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I recently had a visit from one of my older sisters, she flew in from back east. I grew up with four older sisters, so I'm used to getting advice and being "straightened out". This trip I learned that I do not cut up a watermelon correctly. She also had her time predicting rain by the oak leaves. Of course this year, rain seems to be imminent!

It's not been exactly good haying weather. Make hay while the sun shines, as the old saying goes. Excessive moisture in hay can be a very real danger, as anyone witnessing a barn fire can readily attest. When hay's internal temperature exceeds 130 degrees Fahrenheit, it can spontaneously combust. Whether stacked in a barn in square bales, or lined up in rows, the effect can be equally dangerous. Heating occurs in hay above 15 percent moisture, hence the need to cut and bale the grasses dry.

The time-tested method to ensure bale density is optimized is, of course, to get off the tractor and check. Moving too fast in the interest of time can result in mistakes being made, and tweaks not fixed or set while running. But the quality of the hay maintained in the bale is dependent on the density of the bale, and from a safety perspective, loose hay is more likely to heat and combust than when properly packed. In addition to keeping an eye on the baler's density gauge, get out and kick the bales from time to time, with a general rule being that you shouldn't be able to stick your fingers into it, and if you kick it, your foot should smart just a little.

Keep cleanliness of the hay in mind. Set the baler pickup tines about an inch off the ground, ever remembering that hilly ground will be different than flat ground in this respect. Keeping your hay clean will lower ash percentages, which in turn improves quality and makes it easier to digest. Make sure the hay pickup flotation is set correctly so the pickup follows the contour of the ground and the tines aren't digging into the dirt. A good review and check in advance will help as it's easier to get replacement parts before the cutting than once you're in the field.

Baling hay is as American an activity as the apple pie and hot dogs. But keep safety in mind. Watch out for workers wanting to ride high atop a wagon loaded with shaky square bales, and be sure that all wagons bound for a road have a Slow-Moving Vehicle emblem. Don't forget to chock the wheels of wagons that can roll away, and it's a good idea to pick up a 10-pound dry chemical (ABC) fire extinguisher just in case.

And when all that's said and done, be sure to hook a radio up with some good farming music and be prepared to smell the freshly cut alfalfa, brome, native or fescue grass, or whatever you may grow. The bright and shiny tractor in the field, the hamburgers on a grill, and the generations of farmers celebrating the season all make for an image everyone is proud to see.

Resource: Agdaily.com

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Turfgrass Grub Control

The presence of grub pressure in many turfgrass stands is more prevalent than we'd like to admit. If pressure is light, we may not notice, but when the turf turns yellow or you can start to peel the turf back because of grub root pruning, it might be time to consider control measures.

There are two approaches to grub control: preventative and rescue.

Preventative control methods are your best bet if you've had a history of grub problems and are shooting for that 'perfect' turf look. These systemic insecticides don't prevent grubs, but instead kill them well before they cause much damage. Apply in early July to ensure adequate protection during the mating and egg-laying stages. Systemic products include active ingredients such as imidacloprid, chlorantraniliprole, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and halofenozide and can be found in numerous homeowner available products.

If historical pressure has not been heavy, consider a rescue treatment. They are applied in early August to coincide with the peak flight of the adult beetle. Use products containing the active ingredients carbaryl and trichlorfon.

All grub products should be watered in soon after application for best results. Study the product label to ensure safe, proper, and effective use. For more information on the life cycle of the white grub, check out Annual White Grubs in Turf available online from the KSU Bookstore at <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf2635.pdf> or from your local Extension Office.

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What is Burnout?

The term “burnout” is a relatively new term, first coined in 1974 by Herbert Freudenberger, in his book, *Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement*. He originally defined burnout as, “the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one’s devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired result.”

Burnout is a reaction to prolonged or chronic job stress and is characterized by three main dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism (less identification with the job), and feelings of reduced professional ability. The stress that contributes to burnout can come mainly from your job, but stress from your overall lifestyle can add to this stress. Personality traits and thought patterns, such as perfectionism and pessimism, can contribute as well.

Most people spend the majority of their waking hours working. And if you hate your job, dread going to work, and don’t gain any satisfaction out of what you’re doing, it can take a serious toll on your life.

