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AGRICULTURE'S LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Published by AG PRESS

66th Year

No. 44

December 29, 2020

\$1.00



## Abilene Machine celebrates 40 years in ag parts business

The autumn of 1980 found 29-year-old Randy Roelofsen and his friend Loren Engel solving problems for the ever-changing agriculture industry. In the early '80s, farmers were facing lean times, as many factors were driving the prices of commodities as well as land value down.

As any farmer knows, despite these challenges, harvest must go on.

One of the many virtues that farmers are known for, especially during dark financial times, is thrift. Randy, who grew up on a farm and had also seen the inside of the salvage industry, had an idea that would connect old tractor parts with new users.

Recycling good used tractor and combine parts not only helped farmers stretch their budgets – it proved to be a business venture with legs. Taking root along Old Highway 40 between Solomon and Abilene, Randy and Loren grew their endeavor with hard work, a bit of good luck and the kind of go-hard attitude that growing up as a farm boy instills.

Todd Roelofsen, Randy's nephew, joined the salvage parts and equipment resale operation in 1981. Eight years later, the business officially became Abilene Machine.

By 1990, the team was 50-strong. As the company grew and more employees joined the team, many things changed. But, one thing remained the same from day one.

"We think family all the way up and down the ranks. I preach that to my people," Randy said. "I'm proud of our outstanding team. They work tirelessly to ensure that every time a customer interacts with Abilene Machine, they receive the highest level of service and satisfaction."

In the early days, Todd saw opportunity to expand their operation.

"When I first started, I was the only parts guy," he said. "We kept getting calls for the same used parts. At times, we would sell our entire supply of certain used parts."

Rather than send customers away, the team found ways to rebuild old parts and even manufacture some new ones, leading to the company's



The Abilene Machine main warehouse and headquarters at 407 Old Highway 40, in Solomon, Kansas was built in 2005, after a fire destroyed the business' management, sales and accounting departments, and one used parts warehouse Aug. 10, 2004. The new facility boasts 39,000 square feet of space for warehousing new aftermarket tractor and combine parts.

Photo by Torey Griffith, Digital Marketing Specialist



Ray Rahe, a fabricator at Abilene Machine, welds weights to an auger flighting, which balances the rotating assembly for smooth operation and longevity. Abilene Machine manufactures their own augers, which are purchased by farmers all over the U.S.

expansion into aftermarket agricultural machinery parts.

"Our main goal was to acquire the ability to provide the parts our customers needed. We've always been here to help farmers succeed," Todd said.

Abilene Machine manufactures hydraulic pumps, fuel injection pumps for diesel engines, final drives, and even complete engines and transmissions. Each is rebuilt to OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) specifications by team members who come from mostly agricultural backgrounds. The roots run deep here.

In 1992, Abilene Machine released its first parts catalog. With 72 pages featuring used and remanufactured parts, the

company began to establish a national footprint in the ag parts industry.

Four decades later, the Roelofsens are still in the business of providing value to the agriculture industry with their family-owned and operated company. So what's the secret to success in this industry? In a word – innovation. Just like other sectors of the agriculture industry, these last 40 years have been about adapting to the ever-changing conditions to overcome each challenge.

For example, a 2004 fire destroyed Abilene Machine's main office and 15,000 square feet of warehouse and inventory. On the cusp of a worldwide economic recession, Randy and Todd faced the

local agricultural community ever since. Farmers and ranchers know that in early January they can attend the show and talk with an abundant amount of agriculture industry experts on how to improve their business at this event.

Tradexpos has been striving to produce top quality agricultural trade-shows since its inception

in 1988. The company also produces the Wichita Farm and Ranch Show, Fort Wayne Farm Show (Fort Wayne, Ind.), and the North American Farm and Power Show (Owatonna, Minn.). Based out of Austin, Minn., their five-person operation works year-round to serve the agricultural community with their events.

## Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Quarter released

Who says you can't fit the prairie in your pocket? You can now carry a piece of the prairie with a beautiful butterfly in your pocket, and it won't matter if it gets washed.

With much anticipation, the U.S. Mint released its 55th 2020 America the Beautiful Quarter honoring the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve on November 25, 2020. The design depicts a skyward view of a Regal Fritillary butterfly among a background of Big bluestem and Indian grass, both iconic to the preserve. Educational materials about the preserve's quarter is available at the U.S. Mint's website, as well as information about the quarter's designer, Emily Damstra and sculptor, Renata Gordon. Go to <https://www.usmint.gov/learn/educators/coin-program/america-the-beautiful-quarters-lesson-plans> to download the materials.

The quarter is available locally at the Flint Hills Discovery Center, 315 S. 3rd Street, Manhattan, KS. Bring in your old quarter and exchange for a new Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Quarter while supplies last.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway). The preserve is a unique public/private partnership between the National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy.

For more details about the quarter, call 785-587-2726 or visit 315 S. 3rd St. in Manhattan.

e-commerce for everything – from tractor parts to groceries," said Kenny Roelofsen, Abilene Machine digital marketing manager. "We're meeting them there, in the digital marketplace, where we are continuing the spirit of innovation that has brought us this far. Even though we're a large company, every customer – whether at the parts counter or on the internet – can still expect the same kind of honest, personal, service that Abilene Machine is known for."

Abilene Machine is steadily growing to meet increasing demand and has evolved from that single-car garage to one of the largest single-site agricultural salvage yards in the U.S. In addition to multiple manufacturing and remanufacturing facil-



Alex Shewmon, Combine Parts Technician at Abilene Machine, takes good used parts from a damaged John Deere Combine at one of the shops at the company's facility near Solomon. Abilene Machine started in 1980 as an agricultural machinery salvage parts and equipment resale operation. In addition to used parts, the company now sells new aftermarket parts, some of which are manufactured in-house.

task of rebuilding their business to replace what was lost.

Adaptation is key, according to the Roelofsens. For decades, parts sales happened in person and over the phone. People ordered from catalogs, went to trade shows or learned about the company through word-of-mouth. Recent economic events have shown how important a strong digital presence is for a retail company's

continued success. Or survival, for that matter.

A newly updated website enables a customer to sign into a personal account and add all of his or her equipment to a "shed." Each personalized shed stores equipment information so the customer can easily look up and order parts in minutes. Once ordered, the parts are shipped right to their door.

"The new generation of farmers is adopting

ities and a 39,000-square-foot new aftermarket parts warehouse at their Kansas headquarters, they have also built successful operations in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Bishopville, South Carolina.

"It's an amazing business," said Todd, who is now an owner and vice president. "We have a lot of great people working here, and each of them is just like family."

## A social distancing reminder



Ron Wilson of Lazy T Ranch, Manhattan, stopped by the Grass & Grain office with a special delivery – a Llama-Gram. The official certificate included a light-hearted social distancing reminder to keep one llama length of space (six feet) between you and others due to the coronavirus pandemic.



## Breaking Tradition

By Jackie Mundt, Pratt County farmer and rancher

This past year has been a hard one. Though we are close to the renewed hopes of a new year, we still face what could be the hardest days of 2020 for some.

No matter what you are celebrating this season — Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Festivus — most plans have likely been altered. Some people have been lucky to experience only minor inconveniences or shifts, while others are facing a total breakdown of holiday celebrations and family traditions.

My heart goes out to people who are struggling with this change. I was once just like you.

When I was 12 years old, my oldest brother enlisted in the Navy and left for basic training near Chicago just before Thanksgiving. Since the base was only a five-hour drive from home, our family was able to participate in a Christmas Adopt-a-Sailor program to spend the day

with him.

Looking back, I had a lot of pre-teen anxiety about the effects this had on our holiday celebration and family traditions. It was the first time we ever changed our family routine, and I was convinced the changes were going to ruin Christmas. We had to shorten our visits with extended family on Christmas Eve so we could get a few hours of sleep before our 3 a.m. departure. We would not be opening presents around the tree on Christmas morning. It all just felt wrong.

Our Christmas in downtown Chicago ended up being a great adventure. The city was like a ghost town. The only restaurant open was a two-story McDonald's, and my siblings and I were so proud to rack up a \$30 total, which makes me laugh now as it would be a bargain for a family of six today. We visited an equally deserted Navy Pier where our entertainment became exploring a water gunboat and chatting with the on-duty firefighters staffing it. We ended the day watching the latest James Bond movie at the theater since it was the only thing we could find open.

This odd and presumably ruined holiday ended up being one of our most memorable Christmases. The highlights of the day were not presents, which I cannot even remember if we exchanged, or cool experiences. The greatness of the day came from the spoiled plans,

laughter and shared experience of making memories together.

