

Jody G. Holthaus
District Extension Agent
Livestock and Natural Resources

Extra Time

I learned this week that the Farm Service Agency, got an extension notification on the Livestock Indemnity Program. Originally, producers had 30 days to report a livestock death due to inclement weather. Many producers, lost a few early on and didn't know that the winter storms would keep pounding us, causing more deaths. Now, the deadline is May 3, and you can report any deaths that occurred January 1 to April 3. I'm hoping this is good news for those that lost more than 2.73% of their calf crop. That is Kansas' average death loss.

Speaking of the extreme weather, I would think this would be the year to do Bull Soundness exams. The cold wet weather, might be conducive to low fertility in your bulls. Especially if they were "roughing" it this winter. Be sure to get those bulls checked out at least 2 weeks prior to turnout. If it works out for ya!

The Eastern Kansas grazing school was held this week in Ottawa. It was great weather for our first time at it in the spring. The presenters were great. I'm not sure when we'll have a chance to host this again, but it's a great in-depth look at rotational grazing.

With a wrap on the Grazing school, we're turning our attention to the youth!

We will be presenting programs for all the 3rd graders in Jackson, Jefferson and Nemaha counties, well at least most of them. I teach a section on water quality, and the students get the materials to build their own water filters. Not sure it's still drinkable, but they get the concept! Hopefully, they are learning a bit about conservation and stewardship of the land and waters as well.

I know I always learn from these ag/water festivals; I usually learn that I'm not professional teacher material!!

April 26, 2019

David G. Hallauer
District Extension Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

No news from David

Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension District
Food, Nutrition, Health and Safety

What is *C. botulinum*?

It rarely happens. But, when it does, it can be deadly. The pathogen *Clostridium botulinum* causes botulism. This is because a toxin attacks the body's nerves and causes difficulty breathing, muscle paralysis, and even death. The spores grow and make toxin under the following conditions:

- *Low-oxygen or no oxygen (anaerobic) environment
- *Low acid, sugar, or salt
- *A certain temperature range that supports growth of *C. botulinum*

Improperly home-canned foods can provide these conditions to allow *C. botulinum* spores to grow.

Botulism Outbreak in Home-canned Peas

It has happened again. Improperly home-canned vegetables have been linked to a botulism outbreak. This was due to improperly canned peas.

In June, 2018, three women were hospitalized in New York for respiratory failure and cranial nerve palsies (paralysis). These symptoms lead to a diagnosis of botulism. Typical symptoms include nausea, dizziness, blurred vision, slurred speech, thick-feeling tongue, and shortness of breath. This diagnosis was after about 14 hours of eating a homemade potato salad containing the home-canned peas.

The peas were canned 1-2 weeks earlier because of a malfunctioning freezer. A peach preserves recipe that uses the boiling water bath canning method was used by substituting the peaches with the frozen peas. The person who did the canning was a novice and unaware of the risks. After canning, one jar did not seal, and it was refrigerated. But because of the improper canning method and inadequate heating, none of the jars were safe to consume, including the refrigerated jar.

Plain vegetables and meat require pressure canning to eliminate *C. botulinum* spores. This incident also emphasizes the fact that just because the jar seals, does not mean it is safe!

For more information about safe canning methods, contact your local extension office. Ask about any workshops that maybe held that can teach you safe canning methods. In the Meadowlark Extension District, we have a comprehensive food preservation workshop scheduled for June 19. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about safe, recommended methods for pressure canning, boiling-water bath and drying foods. Registration is limited. For more information, contact Cindy at the Oskaloosa Office at 785-863-2212.

We also have information about safe canning of various fruits and vegetables. These are available at each of the Meadowlark Extension Offices. When you are coming, be sure to bring your dial-gauges to be check for accuracy. It only takes a few minutes and there is no charge for this service. We can only check dial-gauges; we can't check the weighted-gauges.

If you have other food preservation, foods or food safety questions, please contact your local extension office. We want you to have a safe, enjoyable food preservation experience. To reach the various Meadowlark Extension District Offices—Seneca—785-336-2184; Holton---785-364-4125 or Oskaloosa---785-863-2212. direction you want to be.

Nancy C. Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Developmental Milestones Matter

Skills, such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving “bye-bye,” are called developmental milestones. From birth to 5 years, your child should reach milestones in how he or she plays, learns, speaks, acts and moves.

Parents and caregivers can use Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC’s) “*Learn the Signs. Act Early.*” tools to track developmental milestones from as early as 2 months to help better understand children’s abilities and stay in tune with their developmental health.

You can track your child’s milestones with CDC’s free *Milestone Tracker mobile app*, available in both English and Spanish. Interactive checklists with photos and videos of developmental milestones help you know what to look for in your child. Use the app to complete a checklist for your child’s age, share a summary with your child’s healthcare provider, and get tips for encouraging your child’s development.

The app has many easy-to-use features including Illustrated milestone checklists for 2 months through 5 years of age, summary of your child’s milestones to share, activities to help your child’s development, tips for what to do if you become concerned, and reminders for appointments and developmental screening.

Print resources are also available at www.cdc.gov/features/developmental-milestones-matter

Making sure all children have the help and support they need to overcome challenges, find their strengths, and reach their full potential starts early. You know your child best. If your child is missing milestones for his or her age or you have concerns about your child’s development, talk with your child’s doctor, share your concerns and ask about developmental screening.

If you or the doctor is still concerned ask the doctor for a referral to a specialist. Don’t wait. Acting early can make a real difference!