While burnout isn’t a diagnosable psychological disorder, that doesn’t mean it shouldn’t be taken seriously. Here are some of the most common signs of burnout:

Alienation from work-related activities: Individuals experiencing burnout view their jobs as increasingly stressful and frustrating. They may grow cynical about their working conditions and the people they work with. They may also emotionally distance themselves and begin to feel numb about their work.

Physical symptoms: Chronic stress may lead to physical symptoms, like headaches and stomachaches or intestinal issues.

Emotional exhaustion: Burnout causes people to feel drained, unable to cope, and tired. They often lack energy to get their work done.

Reduce performance: Burnout mainly affects everyday tasks to work---or in the home when someone’s main job involves caring for family members. Individuals with burnout feel negative about tasks. They have difficulty concentrating and often lack creativity. Individuals experiencing burnout may be at a higher risk of developing depression.

A high-stress job doesn’t always lead to burnout. If stress is managed well, there may not be any ill-effects. But some individuals (and those in certain occupations) are at a higher risk than others. The 2019 National Physician Burnout, Depression, and Suicide Report found that 44 percent of physicians’ experience burnout.

Their heavy workloads place individuals with certain personality characteristics and lifestyle features at a higher risk of burnout.

Of course, it's not just physicians who are burning out. Workers in every industry at every level are at potential risk. According to a 2018 report by Gallup, employee burnout has four main causes:

Unreasonable time pressure. Employees who say they have enough time to do their work are 70 percent less likely to experience high burnout. Individuals who are not able to gain more time, such as paramedics and firefighters, are at a higher risk of burnout.

Lack of communication and support from a manager. Manager support offers a psychological buffer against stress. Employees who feel strongly supported by their manager are 70 percent less likely to experience burnout on a regular basis.

Unmanageable workload. When a workload feels unmanageable, even the most optimistic employees will feel hopeless. Feeling overwhelmed can quickly lead to burnout.

Unfair treatment. Employees who feel they are treated unfairly at work are 2.3 times more likely to experience a high level of burnout. Unfair treatment may include things such as favoritism, unfair compensation, and mistreatment from a co-worker.

Although the term "burnout" suggests it may be a permanent condition, it's reversible. An individual who is feeling burned out may need to make some changes to their work environment.

Approaching the human resource department about problems in the workplace or talking to a supervisor about the issues can be helpful if they are invested in creating a healthier work environment. In some cases, a change in position or a new job altogether may be necessary to put an end to burnout.

It can also be helpful to develop clear strategies that help you manage your stress. Self-care strategies, like eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of exercises, and engaging in healthy sleep habits may help reduce some of the effects of a high-stress job.

A vacation may offer you some temporary relief too, but a week away from the office won't be enough to help you beat burnout. Regularly scheduled breaks from work, along with daily renewal exercises, can be key to helping you combat burnout.

If you are experiencing burnout and you're having difficulty finding your way out, or you are suffering a mental health condition such as depression, be sure to talk to your health care provider

Nancy C. Nelson
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Family Life

What is Alpha-gal Allergy?

The next time you work outside or do outdoor recreation, be aware of ticks and protect yourself from tick bites. The Lone Star tick has been linked to causing allergic reactions after eating red meat.

I'm aware of a family who use to live in northeast Kansas whose college age daughter deals with this. It's a challenging ordeal.

The Lone Star tick is a vector that can spread disease. Mosquitos and fleas are other insects that spread disease. The Alpha-gal molecule is carried in the saliva of Lone Star ticks. People bit by this tick can become sensitive and produce the immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibody. Unlike typical food allergies, which is a reaction to protein, this is a reaction to the carbohydrate galactose- α -1,3-galactose. This carbohydrate is found in most mammals, such as red meat animals. It can also be in products made from mammals. It is not found in poultry or fish.

Symptoms include rash, hives, difficulty breathing, drop in blood pressure, dizziness, fainting, nausea, and severe stomach pain. These symptoms can occur in 3-6 hours after eating red meat.

The Alpha-gal allergy can be severe, and potentially life-threatening. See a healthcare provider immediately for care. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/ticks/alpha-gal/index.html