We didn't know it at the time, but this was the last Christmas we spent together as a family. Ten months later, my middle brother died in a car accident; my oldest brother was away from home for six years in the Navy; and my sister and I became adults with our own careers and families to work around for the holidays.

I will not pretend that my family's Chicago Christmas was magical, tradition-worthy or even worth repeating. However, I am grateful for the time it gave us together and the way it mentally prepared me for the hard lesson of life's changes.

If you are anxious about how the holidays will turn out for your family and friends, I can share from experience that a break from tradition isn't the worst thing that can happen. Even if you are sad, mad or disappointed about the circumstances, you can still make memories and celebrate with loved ones. It will give you something to talk about in future years when you are enjoying your holiday celebrations and family traditions.

"Insight" is a weekly column published by Kansas Farm Bureau, the state's largest farm organization whose mission is to strengthen agriculture and the lives of Kansans through advocacy, education and service.

# Secretary Perdue announces groundbreaking proposal to transfer agricultural animal biotechnology regulatory framework to USDA

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced a significant step in modernizing regulations of agricultural animals modified or produced by genetic engineering. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will be moving forward with an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) to solicit public input and feedback on a contemplated regulatory framework that would modernize our system into a scientifically sound, risk-based and predictable process that facilitates the development and use of these technologies for U.S. farmers and ranchers under USDA's authorities. This initiative follows President Donald Trump's Executive Order on agricultural biotechnology that called upon federal agencies to make regulatory improvements to rectify some of the long-standing barriers to innovation for U.S. agriculture.

"Our livestock producers need all the tools in the toolbox to help protect against animal diseases and continue to meet the challenge of feeding everyone now and into the future. If we do not put these safe biotechnology advances to work here at home, our competitors in other nations will," said Perdue. "Science-based advances in biotechnology have great promise to continue to enhance rural prosperity and improve the quality of life across America's heartland and around the globe. With this effort, we are outlining a pragmatic, science-based, and risk-based approach that focuses on potential risk to animal and livestock health, the environment, and food safety in order to provide our farmers and ranchers the tools they need to continue to feed, clothe and fuel the world."

**Background**  
Last year, President

Trump directed federal agencies to modernize the regulatory framework for agricultural biotechnology products by establishing regulatory approaches proportionate to the product's risks, avoid unjustified distinctions across similar products, and promote future innovation and competitiveness. USDA will publish an ANPR on animal biotechnology as a keystone effort in fulfilling this Executive Order.

This ANPR will transition portions of FDA's pre-existing animal biotechnology regulatory oversight to USDA. USDA will consult with FDA to ensure our reviews benefit from FDA's expertise, while providing developers with a one-stop-shop for their products at USDA. USDA looks forward to FDA experts participating in the development of our review process.

Through this ANPR, USDA is proposing to

establish a flexible, forward-looking, risk-proportionate and science-based regulatory framework that provides a predictable pathway to commercialization and keeps pace with advances in science and technology for certain farm animals (cattle, sheep, goats, swine, horses, mules, or other equines, catfish, and poultry) developed using genetic engineering intended for agricultural purposes.

USDA's proposed safety review would cover molecular characterization, animal health (including noninfectious, infectious, and zoonotic diseases), efficacy (for disease and pest resistance traits), environmental considerations, food safety evaluation of any expressed substance (including allergenicity and compositional analyses of key components), and food storage and processing. USDA's proposal would provide end-to-end regulatory oversight from pre-market reviews through post-market food safety monitoring of animals. USDA will continue to coordinate closely with

the FDA to fulfill oversight responsibilities and provide the appropriate regulatory environment, ensuring the safety of products derived from new technologies, while fostering innovation at the same time.

Under the regulatory framework being contemplated, USDA would provide regulatory oversight from pre-market reviews through post-market food safety monitoring for certain farm animals developed using genetic engineering. USDA would promulgate regulations using the authorities granted to the Department through the Animal Health Protection Act (AHPA), the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA). Pursuant to these authorities, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) would conduct a safety assessment of organisms developed using genetic engineering that may increase an animal's susceptibility to pests or diseases of livestock, including zoonotic diseases, or ability to transmit the same. The

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) would conduct a pre-slaughter food safety assessment to ensure that the slaughter and processing of animals developed using genetic engineering would not result in a product that is unsound, unhealthful, unwholesome, or otherwise unfit for human food.

## Coffee Shop Meetings begin January 14, 2021

Herbicides and Weed Control will be the topic on January 14, 2021 at the first session in this year's Coffee Shop Agronomy series of educational meetings, organized by the Riley County Extension Service. Sarah Lancaster, K-State Research & Extension Weed Scientist, will be the featured speaker.

The 2021 Coffee Shop Series will be hosted virtually on Zoom. Producers will attend from their home computer, using a link sent to each registrant. Coffee Shop meetings will start at 11:00 a.m. and adjourn by 12:00 noon every other Thursday from January 14 through February 11.

Meeting dates, topics, and speakers are:

- January 14 — Herbicides and Weed Control — Sarah Lancaster, K-State Research & Extension Weed Scientist
  - January 28 — Plant Tissue Testing to Fine Tune Fertility Programs — Dave Mengel, K-State Research & Extension Soil Fertility Specialist (retired)
  - February 11 — Best Management Practices for Row Crops — Ignacio Ciampitti, K-State Research & Extension Cropping Systems Specialist Registration is required since a link will be needed to connect to each session. Producers are asked to register online at [www.riley.ksu.edu](http://www.riley.ksu.edu) by noon the day before each meeting.
- For more information contact Riley County Extension Agent Greg McClure at 785-537-6350.



This week is my week of holiday chores. Chores get to be a grind, especially during the winter, but there is something about holiday chores that break the doldrums of the mundane and remind me of why I love what I do. What makes holiday chores so special, you ask? I cannot exactly put my finger on it, but see if you agree with me.

My kids are home, especially for Christmas. Ike lives nearby but usually we go to church on Christmas Eve and then come home and play cards and eat some snack stuff. It is one of the few nights he stays here instead of going back home for the night. Tatum will be home from college and for one night a year, we are all under the same roof at the same time. That alone is enough to do my heart good.

Christmas morning, we get up, the coffee is on and a good breakfast is planned out. We do not often eat much of a breakfast, but we do on Christmas morning. Then it is off to do chores. I get that Christmas morning for those of you with little kids is a bit more hectic. Enjoy those days, even the late-night assembly of Santa's presents, the time is fleeting and soon it will go away. Christmas with big kids is a lot more laid-back, at least at our house.

We attack chores with a lot more help than I am normally used to, and it really goes fast, except that it is a morning when we can stop and admire the animals that we are entrusted with caring for. I am not sure why but on Christmas morning it seems like the animals are a lot more laid back too. I know a scientist would tell you that it is probably all in my attitude and the signals I am giving off. I am also sure it is because I am in a good mood and more willing to forgive and forget. I chose to believe it is because it is Christmas morning, and all is right in the world, if only for a moment.

We look at the animals, maybe add a little extra feed and discuss plans and thoughts for the upcoming year. The traffic is another thing that seems to help the mood of the morning. There is no traffic. Roads are quiet as people are not moving that early in the day. All of

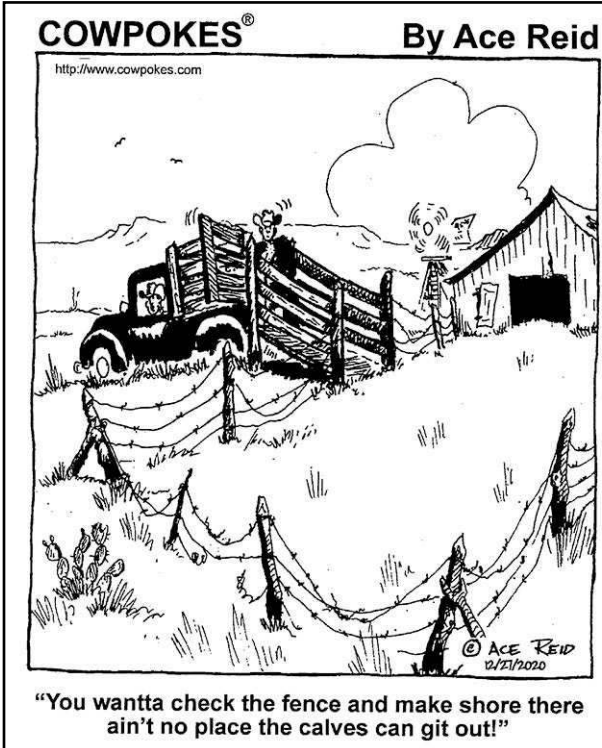
that lends itself to a stillness that adds to the nature of the morning and the awe of the season. I suppose chores are more relaxed too because we have done most of the feeding and watering the day before in anticipation of Christmas morning. We try to keep the chores light.

