheat stem sawfly problems) to a new focus on climate change research to be performed at Sidney, MT. This means two of the four scientists and two technicians currently in the Insect Unity would move to either our Weed Biocontrol program in the Pest Management Unit or to the Ag Systems Research Unit (\$730,000 of Congressionally appropriated funds redirected). 2. Termination of two scientists and two technicians from our Insect Pest Unit, who would be relocated to other ARS laboratories outside of Montana (\$450,000 Congressionally appropriated funds lost).

Given your interest as stakeholders of the Sidney lab, we want to keep you informed of any major changes affecting the lab and its research. As an executive agency, we support the President's budget, but recognize that you may have concerns.

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REAL Montana Class II Travels to Washington D.C. March 1-5



Submitted by Karli Johnson

Sidney resident Karli Johnson just returned from four days in Washington D.C. as part of REAL Montana (Resource Education and Agriculture Leadership). REAL Montana is comprised of twenty of Montana's emerging and established leaders. The participants were competitively selected from a pool of qualified candidates representing a wide variety of agriculture and natural resource industries across the state to take part in Class II of REAL Montana.

For Karli and other members of REAL Montana Class II, this was the fourth seminar in their two-year educational program. The program features eight in-state seminars; a four-day tour in Washington D.C.; and a ten-day international trip to Columbia. Seminars include training in natural resource development, agriculture institutions and agencies, public speaking/media, economics, state and federal policy, international trade, urban/rural relationships, water issues, and other current industry topics. The next seminar will be here in Sidney focusing on the oil gas industry.

The focus of the seminar March 1-5 was "Policy on a National Scale". Class members spent a day on Capitol Hill meeting with the Montana Congressional delegation and receiving briefings from Senate Agriculture and Energy and Natural Resources Committee staffers. The American Farm Bureau Federation hosted the

class the following day, where they heard from speakers representing a wide range of interests including the EPA, Federal Forest Resource Coalition, and the Associated General Contractors of America. The class arranged meetings with representatives from federal agencies including the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, USDA Forest Service, U.S. Trade Representative, and USDA Risk Management Agency. The visit to D.C. was topped off by a guided tour of the Gettysburg battlefield where class members heard leadership lessons from a retired Army colonel. Additional class activities included tours of the U.S. Capitol and other historic sites as well as group dinners with the California Agriculture Leadership Program and the Washington AgForestry Leadership Program. "My biggest lesson from my time in DC is the importance of forming coalitions and working together to find solutions. There are so many opportunities to unite our voices as Natural Resource Industries."

REAL Montana is funded through a partnership with Montana State University Extension and private industry. An advisory board of industry leaders provides oversight. The program will start accepting applications for Class III in the spring of 2017.

Complete program information is available at www.realmontana.org or by contacting Janelle Booth, program director, at (406) 994-6480, janelle.booth@montana.edu.

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