

Meadowlark District Extension News
June 25, 2021

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Tailgate Talk – July 14th

The Tailgate Talk forage education series has returned, with this year's focus on water. This year's Tailgate Talk will be Wednesday, July 14th hosted by the Henry and Tracy Hill family northeast of Holton.

We'll start with a light supper at 5:30 p.m. courtesy of the Jackson County Conservation District at the pasture located three miles north and two and three quarters of a mile northeast of Holton on the south side of 254th Rd. (one quarter mile east of S and 254th Roads).

At 6:00 p.m., we'll kick off with a brief discussion on planning pasture management to finish the grazing season strong while preparing for 2022. At 6:15 p.m., Meadowlark Extension District Livestock and Natural Resources Agent Jody Holthaus will team up with KSU Water Quality Specialist Will Boyer to talk all things water. They'll discuss and demonstrate some of their work to reduce the harmful effects of blue green algae then share information on alternative water sources as well.

Bring your lawn chair, some bug spray and plan for an evening all about water. Attendees should RSVP by Friday, July 9th by contacting the Holton Office of the Meadowlark Extension District at (785) 364-4125 or registering online at <https://tinyurl.com/tailgatetalk2021>. If you have questions, e-mail Jody Holthaus at jholthau@ksu.edu or me at dhallaue@ksu.edu. We look forward to seeing you there!

Squash Bugs

One of the more challenging to control insects for most gardeners is the squash bug. The grey, shield-shaped adults feed on squash and pumpkin plants, severely reducing production and even killing plants outright. By the time we notice adult stages and their damage, insecticidal controls are made very difficult by the insect's hard body that limits penetration by insecticides.

A better option than trying to control adults is implementation of control programs while the insect is still small. Start by looking for squash bug eggs on the underside of leaves. They will be a cluster of brick-red eggs and newly hatched small green insects with black legs. These are the nymphs that will eventually become adults and start a second generation – typically the one that is the most devastating. Control of first generation bugs is of vital importance.

Squash bugs feed by sucking juice from the plant so only insecticides that directly contact the insect will do any good. That means you must spray or dust the underside of the leaves where the bugs are located while the insects are still in their soft bodied juvenile stage.

Lots of products are labeled for control and contain active ingredients like permethrin, malathion, and methoxychlor – with best results when application is made to the soft bodied stage of the insect. As with any pest control product, always read and follow label directions for appropriate crop use, including rates and pre-harvest intervals.