There is a difference, a lightness in our step, a bounce in our moods because it is Christmas. The animals also seem to have a calmness, a gentleness that comes with the day. It is the one morning we forget the troubles that bother us the rest of the year and focus on what is good. It could also be that we are looking forward and anticipating being done with chores and that second cup of coffee when we are opening presents.

That is my Christmas morning, and it is probably more laid-back because of the year and the fact that we are not going anywhere. I understand that for some it is more hectic as you hustle around earlier to get to a family Christmas that requires traveling. We have been there, done that and there are parts of those mornings that are special too. Christmas on the farm can be exhausting, but for us, this year, it will be casual and relaxing.

I also realize that this may be one of our last Christmas mornings like this. The kids will soon have their own families and we will not always have them Christmas Eve and Christmas all to ourselves, but the last two years have been amazing. I know this year has been challenging and I hope that this holiday season finds you with a chance to relax, reflect and enjoy all that you have been blessed with.

I hope that your holiday chores left you with a chance to take that deep breath, even if the morning was hectic, and see the peace that was all around you. Holiday chores only come around once a year, and that is a good or bad thing depending on your perspective. I hope your chores found you with everything in, all your waterers unfrozen, your batteries charged and your critters healthy. The secret of life is to enjoy the moment and find happiness in the little things like holiday chores.



Since 1951

# GRASS & GRAIN

Published by AG PRESS

**785-539-7558**  
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**GRASS & GRAIN (USPS 937-880)**  
The newsweekly for Kansas and southern Nebraska, published each Tuesday at 1531 Yuma (Box 1009), Manhattan, KS by Ag Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Manhattan, Kansas and additional offices. Postmaster send address changes to: Ag Press, Box 1009, Manhattan, KS 66505.

**Subscription** — \$76 for 2 years. \$41 for 1 year, plus applicable sales tax. Outside Kansas, \$51 for 1 year, \$95 for 2 years.

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## You inherited the farm – now what?

A Knowledge @ Noon series titled, "You Inherited the Farm – Now What?" will be offered as a virtual conference, starting January 12, 2021. Sessions will be presented via Zoom at 12:00 noon on four Tuesdays, from January 12 through February 2. Greg McClure, Riley County Extension agriculture agent will be the conference host and presenter.

The first session will be an introduction to farm ownership, covering some of the decisions new landowners might face, including whether to keep the land with multiple owners, sell it, or divide it among multiple heirs.

- Series dates and topics are:
- January 12 – Intro to Farm Ownership — Where do you begin now that you are a farm owner?
  - January 19 – Lease Law and Common Leasing Practices
  - January 26 – Kansas Fence Law — Who is responsible for fence maintenance?
  - February 2 – Soil Fertility Basics — Understanding soil fertility, fertilizers, and crop nutrient needs.

Landowners can sign up for the entire series, or for individual sessions, but registration is required by noon the day before each session. Zoom connection instruction will be sent to participants via email. Register online at [www.riley.ksu.edu](http://www.riley.ksu.edu). For more information, contact Greg McClure at the Riley County Extension Office by phone at 785-537-6350 or by email to [gmcclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmcclure@ksu.edu).

## Tool helps develop custom biosecurity plan for disease prevention in beef

In support of cattle producers across the country dedicated to preventing disease, improving animal welfare and reducing production losses, the Beef Checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program developed a Daily Biosecurity Plan for Disease Prevention template. The template, which helps cattle producers implement daily biosecurity measures on their operations, is available digitally as a PDF or can be printed for handwritten plans.

The template was specifically designed to be customizable, giving producers flexibility in determining management practices that work best for their cattle operation and covers everything from animal movement to worker training.

The goal of this introductory and stepwise program is to provide beef farmers and ranchers across the country with the information needed to implement biosecurity plans. In addition to providing basic information, the tool emphasizes why biosecurity is vital on cattle operations and provides an opportunity for producers

to have conversations with their herd veterinarians, extension agents, and state BQA coordinators about biosecurity preparedness.

"Biosecurity is a top priority for the beef industry," said Kim Brackett, an Idaho cattle producer and chair of the BQA Advisory Group. "This Beef Checkoff-funded tool allows beef farmers and ranchers to develop their own biosecurity plans unique to their operations. Whether a cow-calf operation in California, a backgrounder in Mississippi or a feedyard in Kansas, being proactive and developing a written plan ahead of a crisis allows producers to implement and become familiar with biosecurity precau-

tions. Even more importantly, producers will be prepared if a biosecurity threat were to happen."

The Daily Biosecurity Plan for Disease Prevention template was created in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture and its Secure Beef Supply plan. By intersecting these resources, producers that already have biosecurity steps in place for day-to-day operations are able to easily move to an enhanced biosecurity plan to prepare for a potential foreign animal disease outbreak.

For more information about BQA and the BQA Daily Biosecurity Plan, visit [BQA.org](http://BQA.org)

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Contact: Bob 785-736-2787 or Jim 785-736-2821

## Reinke's ESAC wins two national awards

ESAC™, Reinke Manufacturing's electronic swing arm corner technology, has won both an AE50 award from the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) and the Irrigation Association New Product People's Choice Award for agriculture irrigation. A global leader in irrigation systems and technology, Reinke introduced ESAC to growers in the U.S. and Canada earlier this year.

"We're very excited to be recognized by these organizations, especially since they represent both engineers and growers," said Chris Roth, Reinke president. "Our team has worked for some time perfecting ESAC's ability to improve water uniformity on corners and help producers grow more with less. These awards are a signal that we've achieved those goals, by providing the most advanced swing arm corner in the irrigation market."

The AE50 Awards are the only one of their kind, celebrating product innovations in the area of agriculture, food, and biological systems. Only 50 products are recognized each year; those ranked highest

in innovation, significant engineering advancement and impact on the markets they serve.

The Irrigation Association's New Product Awards are determined during the annual Irrigation Show and Education Week. A total of 31 new products and technologies were entered in five categories, evaluated on innovation, design quality, increased water/resource-use efficiency, ease of use and product life expectancy.

ESAC will provide growers with highly efficient and uniform water

application, increasing yields under their Swing Arm Corners. In field tests, ESAC showed major improvements for irregular-shaped fields and corner applications on rectangular and square fields. Based on GPS positioning, ESAC's electronic six or 12 zones control the precision application of water or chemical applications to individual field specifications. ESAC is available on all swing arm models.

Visit [Reinke.com/swingarm](http://Reinke.com/swingarm) to learn more about ESAC and to find a Reinke dealer in your area.

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## Do you renew your Grass & Grain subscription at the Topeka Farm Show?

Since the show has been postponed from early January till mid-April, we are offering the same tax-free special we give at the show.

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It's one of those windy mornings that sweeps the prairies clean. How does this old house stand in its path? I never fail to think of those in the past and how they faced the weather: plains tribes in their tipis, soldiers in their tents (or without them), settlers in soddies, the weary traveler on horseback riding into the sleet, ragged refugees displaced and walking through the cold mud.

Weather is the great equalizer, or perhaps, the great leveler. Their first winter at Fort Wallace, Capt. Myles W. Keogh and four other officers lived with no heat in their tent because the Army had sent stoves but no pipe. My daddy, one of 12 children growing up in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, recalled waking with snow on his blanket. It had blown through the cracks in the clapboard. There was no insulation in that old house, no storm windows, no central heat. Just the wood cookstove in the kitchen and the wood heat stove in the front room.

The year our first house burned down (I was maybe nine years old), we moved in with Granny and Grandpa while we rebuilt. My sister and I slept upstairs where there was no heat and Granny piled so many quilts we couldn't turn over underneath them. But the kitchen was always warm and we scurried there as fast as we could.

May you always have a warm refuge no matter what the weather, and may you have a blessed 2021.

Deb Goodrich is the host of the *Around Kansas* TV show and the *Garvey Texas Foundation Historian in Residence* at the Fort Wallace Museum. She chairs the Santa Fe Trail 200, the bicentennial of that historic trail. Contact her at author.debgoodrich@gmail.com.

## Soy growers pleased with final 2020 COVID relief and omnibus

Congress has now approved H.R. 133, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, and the American Soybean Association (ASA) is very pleased. The long-anticipated coronavirus relief bill, which passed both chambers with large majorities, will bring needed aid to members of the agriculture community and other Americans.

