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Attracting Pollinators & Beneficial Insects

Thursday, April 9
6:00pm – 8:00pm
Reno Co. Extension Office

2 W 10th, South Hutchinson
Did you know that about one out of every three mouthfuls of food we eat and of the beverages we drink is delivered to us by pollinators? Attracting pollinators and beneficial insects allows us to keep out bad pests and get better produce from our garden.

Join us as Scott Vogt from Dyck Arboretum teaches us about pollinators and how to attract them to our yards and gardens.
Poultry Owners Should be Vigilant in Watching for Signs of Avian Influenza

MANHATTAN, Kan. -- Poultry owners should be aware that there is currently an outbreak of the H5N2 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) associated with the migratory bird flyways in the United States, said Kansas State University animal scientist Scott Beyer.

The first problems were observed with small poultry flocks on the upper west coast, which were soon followed by infections on larger commercial poultry farms on the southern west coast. Recently, infections have occurred in the central flyway, a migratory route which encompasses three provinces in Canada and 14 U.S. states, including Minnesota, Missouri and Arkansas, where the disease has been confirmed in turkey flocks.

"Migratory fowl move north and south all over the earth through flyways as they move from nesting and feeding grounds," said Beyer, who is a poultry specialist with K-State Research and Extension.

“When they come into these areas, the avian influenza virus can sometimes be shared between the birds, which then return to their respective flyways bringing new variants of the virus which may have originated from other continents. Although this particular variant of the avian virus (H5N2) is more pathogenic than others, there have been no incidences of the virus spreading to other species or people. As is often the case, this virus has so far not been associated with actual disease symptoms in the migratory fowl so they should be considered potential carriers of the virus that is pathogenic to domesticated poultry."

The safety of poultry meat and eggs is not an issue, Beyer said. This variant is the H5N2 strain of avian influenza and although it is harmful to birds, it has not been associated with a threat to people or the food supply. The commercial poultry industry in the U.S. routinely screens for all types of the avian flu in flocks and any positive flocks, even those with variants that are not harmful to birds or people, are not processed for food.

U.S. poultry industry routinely monitors for diseases

“Since viruses continually change form to avoid an animal’s immune system, the U.S. poultry industry does not allow any form of the virus to persist in commercial flocks unlike some other countries which allow the non-pathogenic viruses to persist in their flocks,” he said. “This reduces the risk of any virus from becoming more pathogenic thus harming birds and people or affecting our food supply."

Small poultry flocks, gamebirds enterprises and commercial farms should be wary of potential exposure. Because it is thought that the virus has originated from migratory waterfowl as they move through their flyway, keeping them away from domestic poultry is most important. Many of these waterfowl likely visit local ponds for rest and feeding.

“If you have poultry near these ponds, you must eliminate all contact between them and your birds,” Beyer said. “This is especially important if you have your own waterfowl which could infect your poultry flock, but could also remain on the pond as other wild migratory birds stop by and then become infected by your birds.”

When these migratory birds feed in crop residues and farm ponds, they leave behind feathers and fecal matter that could carry the virus. Keeping yourself and pets away from these areas is crucial to reduce the chance of carrying the virus into your facilities, the K-State specialist said. Do what you can to encourage these birds to move away from your facilities so that you widen the clean zone around...
your farm as much as possible. Gamebird operations with birds in netted flight pens are more vulnerable because migratory birds flying over pens could drop fecal matter and feather dander directly into the pens. Efforts to reduce anything that attracts feeding and movement of these birds around pens should be implemented. Nets should be repaired to prevent birds and animals from entering as much as possible.

Starlings and sparrows should be considered vectors as well, at least until proven otherwise, Beyer said. With the spring season now here in Kansas, these birds are looking for nesting and feeding areas and may be persistent in trying to enter your facilities. Nests should be removed as they try to build them and you should work to keep them from entering as much as possible. Clean up all spilled feed indoors and out so they are not attracted. Move or eliminate bird feeders away from domestic poultry areas. Netting areas where they like to nest will also discourage them. If you have roosting pigeons and starlings in your barns, these birds will always be potential sources of all kinds of avian disease and they should be eliminated from the facilities.

Wild birds are not the only threat
“Rodents are also sources of diseases,” Beyer said. “They are nocturnal, so usually show up after dark to scavenge leftover feed and you may not even know they are there. You should control rodent populations as much as possible using rodenticides or with the help of an exterminator.”

Don’t leave feed accessible at night. Place all feed into rodent-proof containers or areas. Do not allow feeders to remain full of feed overnight. Either move the feeders out or feed only what the birds will consume before dark.