Kevin Scott, ASA president and soy grower from Valley Springs, South Dakota, said, "We are very thankful that so many measures in this relief package and the attached omnibus are priorities for which soy growers have diligently pushed: enhanced assistance under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program and other direct aid to producers — including a shot in the arm for PPP and per-acre payments for eligible row crop producers — broadband funding, WRDA reauthorization and more."

Importantly, the legislation provides \$13 billion to address COVID-related impacts on agriculture and \$7 billion for broadband funding — including \$300 million for a much-needed rural broadband build-out — along with an additional \$13 billion to support nutrition programs. And, the legislation includes a reauthorization of the 2020 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), with an adjusted cost-share ratio for Inland Waterway Trust Fund projects from 50% IWTF/50% General Revenues to 35% IWTF/65% General Revenues through FY2031, a major priority for U.S. soy growers.

"The bill also provides block grant funding for state departments of agriculture to support farm stress programs. Back in April, shortly after all this really escalated, the ASA COVID Task Force highlighted the need for stress relief across our ag communities—and ASA worked in conjunction with our state soy affiliates, the United Soybean Board, and even several interested state departments of agriculture and universities—on the #SoyHelp program to provide tools and resources to those in need. So, this is just one more component included in this legislative package that is keenly important for our ag communities," said Scott, who led the task force for months.

In addition to provisions specific to agriculture, the 5,593-page bill includes many other important measures; notably, funding for distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, another much-needed step for which ASA has advocated. And, the \$900 billion stimulus package includes \$1.4 trillion to fund the government through September, more welcome news.

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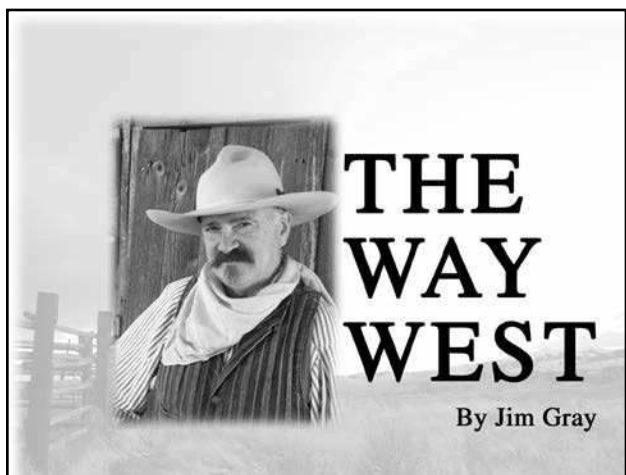
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### Building His Own Monument

Johnson County, Kansas was established by Kansas Territorial government on August 25, 1855, in honor of Reverend Thomas Johnson. Reverend Johnson and the Reverend Alexander McAlister, the presiding Methodist elder of the Cape Girardeau Missouri district, met with representatives of the Shawnee Indians in November of 1830 to gain permission to establish a mission among their people. By December 1st Rev. Johnson returned with his bride Sarah T.

(Davis) to begin building the mission. He was twenty-eight. She was twenty.

The Methodist mission was located on a wooded bluff overlooking the Kansas River, approximately three-quarters of a mile southeast of present-day Turner, Kansas. The Chouteau brothers' American Fur Company was about a mile away (just north of present-day Turner).

Alexander McAlister Johnson was born to Sarah and Thomas Johnson at the Shawnee Methodist Mis-

sion on July 18, 1831, but sadly only survived until August 15, 1831. The following year, a second son, Alexander Soule Johnson, was born on July 11, 1832. Four more children were born by 1839.

In 1838 Thomas began planning for a new Shawnee Methodist Mission and Indian Labor School. Rev. Johnson persuaded the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to provide seventy-five thousand dollars to build the new mission and labor school. Traveling to Washington, D. C., he then induced the government through the Commission on Indian Affairs to grant two thousand four hundred acres for service in training in agricultural arts. The new location was six miles south of mouth of the Kansas River and one-half mile west of the Missouri border (the present Shawnee Indian Mission Indian Historic Site).

By February, 1839 forty acres had been fenced, comprising twelve acres of young apple trees, the first orchard planted in Kansas, and one hundred seventy-six acres prepared for planting corn in the spring. Cattle, hogs, and horses were run on the surrounding prairie.

Forty Indians were employed to cut fence rails and construct the buildings. Bricks for the buildings were produced on site in brick kilns. Lumber was sawn onsite with their own saw mill. Everything to ensure sustainability was provided, from blacksmiths and shoemakers to a water-powered flour mill. The large dining hall could serve two to three hundred people at a time.

The school was attended by more than the Shawnees. Delawares, Chippewas, Gros Ventres, Peorias, Pottawatomies, Kansas, Kickapoos, Muncies, and Osages attended the mission school in the first year.

In 1855 the first territorial legislature convened in the main building at the mission after its initial assembly at Pawnee, Kansas. Rev. Johnson was

elected president of the upper house of the legislature. Territorial Governor Andrew Reeder and his staff were quartered at the mission throughout 1855. The pro-slavery legislature was deemed the "Bogus Legislature" by Free Staters and soon failed. Even so, Rev. Johnson, being one of the most prominent men in Kansas Territory, was honored by the organization of Johnson County in 1855.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861 Rev. Johnson was forced to come to grips with his support of slavery. He was a Virginian by birth, however, his close ties with the federal government had been beneficial to the success of the mission and his personal success as well. He had moved in 1858 to the Davenport House, a colonial-style mansion near Westport. When Kansas entered the Union as a free state Johnson turned away from his southern friends to support the Union.

His shift of allegiance infuriated former pro-slavery colleagues. Treachery was around every corner. The evening of January 2, 1865, a large number of horsemen approached the house at about 11 p.m. Going to the door, Johnson asked what they wanted. The men said they were looking for a drink of water, to which, they were directed to the well behind the house. But they were cold and wanted to come in to get warm by the fire. But the fires were no longer blazing, and not wanting to disturb his sleeping family, he denied them entry.

By that time the family was gathering near the door. His wife urged him to close it, and as he did a bullet splintered the

wood, striking Johnson in the chest. A volley of bullets struck the house as family members defended themselves with firearms stored within the house. The back porch was set on fire but doused with water from the kitchen. The standoff lasted over an hour when Mrs. Johnson shouted to the raiders that her husband was dead.

His body was taken to the mission cemetery the next day. The marble shaft that marks his grave declares that Rev. Thomas Johnson had built his own monument. "A Monument of Good Works" on The Way West.

"The Cowboy," Jim Gray is author of the book *Desperate Seed: Ellsworth Kan-*

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### "Winning the Game" marketing class to be held in February

The River Valley and Post Rock Districts are working together to put on a Corn Marketing class in Belleville, on February 9th from 12:30-5:30 at the 4-H building on the Fairgrounds. This corn marketing workshop will focus on developing pre-harvest marketing strategies for the 2021 Kansas Corn crop. The emphasis will be on using the cost of production and seasonal price trend tendencies to develop seasonally flexible 2021 corn marketing plans for Kansas farmers. A variety of marketing tools will be used in the workshop including forward, basis, and hedge-to-arrive contracts, short futures hedges, and put/call options. Instructors for the workshop are Mark Nelson, Director of Commodities for the Kansas Farm Bureau, and Daniel O'Brien, Extension Agricultural Economist, Kansas State University.

Registration is required, please sign up at <https://bit.ly/387zMVr>. There will be a Zoom option available and we will be following K-State's COVID-19 guidelines which include facemasks and social distancing. There will be a limit of 50 people.

This meeting is sponsored by Kansas State University Extension, Kansas Farm Bureau, and the North Central Extension Risk Management Education Center.

If you have any questions contact Rebecca Zach at the Belleville office at 785-527-5084 or by emailing [zrebecca@ksu.edu](mailto:zrebecca@ksu.edu).

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Bids sheets can be obtained by contacting Galloway, Wiegars & Brinegar or by visiting the website: [sealedbidauction.net](http://sealedbidauction.net).

Bids must be received by 12:00 p.m. January 8, 2021. Seller reserves the right to accept any bid, reject all bids or invite certain bidders to a subsequent private auction.

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# First learning modules for 'Regen Ag 101' now online

The non-profit Soil Health Academy has announced that the first three learning modules of its Regen Ag 101 virtual school are now online and available to help farmers, ranchers, gardeners and others successfully transition from chemical- and tillage-dependent conven-

tional agricultural practices to soil health-improving regenerative agricultural practices.

The curriculum was developed by regenerative ag pioneers Ray Archuleta, Gabe Brown, Shane New and Allen Williams, Ph.D., based on their decades-long, on-farm ex-

perience in applying soil health-centric, regenerative agricultural principles and practices.

"We're delighted to make the first three learning modules available now so our students can begin interacting with the course content," New said. "The modules come com-

plete with video instruction from SHA's world-renowned cadre of instructors along with supplemental media for students to search, read, watch and interact with," he said.

According to New, an additional six learning modules will round out the Regen Ag 101 course curriculum and will be available shortly after the first

of the year.

"Regen Ag 101 contains video lectures, case studies and supporting research gleaned from the very best of Soil Health Academy live workshops across the U.S.," New said. "Through this interactive platform we're able to provide the foundational knowledge and understanding of regenerative

principles and practices that will allow our fellow farmers and ranchers to practically and profitably make the transition from conventional agriculture to regenerative agriculture."

To register or to learn more about Regen Ag 101 visit [www.soilhealthacademy.org](http://www.soilhealthacademy.org).

## Handke to serve as Gelbvieh World editor

The American Gelbvieh Association (AGA) is excited to announce the addition of Laura Handke to the AGA publications team, serving as editorial contractor.

In her role, Handke will help to create and coordinate content for *Gelbvieh World* and *The Profit Picture* publications as well as other AGA communications efforts. Handke previously contributed to the publications through freelance writing.

Handke, her husband and eight-year-old daughter, Audrey, live in Easton and run a small herd of commercial cattle. Handke holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in agriculture science from



Northwest Missouri State University and has been professionally involved in agriculture communications for the past decade, working on education initiatives and content for crop and health animal companies and associations.

Handke says of the opportunity to join the AGA team, "I am excited to

have the opportunity to join the AGA team, and look forward to sharing the story and communications of a breed that has meant so much to me throughout my life."

"Laura has contributed great work to our publications in the past and we are excited to have her a part of our team in this new capacity," says Megan Slater, AGA executive director. "She has a wealth of experience in ag communications and will be a great asset in growing the Gelbvieh and Balancer message."

Handke began her role at AGA on December 1 and can be reached at [laura@gelbvieh.org](mailto:laura@gelbvieh.org).

## Kansas cattle on feed up 3 percent

Kansas feedlots, with capacities of 1,000 or more head, contained 2.50 million cattle on feed on December 1, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

This inventory was up 3% from last year.

Placements during November totaled 415,000 head, unchanged from 2019. Fed cattle marketings for the month of No-

vember totaled 425,000 head, up 8% from last year. Other disappearance during November totaled 10,000 head, unchanged from last year.

## Adoption of precision ag varies across generations

Farmers who fear they are falling behind in farm technology might not be as behind as they think.

Kansas State University cropping system economist Terry Griffin explains that a recent Kansas Farm Management Association study on farm technologies dispels the myth that all farmers use all of the lat-

est technology.

Griffin was one of the speakers at the December 2020 University of Missouri Crop Management Conference, held online.

Studies show that farmers are slower to adopt new technology than previously thought, Griffin says. It usually takes 15 years for technology to reach a critical mass. Many factors weigh into the speed and degree with which they adopt new ways of farming.

Farm size is one of the main factors: The larger the farm, the quicker and higher the adoption rate.

Age, wealth and type of farming operation also are factors.

The number of generations of a family on the farm and the birth year of the farm operators also affect adoption rates. Not surprisingly, younger farmers are introducing digital resources to older generations on the farm.

Many technologies have been available for more than two decades but still are not widely adopted, Griffin says. Of available technologies, farmers may choose to invest in only a few.

The Kansas Farm Management Association found that Kansas farmers used three of eight surveyed technologies most commonly. Many used none. Very few used all eight.

For example, automated guidance became commercially available more than 20 years ago, yet only 70% of farmers surveyed in Kansas have adopted this technology.

MU Extension assistant teaching professor of precision agricultural technology Kent Shannon says his observations show that Missouri farmers are similar in their willingness to invest in precision ag.

Many factors affect how farmers look at return on investment and the installation and maintenance costs of precision agricultural equipment, Shannon says.

An agricultural resource survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture shows that farmers use technology in different ways. They may use it

to divide crop production, negotiate new crop leases, install tile drainage, monitor crop technology or document yields. Many used monitors to conduct field experiments.

Shannon says lack of internet access in many rural areas slows change. A USDA report shows that only 75% of U.S. farms reported having internet access, and that half of the farms use smartphones or tablets rather than desktop or laptop computers to conduct farm business.

As tech-savvy younger generations join established operations, changing perspectives are inevitable, says Griffin. The numbers of farm owners in the "silent generation" (born before the end of World War II) and baby boomers (born 1946-64) continue to decrease.

Differences in business structure also affect adoption rates.

Multigenerational farms tend to embrace changes quicker than sole proprietors. They also likely own more acres, have more financial resources to invest and can prorate the expense.

Additionally, younger family members, although lacking the financial resources, may convince older, more risk-averse family members of the value of technology.

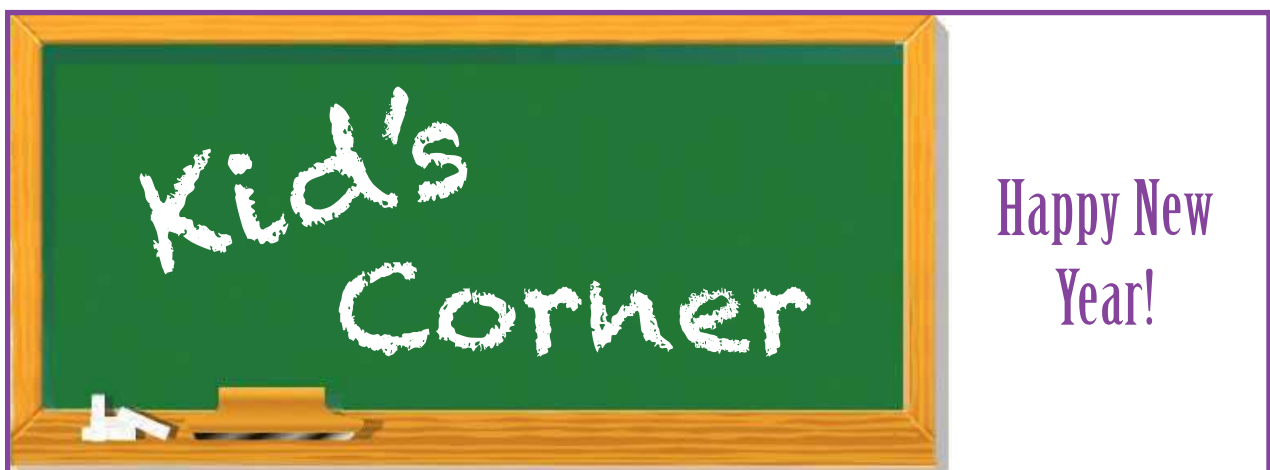
The silent generation's contribution remains strong despite dwindling numbers, says Griffin.

With life expectancies increasing, many remain active in the farm operation and retain ownership. Their heirs increasingly reach retirement age before inheriting the farm. As a result, the current younger generation will control farm operations at an older age than previously, Griffin says.

Farmers should decide if new technologies are for them, he says. "Ag tech is not for every grower on every field. Sometimes waiting is an optimal decision."

Decide how technology improves efficiencies, profit and quality of life on your farm, Griffin says.