Beyer said that people, autos and farm implements can carry the virus from one farm to another. At this time, it is a good management practice to limit any contact with birds on other farms.

“You should also be aware of any areas that you are driving or walking through on the farm or ranch where migratory birds have congregated as mud and dirt can help move the virus,” he said. “A good way to clean up exposed items is by using a cup of bleach in a gallon of water to soak or rinse the items. Be sure to rinse off the bleach after treating because it can be corrosive.”

Monitoring your birds for symptoms
Producers should be aware of bird illnesses and die-offs, Beyer added. The primary symptom of avian influenza in birds is typical of most flu symptoms, so look for respiratory distress like coughing, ‘rattling’ (a raspy sound made when they breathe), sneezing, swelling around the eyes, and flicking of the head. Death may happen quickly, even before any signs of illness are noticed.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is monitoring poultry flocks for the virus in Crawford and Cherokee counties, which are closest to the most recent known infection in Missouri, and on March 12 established quarantine zones in those counties.

If you have a flock with signs of this illness in these areas, quarantine your poultry and contact your local veterinarian and the KDA Division of Animal Health at 785-564-6601.

Also, as part of the monitoring process, the KDA is developing a map of the location of backyard flocks in Crawford and Cherokee counties. Backyard flock owners are asked to self-report their flocks by contacting KDA at 785-564-6601. This will assist with notification if further developments occur in this disease outbreak.

“Biosecurity is the best way to prevent your flock from contracting the infection,” Beyer said. “Knowing how the disease spreads and using good biosecurity will be the best line of defense.”

For more information on biosecurity procedures contact the local K-State Research and Extension office and visit online resources on Kansas Avian Influenza issues for poultry at the Kansas Department of Agriculture and poultry flock health at the USDA website.
Plan the Garden to Preserve Food Later

Gardeners rejoice! Spring is on its way and now is the time to plan what produce to plant. Besides planning what to put in the ground, plan ahead to preserve the bountiful harvest.

Depending on ground space and weather, growing a garden can yield fresh, nutritious produce to enjoy throughout the year. Two resources can help with your planning.

The first is K-State's Vegetable Garden Planting Guide. It gives vegetable yields per 100 feet of land, planting guidance, and a planting calendar from planting to harvesting. For example, 100 feet of green beans should yield 120 pounds of beans. Yield can also be calculated per person. For green beans, 15-16 feet of plantings per person.

Based on what is planted, plans can be made to preserve the produce. To can the green beans in the above example, the 120 pounds of beans will make about 60 quarts of canned beans. An approximate yield chart can be found in Table 2 of So Easy to Preserve, 6th edition.

For more gardening information, see www.hfrr.ksu.edu/p.aspx?tabid=583.

Time to Test Pressure Gauges

To ensure safe food processing with a pressure canner, dial gauge units must be tested yearly to verify Presto Industries offers a testing unit that is used by many Extension offices to offer this service. The following brands of pressure canners can be tested with this device:

- Presto
- National
- Magic Seal
- Maid of Honor
- Kwik-Kook
- Cook Rite

Do not test All American canner gauges with the Presto tester!

All American Pressure Canner Gauge

The All American Pressure cooker/canner is a weighted gauge canner. The dial gauge is on the lid for reference only! The gauge helps the user know when the canner is pressurized and when the pressure has dropped to zero to remove the lid safely.

The gauge should be within +/- 2 psi of what the weighted gauge is set at when it jiggles. If the gauge is more than +/- of what the weight is set at when it jiggles, the dial gauge should be replaced.

Source: www.allamericanchefsdaleign.com/admin/FileUploads/Product_58.pdf

National Nutrition Month®

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics designates March as National Nutrition Month® to focus attention on informed food choices and sound eating and physical activity habits.

The theme for 2015 is “Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle.” The goal is to encourage consuming fewer calories, getting daily exercise, maintain a healthy weight, reduce chronic disease risks, and promote overall health.

Learn more about this event and ideas to help promote a healthy lifestyle at www.nationalnutritionmonth.org/nnm/.

Restaurant Inspection Scores—There’s an App!

Want to know how your favorite restaurant scored on their food safety inspections? There’s an app for that! Inspection data is public information, but it can be difficult to find or understand.

HDScores (Health Department Inspection Scores) is a free app available for iOS and Android systems. The web app will be available soon.