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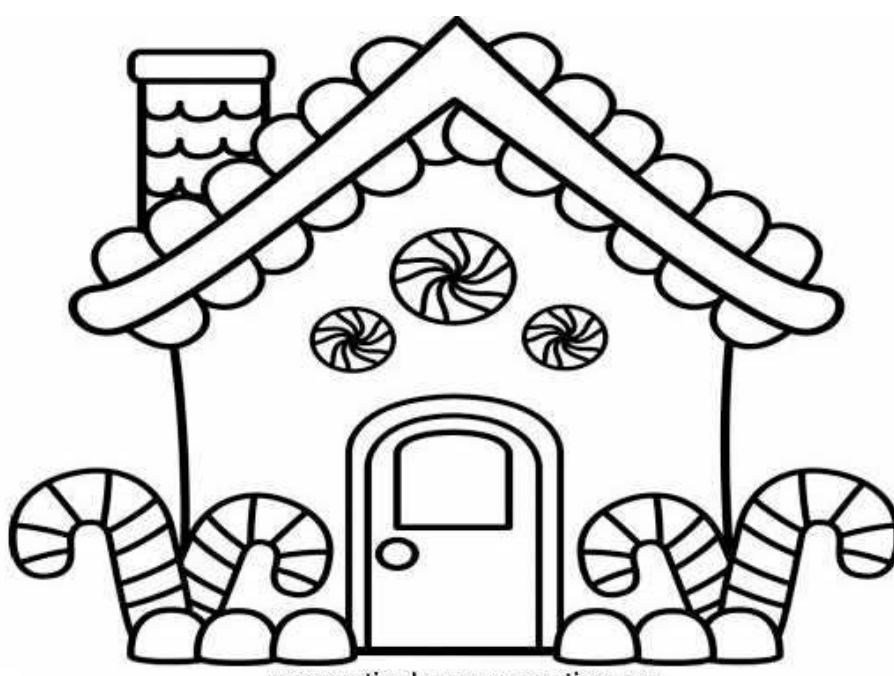
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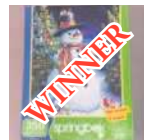
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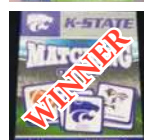
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# Fences are moving property lines: squatter's rights

By James Coover, Crop Production Agent, Wildcat and Southwind Extension district

K-State Research and Extension will be hosting a Land leasing and Law Meeting on January 23rd virtually as well as in person at the Southeast Research and Extension Center in Parsons. We will cover how to create simple, but well-defined written leases, laws when it comes to leasing, and the results of a recent leasing survey in the Wildcat District. Please call a K-State Research and Extension Wildcat or Southwind District office to register (Altamont, 620-784-5337).

Fences, property lines, and adverse possession of land can be one of the most contentious issues in agricultural law. The laws, no matter which state you are in, are complex, usually very old, and not always well-defined. This article is to state what my understanding of the property boundaries laws are based on various state extension publications and is not meant to be a substitute for an attorney's advice.

## The Partition Fence

A partition fence is the fence that is between two property lines and the majority of property lines have them. The issue is that not all fences are on the original property line. As hedge rows were planted, old fences were abandoned, and new fences were built, the original lines recorded in the county courthouse might not be where expected. Unfortunately, that nearly always means that someone has gained ground and someone

has lost ground, which is where the issues arise.

## Adverse Possession

Under adverse possession, a landowner may acquire title to a property by making open and notorious use of that property for 15 years in Kansas and ten years in Missouri. Notorious in this sense means the usage is not in secret and the usage is obvious (such as grazing livestock and fertilization). The use of the land must be "hostile" which means the land isn't being rented or contractually granted.

Usually the instances of adverse possession is that the adverse possessor does not know they are on another's person land (adverse meaning unknown). The usage of the land needs to be exclusive, as in it can't be a driveway that is used by two land owners. The usage also needs to be continuous, so not divided into separate periods and possessed by a single party during that period. Usually these property/fence lines go uncontested for decades. However, problems arise when a land survey or some type of record inspection reveals the original lines. In both Kansas and Missouri, a land survey can't move a property line, only a court order can do that. The payment of property taxes also doesn't affect the laws of adverse possession. One way to officially move a property line and make it "marketable of record," is a quit-claim deed. This is a signed, notarized, and courthouse recorded agreement between adjacent landowners that should be done with an attorney's advice that is intended to keep a settlement out of the court system.

These laws of adverse possession make it important for land owners to protect themselves, or more likely, future inheritors or the land. If a fence is moved off a tree line, first it would be good to know if the tree line really was the original property line. A boundary agreement affidavit of sorts can be made and filed between landowners declaring the property line, removing the "adverse" part of adverse possession. I would assume that permanent markers upon the actual property line would help with future issues. Looking at the Open Records for Kansas Appraisers maps could be an easy first step, but they are meant for land valuations and taxes and aren't necessary accurate enough for property line disputes.

This article was written using publications from Roger McEowen, Washburn Professor of Ag Law, and Joe Koenen, Missouri Extension Specialist. If you have any questions about finding agricultural law publications, please contact your local Extension office. However, any legal dispute over property line is an issue for an attorney and the court system. The Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services (KAMS) is a part of K-State Extension that can help mediation and legal assistance.

For more information, please contact James Coover, Crop Production Agent, jcoover@ksu.edu or (620) 724-8233.

# Tips for managing does in late gestation

By Adaven Scronce, diversified agriculture and natural resource agent, Wildcat Extension District

As a child during the month of December, I would be anxiously await for Christmas, excited to see what presents I would find under the tree Christmas morning. Now, I get just as excited for kidding season and for the first set of kids to hit the ground. I would guess that many producers feel the same way. While anxiously waiting for the first set of 2021 kids to hit the ground in the coming months, now is the time to make sure the nutrient requirements of does are being met to help ensure strong, healthy kids and does in the spring.

While making preparations for kidding season, ensuring that there is adequate shelter for does and kids and that you are stocked up on all the supplies you may need, it is also important to ensure that does are receiving the nutrients they need during the last four to six weeks of gestation, also referred to as late gestation. During

late gestation, about 70 percent of fetal growth occurs; as the fetuses grow and take up more room rumen capacity will decrease. While the energy and protein requirements of the doe increase during late gestation, her rumen capacity decreases. This is because of the decreased rumen capacity there is not enough space in the rumen for the doe to meet the higher nutrient requirements by consuming more feed. Instead the doe must consume higher quality, more nutritious feed. Due to increased energy demands to support fetal growth supplemental nutrition is usually required, especially for does that are carrying multiple fetuses (twins, triplets, quads). As a result, the doe's nutritional requirement of both energy and protein will increase. Meeting the nutritional needs of the doe by ensuring the doe has access to good quality forage along with supplementing with grain if needed, will help ensure does are consuming adequate nutrients to support

fetal growth, help prevent pregnancy toxemia (ketosis) and milk fever, and help ensure the arrival of strong, healthy kids.

Nutrient requirements will vary by age, weight, body condition, number of kids, and weather. To meet the increased nutrient requirement of late gestation, it is usually necessary to supplement with grain, especially if the quality of available forage is low. Generally, does require 12 percent protein and 60 percent total digestible nutrients (TDN) during late gestation. To find out the amount of protein and TDN in your hay you can send in a hay, sample in to be tested. Pregnancy toxemia (ketosis) is caused by decreased blood glucose levels (blood sugar) and a rapid breakdown of fat to maintain blood glucose levels and meet energy requirements. Not meeting the nutrient requirements of does can result in pregnancy toxemia (ketosis), low birth weights, weak kids, and poor milk production. Calcium is also an important part of the diet for pregnant does as it is needed for bone development in kids and milk production, needing around 4 percent calcium in their diet. If does do not receive

enough calcium in their diet or have too much calcium during late gestation it can result in milk fever. The ratio of calcium to phosphorus should range from 2:1 to 1:1 for pregnant and lactating does. Milk fever (hypocalcemia) is a blood calcium deficiency due to the body's system not being able to activate and mobilize calcium, which most commonly occurs in dairy does right before or after kidding.

While it is important to make sure the nutritional requirements of does are met, it is also important to make sure does are not overfed, as overfeeding can result in overweight does that have an increased risk of difficult births due to larger kids, and pregnancy toxemia (ketosis). It is important to meet the doe's nutritional needs, but not exceed those nutritional needs by overfeeding grain. Meeting the nutritional requirements for does includes managing the way they are feed as well as what they are fed. When supplementing with grain, weigh the grain to ensure they are being fed the correct amount to meet their nutritional requirements. Do not feed on the ground, make sure the feeders are

clean and feed is not going to waste. Ensure there is adequate space at the feeder(s) for all does to eat at a feeder at the same time. Feed does that need supplemental feeding separately from does that do not need extra feed. Encourage exercise by placing feed and water in different areas of the pasture and remember when feeding grain to increase the amount they are being fed gradually. It is also important to remember that water is the most important nutrient and water requirements increase during pregnancy, almost doubling during the last month of pregnancy. Water should be clean and ice-free to ensure adequate intake. If animals do not drink enough water, it can reduce dry matter intake.

Along with ensuring the nutrient requirements of does are met, it is also important to check does during late gestation to see if the need to be dewormed. To determine which females need to be dewormed, check their

FAMANCH score, evaluate their body condition and hair coat, and/or collect a fecal sample for a fecal egg count. Three to four weeks before kidding, does should be vaccinated for colostrid diseases and tetanus, as late gestation vaccinations are important to protect kids against enterotoxaemia (clostridium perfringens type C). To vaccinate does, CD/T or Covexin-8 can be used. When kids are born they do not have a fully functioning immune system. By giving the doe a CD/T or Covexin-8 booster before kidding, it will protect the doe and the kids will receive passive immunity through the colostrum and milk. Also remember when working does during late gestation, to handle them in a low-stress environment to make the process the least stressful for the does as possible.

For more information, please contact Adaven Scronce, Diversified Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent, adaven@ksu.edu or (620)331-2690

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## Marshall applauds final passage of SALE Act

The COVID relief package passed by Congress included legislation introduced by Rep. Roger Marshall, M.D. to provide much-needed payment protections for livestock sellers.

"As a teenager, I spent three years of weekends working at a sale barn in El Dorado," said Marshall. "And while that was hard work, today's world of cattle is a little more complicated than when I was sorting heifers and steers. Unfortunately, we've seen too many instances of sale barn owners holding hot checks passed by cattle dealers with empty bank accounts. This bill will help protect those businesses and the producers working with them and assure that both are fully compensated for their animals. Protecting our livestock owners has been a top priority for me during my time in Congress, and I am honored to see this legislation finally made into law."

The bipartisan Securing All Livestock Equitably (S.A.L.E.) Act, was first introduced by Rep. Marshall in the House in October 2017. The S.A.L.E. Act will place livestock sold to a dealer, and proceeds/receivables from already sold livestock in a trust until the original seller has been paid, ensuring that producers and livestock auctions have a legal recourse in the event of a dealer default and/or bankruptcy.

"I appreciate the help of the Livestock Marketing Association and Senator Pat Roberts, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, for their help in moving this legislation forward and ensuring its final passage," Marshall said.

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# KLA members approve policy for coming year

Policy focused on taxes, trade, noxious weeds, raw milk labeling and inspection, and other key issues was approved by members of the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) during the group's annual business meeting held virtually December 17. Ranchers, feeders and dairymen provided input during regional roundtable meetings in the fall and committee and council meetings that took place virtually over the past few weeks, with final approval coming from the general membership.

"KLA policy is developed through broad member input," said KLA president Jerry Kuckelman, a cattle feeder from Manhattan. "The resulting resolutions will direct officers and staff as we represent the membership on various issues during 2021."

Members voted in favor of a new resolution regarding raw milk labeling and inspection. The policy supports legislation that requires raw milk to be conspicuously labeled with a food safety warning label. It also supports legislation requiring all dairies to meet the same basic Grade A or Grade AA inspection standards as dairies that sell milk to a processor.

Existing policy regarding income taxes was amended

to support deductions or exemptions that ensure equal competition among agricultural lenders and equal access to credit for agricultural borrowers.

Policy focused on trade was amended by the membership to reflect support for bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that benefit agriculture. It also supports protecting the use of modern agricultural technology in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. The policy originally was specific only to North American trade agreements.

An amendment was made to policy surrounding the control of noxious weeds. The policy suggests government should share financial responsibility for control of invasive plants, on private land, introduced by state and federal agencies without unnecessarily restricting the ability of landowners to utilize and manage their property.

Members reaffirmed policy containing the association's Statement of Operating Principles, which opposes attempts to narrow the business options or limit the individual freedom of livestock producers to innovate in the management and marketing of their production

unfettered by additional government regulations.

A resolution focused on environmental regulations was reaffirmed. The policy supports legislative, judicial or administrative actions to minimize the effects of environmental laws, regulations or judicial determinations on livestock operations. It also supports maximizing economic opportunities for agricultural and livestock operations to meet such regulations. Additionally, the policy supports actions that allow maximum flexibility for such operations to meet regulatory obligations.

Additionally, members reaffirmed policy that supports strengthening penalties for anyone vandalizing or gaining unauthorized entry into a livestock facility.

In all, KLA members approved 64 resolutions for 2021. Other issues addressed in KLA policy range from animal health to cattle marketing to resource conservation.

KLA is a 5,700-member trade organization representing the state's livestock business on legislative, regulatory and industry issues at both the state and federal levels. The association's work is funded through voluntary dues dollars paid by its members.

## Behind the brand – what makes the Certified Angus Beef brand tick?

By Abbie Burnett

On the outside, clocks look simple. But the plain cover hides the famously complex yet dependable system of gears and circuitry known as clockwork. It's a lot of production for an effective tool. The Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand can look like that. A company working for cattlemen and women, driving demand for high-quality cattle through great eating experiences. But what complex system behind the scenes makes it work?

Kara Lee, assistant director of producer engagement for the brand, answered such questions at the November webinar,

"Getting to know the Certified Angus Beef brand."

She began with the roots, established more than 42 years ago by Angus breeders who believed they had to do better: "Better in terms of raising high-quality cattle that meet consumer expectations, and better in terms of offering the consumer a higher level of confidence that they can receive something that meets their consistent quality expectations every single time."

The only beef brand owned and operated by the American Angus Association, Lee said all funding for the extensive global program comes

from packer commissions, paid because they can sell the branded products for more.

"The way that we build demand is by ultimately meeting our brand promise to consumers—and our licensees who serve them—by having a consistent premium product every single time," she said.

The brand is unique, Lee added, because it owns neither beef nor cattle. It can't buy cattle or have any involvement in the price structure or determining who cattlemen sell to.

Demand, then, is built by the created, pull-through model by which consumers seek the brand by name and consistently have the same great eating experience.

Which makes brand integrity the key to the clock.

Lee said the brand is also unique in tracking every pound from packing plant to those who sell to consumers. "We make sure that at no point along the way is any distributor, processor, retailer or restaurant selling more product than they're buying."

Surveys show 95% of consumers recognize the logo and associate it with quality, she said. By licens-

ing and auditing packing plants, retailers, distributors and restaurants, the brand makes sure that perception stays true. Research even shows a willingness to drive a little farther for a grocery store or restaurant where they can buy beef with the CAB brand.

"When the consumer recognizes our logo and affiliates it with quality, we are able to achieve our overall mission statement, which is all about increasing that demand for registered Angus cattle through the specification-based program," Lee said. "While many pieces in this beef supply chain can feel very segmented, we know they're all very directly tied together in achieving that overall mission."

Despite 2020's struggles, the brand surpassed sales of a billion pounds for the fifth year in a row. Demand, indeed.

But how do cattle make it into the brand? With Rolex-level precision.

First, Lee noted "Angus" in-and-of-itself is not a guaranteed quality level. More than 70 other brands of USDA-certified programs use the Angus word, all of which run the spectrum of quality from

lowest to highest.

Only about three in ten Angus-influenced cattle meet all of CAB's science-based standards. That's why, Lee said, the brand vigilantly protects its three-word name.

"Just talking about Angus beef isn't good enough for the customer today, so it can't be good enough for us as a program," Lee said.

The initial threshold to qualification is simply Angus influence with black hide behind the shoulder, above the flank and in front of the tail head. But no cattle earn the brand before that hide comes off, she said, and each one is evaluated by that USDA grader for all ten carcass specifications.

Of all the Angus-identified cattle, only about 35% make the cut. The four biggest disqualifiers are not enough marbling, out-of-range ribeye size or carcass weight, and back fat thickness of more than an inch.

Of those four, 92% fail for lack of marbling. If that term seems like a consistent talking point, Lee said that's why.

"It's not because we believe in single-trait selection. We know that you have a lot of different

traits that are very important to both a registered or commercial cow herd," she said. "The reason we talk about marbling so much is because it's the number one place where there's money left on the table because a producer missed out on their Certified Angus Beef premiums from not having enough."

The good news is, about 40% of what influences marbling is based on genetics, Lee said.

Beyond that, what happens on the ranch and at the feedlot greatly influences how consumers respond to it.

"What all of this ultimately boils down to is, quality pays," Lee said. "There is a message that has been clearly sent from consumers to producers today, that high-quality beef is worth more to them and they're willing to pay more for it."

Premium genetics and management need premium marketing. That's why the brand will host a second webinar on January 21 tackling grid marketing, retained ownership and how to use information to make better decisions. To learn more and register for that virtual program, visit [cabcattle.com/webinars](http://cabcattle.com/webinars).

### FDA releases antimicrobial use summary report

Domestic sales and distribution of medically important antimicrobial drugs approved for use in food-producing animals increased by 3% between 2018 and 2019. However, the trend of antimicrobial sales for food-producing animals over time shows sales and distribution of 25% less since 2010 and 36% less than 2015, the peak year of antimicrobial drug sales data.

The data comes from FDA's 2019 Summary Report on Antimicrobials Sold or Distributed for Use in Food-Producing Animals. Section 105 of the Animal Drug User Fee Amendments of 2008 (ADUFA 105) requires that animal drug companies annually report to FDA the amount of antimicrobial drugs that they sell or distribute for use in food-producing animals. ADUFA 105 also requires FDA to issue annual summary reports of the sales and distribution data.