HDScores currently collects data from health department inspections across North America and United Kingdom. In the U.S., they have access to 1,732 health departments out of 2,550 total health departments/agencies. This covers 77.62 percent of the U.S. population. The entire state of Kansas is in this database. The data is near real time and comes from digital and paper reports. Once data is received, they can have it in this system within 24 hours. The goal is to make this a world wide system. Learn more at http://hdscores.com/.
MEDICARE & What You Need to Know

Instructors: Kay Schlabach, 12 years’ experience SHICK (Senior Health Insurance Counselor)
Jennifer Schroeder, Reno County Extension Office, SHICK (Senior Health Insurance Counselor)

The Medicare class includes the following:

1. Do you need help filling out forms for Medicare or Social Security?
2. Do you need help paying for Medications?
3. If you have Medicare C and want to change….can you?
4. When do you get Medicare?
5. What is Medicare?
6. What is Medicaid?
7. If your under 65 years old, what help can you qualify for?
8. When can I retire and start my benefits?
9. What if I have employer group coverage, is Medicare the same as Affordable Health Care?
10. Does Medicare cover, glasses and dental?
11. Does Medicare A & B have prescription insurance?

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) is a free program offering Kansans an opportunity to talk with trained, community volunteers and get answers to questions about Medicare and other insurance issues. SHICK provides you with many resources that will help you with your struggle through the Medicare maze.

April 8th, May 13th, June 17th, July 8th, August 12th, September 9th, October 14th, November 11th and December 9th. (November 11th and December 9th we will be enrolling people in drug plans).

Where: Hutchinson Public Library Basement Computer Lab

Time: 10:00 am to 11:00 am

For more information call the Reno County Extension Office (620) 662-2371.
Youth Lawn Mowing Clinic

PURPOSE ~ To assist youth in earning summer income by mowing lawns.

WHO ~ Boys and girls age 10 and older.

WHEN ~ TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2015
6:00 TO 8:45pm
Please register by April 10, 2015

WHERE ~ DILLON NATURE CENTER
3002 E. 30th, Hutchinson

COST ~ Free – Registration costs are being sponsored by the Downtown Kiwanis Club (although there is no cost, registration by April 10 is required)

GRADUATION ~ Upon attendance of training sessions, each youth will receive a certificate plus calling cards for use in reaching prospective customers.

TOPICS COVERED
◊ GRASSES THAT FORM A LAWN
◊ SAFE USE OF POWER MOWERS
◊ LAWN MOWER MAINTENANCE
◊ OBTAINING A LAWN MOWING JOB

Registration Deadline: April 10, 2015

Return to:
K-State Research & Extension - Reno County
2 W. 10th Ave., South Hutchinson, KS 67505
Or Fax to: 620-662-0313

NAME ___________________________________________ GRADE _______ PHONE ___________________
ADDRESS ________________________________________________________________________________

street city        zip code

PHONE # where parent/guardian can be reached during the Lawn Mower Clinic____________________

For additional information about the course, contact the Reno County Extension Office, 620-662-2371
I hereby give my permission for the above named to take part in the Lawn Mower Clinic sponsored by the Hutchinson Downtown Kiwanis Club and K-State Research & Extension - Reno County.
Tractor Safety Training

Reno County Extension Office
Saturday, April 18, 2015
8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Sponsored by:

It’s The Law
If you are 14 or 15 years or older, planning on doing farm work for someone other than a parent or legal guardian, you must take a Tractor Safety Course according to U.S. Department of Labor requirements.

Requirements:
14 - 15 years old (or 13, turning 14 this summer)
Social Security Number - Bring it with you to class!
$20.00 Registration Fee
Lunch will be provided
Registration due April 13

Register by submitting $20 fee with form below to: Reno County Extension
2 W. 10th Ave
So. Hutchinson KS 67505

Questions call Reno County Extension Office (620) 662-2371

*** Class textbook may be picked up at Extension Office upon payment
*** *** Students should be familiar with Chapter 1 before the class ***
*** Class space limited to the first 25 paid entries***

Name_____________________________________________ _______________________________
Address____________________________________________ _______________________________
Phone_____________________________ Age ____________ Date of Birth __________________
Social Security #_________________________
Internet Frustrations

Have you ever tried to watch a video online, or download a file, only to have it take much longer than it normally should? This has happened to me – a lot. There can be many causes, though in my case it’s usually one or more of my kids streaming a movie or downloading a new game. I’ve been helping people work through online issues for several years and have some tips for anyone experiencing a “slow” connection:

- Make sure no one else in your house is streaming videos or downloading files at the same time you notice the slowness. If this is a frequent problem, consider setting up a schedule when others can use online services without interfering with others. Some routers and modems today have the ability to limit the amount of bandwidth taken by a device on your network. Give your son a little bit to download his games, your daughter enough to watch a show, and the rest for everyone else.