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# Researchers develop corn that can weather warming planet

Climate change will affect many agricultural crops, and field corn is likely no exception.

Field corn, the starchy cousin of sweet corn, is a globally important cereal grain used in livestock feed and other products. And it has an Achilles heel: unseasonably warm nights.

"As night-time temperatures rise, corn yields decline. These high temperatures affect an enzyme in maize responsible for storing starch. At higher night time temperatures, that enzyme, called PGD3, stops working, and the corn kernels will not produce as much starch, or will not properly develop," said Camila Ribeiro, a graduate of the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CAL) and former postdoctoral researcher at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Edu-

cation Center.

"Over the next several decades, as we see climate change lead to higher night time temperatures, this could mean farmers won't be able to produce enough corn to stay in business," said Mark Settles, professor in the UF/IFAS horticultural sciences department. "That's a food supply issue and an economic problem."

But Ribeiro and Settles may have a solution. In a new study, they show that a new variety of field corn is productive even when nights are warm. This variety was developed via a novel genetic engineering technique that inserts a copy of a corn gene to make a protein in a new location in the plant's cells. This finding could help inform traditional breeding efforts down the line.

To test how well their new corn variety fared in

the heat, the researchers planted it during March and April at the UF/IFAS Plant Science Research and Education Unit located about 30 minutes south of the main UF campus in Gainesville. Compared to the March plantings, the corn planted in April experienced warmer nights temperatures during kernel development.

The results were striking: the new variety produced 40% more yield under higher temperatures.

"In the field, we had plots planted with engineered and non-engineered plants. They were growing under the same conditions, same temperatures. As we harvested the field, we could see just how much bigger the corn ears were in the new variety under heat stresses. It was very exciting to see," said Ribeiro, who complet-

ed this research as part of her a doctoral studies in plant molecular and cellular biology at UF/IFAS CALS.

"It was exciting because, for people like us who want to figure out how to grow food with climate change, this is a promising result," said Settles, who was Ribeiro's dissertation adviser. Ribeiro now works at the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) Maize and Sorghum in Brazil.

This new corn variety is more productive because the heat sensitive PGD3 enzyme that allows the plant to store starch is getting extra help.

"PGD3 isn't the only enzyme in the cell that catalyzes its specific reaction. You also have PGD1 and PGD2. Unlike PGD3, 1 and 2 aren't sensitive to heat, but they don't operate in

the part of the cell where PGD3 operates, the amyloplast, which is the part of the plant cell that produces starch," Settles said. "We wanted to find a way to move 1 and 2 into the amyloplast. Once there, we predicted they would be able to help kernels grow at higher temperatures."

To reroute these enzymes, Ribeiro and Settles reconfigured their corn plants' genetic code by inserting a part of the gene called Waxy1 in front of Pgd1 and Pgd2 genes. This extra code in the DNA would direct those enzymes to the amyloplasts.

"Our study confirmed that when PGD1 and PGD2 proteins are relocated to the amyloplasts, it results in the characteristic we are looking for, heat resistance," Settles said.

The engineered genes open up the possibility of making new heat resistant

varieties using traditional breeding techniques, the researchers say. Breeders could screen corn plants for heat-resistant forms of PGD3 to try to get the same effect.

"Our study is an example of how genetic engineering techniques can speed up traditional plant breeding processes by giving breeders insight into how genes confer desired traits. Climate change is happening fast, and we need to develop plants that will adapt to this new environment as soon as possible," Settles said.

While such a corn variety may not be commercially available for several years, Ribeiro and Settles are hopeful that their plants will one day help feed a changing world.

The study is published in the journal PNAS.

## Red Angus Foundation sponsors Beef-on-Dairy Project

By Tom Brink, CEO, Red Angus Association of America

There's a genetic revolution taking place in the dairy industry. Increased use of sexed semen on top-producing dairy cows is creating ample numbers of replacement heifers without the need to breed mediocre or lower end cows to dairy bulls. As a result, many dairies are now utilizing beef semen to produce growthier, more marketable calves that are 50% beef and 50% dairy. A typical scenario is to use female-sexed semen on one-third to half of the best cows, and beef semen on everything else. This approach virtually eliminates all low-value dairy steers.

With over 9.3 million dairy cows in the U.S., coupled with active use of artificial insemination, "beef on dairy" has become big business. A rough estimate would be that 7 to 8 million straws of beef semen are now being used by the dairy industry annually, with additional growth expected in the years ahead.

Even though this semen sells for less per unit than

conventional beef semen, it has become a market too big to ignore. That's why the Red Angus Foundation, Inc. is sponsoring a research project in central California to demonstrate that Red Angus genetics can be used successfully to produce fast-growing beef-dairy-cross calves that will excel in the feedlot and hang up valuable carcasses at harvest.

### About the Project

Red Angus has not been extensively utilized in beef-on-dairy applications, though we are aware of some commercial use in the Texas Panhandle and New Mexico region involving both Holstein and Jersey cows. The Visalia California project, funded in part by RAFI, was initiated in the fall of 2019. More than 50 head of Red Angus-sired calves were born to Holstein dams in July and August this year and wear the yellow FCCP tag.

Calves will be grown to around 350 pounds on-site at the calf-growing facility on the dairy of origin before being moved to a small feedlot, also located in

central-California. Eventually, both steers and heifers will be fed out to 1,300 to 1,400 pounds and harvested. Planned data collection includes actual live gains and feed conversion rates on a group basis, along with individual DNA and carcass results.

Many of the project calves are mostly or entirely black-hided since black is dominant to red. However, a few red calves were produced, due to some of the cows being red-carrier Holsteins. White on the head, feet, flank and belly also showed up on some calves which is normal for beef-dairy-cross animals given their black-and-white-spotted dams. Some believe Red Angus does a better job than other breeds in getting rid of the white and producing more solid-colored calves.

More information will be provided on this project as the calves grow and progress during the months ahead. Thanks to RAFI for helping get this important research off the ground and we look forward to its results!

## U.S. protein export markets continue to see change

By Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University

U.S. global meat protein exports have continued to evolve in 2020. Some of the changes this year reflect ongoing trends in global meat markets but the COVID-19 pandemic has also affected protein trade.

Beef exports for the year-to-date through October are down 5.3 percent year over year after dropping sharply in May and June and then recovering from July to October. Total pork exports in 2020 are up 19.9 percent, driven by exceptionally strong exports to China, along with

Taiwan and Hong Kong. Broilers exports so far in 2020 are up 4.2 percent year over year, with exports to Mexico, the largest market nearly unchanged from one year ago, but up sharply to China.

Mexico is arguably the market most impacted by COVID-19 from a U.S.,

and specifically a beef, perspective. Exports of beef to Mexico are down 37.9 percent year over year, with declines from last year every month in 2020. Mexico is suffering a devastating recession, the result of current federal policies aggravated by the pandemic.

The biggest changes across all meat markets relate to China. China has dramatically increased protein imports in 2020 after suffering from the devastating loss of pork production due to African Swine Fever (ASF) in 2018-2019. So far this year, China has accounted for nearly 30 percent of U.S. pork exports. This follows a 16 percent share of U.S. pork exports to China in 2019. Pork exports to China represented less than seven percent of total pork exports from 2014-2018 but previously peaked at nearly 13 percent of annual exports in 2011.

China is the number two market for broiler exports in 2020. Broiler exports to China have been very low in recent years, though China did account for ten to eleven percent of U.S. broiler exports from 2006-2009.


China has been a rapidly growing market for global beef imports in recent years and is the largest beef importing country since 2018. This reflects underlying growth in beef demand in China, accentuated by the protein short-

ages due to ASF. China has been a minor market for U.S. beef but is growing rapidly. The China share of U.S. beef exports exceeded one percent for the first time in 2019 and is the number seven beef export market at 2.9 percent of total beef exports thus far in 2020. Beef consumption in China is expected to continue growing and, assuming no additional political disruptions, China could be one of the top exports markets for U.S. beef in the next couple of years.

Broiler meat exports are heavily dominated by Mexico, with China increasing from zero exports in the first ten months of 2019 to the number two market in 2020, to supplement ASF related protein shortages. Broiler meat is exported to a vast array of smaller markets. It is interesting for example, that broiler exports to Cuba in 2020 have exceeded exports to Vietnam and Canada. The top twelve broiler export markets only account for about 68 percent of broiler exports (compared to 94+ percent of beef and pork exports).

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