- While you’re looking at your modem or router, is it wireless? Do you have a password set up to connect or is it unsecured access? If it’s unsecured, it could be that a neighbor unwittingly (or wittingly) has connected to your network and now is hogging the bandwidth. Having a secured connection prevents this.

- Is your computer set up to download updates automatically? Maybe there are updates for Windows, Mac, Java, Adobe Flash, Steam games, etc. in the background, making your web browsing painfully slow. Check your update settings and change how and when updates are downloaded, if desired.

- Are you using satellite, an antenna, or microwave to connect to the internet? Weather can sometimes be a factor – heavy storms, whether it be thunder, rain, or snow, can cause loss of signal or interference. Wait until the storm has moved on to do any further diagnosis.

- Turn off your modem and router (if you have a router). Turn it on again after about 5 minutes. You will get a new connection to your internet provider, which may be better than the one you had before. Restart your computer after your modem reconnects and see if things are back to normal.

- Visit a speed test site and record your download and upload speeds. Examples of such sites are Speakeasy: http://www.speakeasy.net/speedtest/ and SpeedTest: http://www.speedtest.net/. Cox, CenturyLink, and AT&T also have speed tests you can run from their sites. Check with your internet provider’s technical support to let them know your current speeds and what you’ve tried before calling. It may be an issue beyond your control.

Don’t Fall for E-Mail or Telephone Scams

Email users have lost money to bogus offers that arrived as spam in their inbox. Con artists are very cunning; they know how to make their claims seem legitimate. Some spam messages ask for your business, others invite you to a website with a detailed pitch.

To help minimize your risk:

- Protect your personal information. Only provide your credit card or other personal information when you’re buying from a company you know and trust.
• Know who you’re dealing with. Don’t do business with any company that won’t provide its name, street address, and telephone number.
• Never give confidential information to an unknown person over the phone, no matter what they seem to know about you. Even if the call seems legitimate, tell the caller that you will call them back via a telephone number that you can verify independently, such as a number listed in a telephone directory.
• Take your time. Resist any urge to "act now" despite the offer and the terms. Once you turn over your money, you may never get it back.
• Read the small print. Get all promises in writing and review them carefully before you make a payment or sign a contract.
• Never send money for a “free” gift. Disregard any offer that asks you to pay a fee for a gift or prize. Free means free.

Some common scams to watch out for include: Work-at-Home offers, foreign lotteries, weight loss claims, cure-all products, investment schemes, debt relief, and offering to share money if you help the sender move the money to your bank account (often called “Nigerian 419” scams. More info on this type of scam can be found here – address is case-sensitive: http://ow.ly/Kas6s). Source: Adapted from University of Rochester Security Tip of the Week archive

From Ground Rules to Shared Expectations
Facilitators can encourage groups to move beyond identifying bad behaviors and toward positive outcomes.

Too many meetings fail to be productive and motivating. Even well-planned meetings with clear agendas, objectives and outcomes can deteriorate if certain participants dominate the discussion, focus on past grievances or fail to stay on topic.

Effective meeting facilitators, then, help a group to agree to a set of acceptable behaviors, prior to getting down to business. In so doing, the facilitator can shift ownership of the process to the participants at the outset. This set of acceptable behaviors is commonly referred to as “ground rules.” Typical ground rules include:
• No texting or emailing.
• Address comments to the group, not the facilitator
• Allow one person to speak at a time without interruption.
• Maintain confidentiality.

In the book, Reaching for Higher Ground in Conflict Resolution: Tools for Powerful Groups and Communities, the authors Dukes, Piscolilsh and Stephens describe a slightly different approach that begins with a “covenant” of shared expectations. This covenant helps a group aim for higher ground, beyond the typical limited and prohibitive ground rules. These shared expectations should provide transparency on acceptable behaviors and attitudes during the session. Appropriate agreements should make participants feel safe in sharing and expressing their views. Some statements might include:
• Discuss un-discussable issues.
• Focus on interests, not positions.
• Explain the reasoning and intent behind your statements, questions, and actions.
• Balance advocacy with inquiry.
• Jointly design next steps and ways to test disagreements.
• Keep the discussion focused.
• Make decisions by consensus.

Although prohibitive behavioral expectations may be included in shared expectations, higher ground expectations go beyond behaviors. They are principled, value-based and creative; they involve dialogue in the true sense of “sharing meaning” and they are concerned with the common good.

Next time you are charged with facilitating a meeting, challenge groups to think beyond what they don’t want to what they do want. Have an open, participatory discussion to generate and come to consensus about shared expectations. Display this list of working agreements or shared expectations during the session for all to see, to remind the group of their covenant. Taking the time to agree on these shared objectives is time well-spent.

Source: Bethany Prykucki, Michigan State University Extension