

David Hallauer  
District Extension Agent, Crops & Soils

### **Soil Sampling Tips – Hay/Pasture**

When we think about the factors affecting cool season grass production in a given year (weather/harvest timing/grazing height/etc...) one of the more commonly complimented – and cursed – is fertilizer. In our cool season grass systems, it's a big yield driver and fall can be a great time to 'turn the page' to next year's production by addressing fertility needs.

While we can tell a lot by a pasture's production or hay field's yield, or even how they look from afar, the best way to manage fertility starts with a soil sample. Fall is a good time to do so, providing time to get results, formulate a plan, and manage application.

It's not difficult to collect a soil sample, but it does take attention to detail for best results. Start with a sampling plan/pattern. If there are poor areas or trouble spots, sample them separately from the rest of the field. Fertility might *not* be the issue, but an inexpensive soil test is a good way to rule it out. If you want to start teasing out more differences, consider zone sampling, by dividing the acreage into zones of different slope or soil type or management. It doesn't mean you have to apply nutrients in a variable rate manner, but it can provide greater information than a single sample and help you fine tune your nutrient management program.

For greatest accuracy, use a soil probe (available for check one from any District Office). This helps with consistent depth and core size which can be very important for attaining best results (a shovel or spade can be used, but requires a little more work for the same accuracy of results as a probe). Phosphorous and Potassium testing is best done to a six-inch depth. Samples for pH can be pulled to the same depth or for more fine tuning – three to four inches deep. *NOTE: dry soils can make soil sampling more difficult. If you can't maintain a consistent sampling depth, it might be best to wait until better conditions prevail.*

Take 15-20 cores per area sampled. It's easier to do less, but studies have shown a pretty large degree of accuracy once the number of cores per sample drops below a dozen.

Depending on the sample package, soil tests will cost \$10-15/sample plus shipping. Samples can be submitted to the K-State Soil Testing Lab via any District Office. Many ag retailers will also submit samples as well. As you are sampling, note in your mind to repeat the sampling process in two to four years. Getting on a regular soil sampling schedule can help you monitor soil test changes as well as how fields might be responding to your fertility program.

For more information on sampling ideas and procedures, contact me via any of our Meadowlark Extension District Office or e-mail me at [dhallaue@ksu.edu](mailto:dhallaue@ksu.edu).

Ross Mosteller  
District Extension Agent, Livestock & Natural Resources

### **November 5 - Election Day or More?**

If my memory serves, this is the second time this year that I've referred to politics in a column, but I'm truly not hoping for anything more than drawing you in to read. Not only is November 5 election day, it is an important implementation date for the updated federal animal traceability rule. Does this mean that livestock producers will see marked change on that day? Not necessarily, but let's take a look at the change and what it means.

In the spring of 2024, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced mandatory EID tags for certain bovine classes. This builds upon the 2013 ruling that requested visual ID tags. The original rule stated that livestock moved interstate must be officially identified if: sexually intact & 18 months of age or older; all Dairy regardless of age, breed & sex; all Rodeo or Exhibition animals - nothing changes there. The change is that electronic tags will be used to track and contain animal disease outbreaks, just as the metal identification visual ID clips did.

Producers are likely familiar with the "silver bright" tags in animals going across state lines or orange "bangs" tags in heifers vaccinated for brucellosis. However, those metal clips will soon be an artifact of the past. Starting November 5, 2024, veterinarians will not be tagging with metal clips, but instead will use electronic identification (EID) tags.

The EID tags replacing the metal clips are USDA 840, showing the country code for the United States (840), with the official USDA shield, followed by 12 additional digits unique to each tag. 840 tags provide animal identification to trace animal movements in the event of animal disease outbreak. The 15 numbers can be visually read off of the EID button, or can be read with an EID reader or wand. 840 tags are UNLAWFUL to remove. They may be a round button with an electronic chip or matched set of that button and visual management tag.

What does this mean for producers? Nothing has changed on the class or type of livestock required to have official identification, simply that visual metal band type tags are no longer accepted and EID 840 tags will now become the industry standard. Here are a few of the big points to remember.

- Animals with the old metal tags already in their ears are "grandfathered in" and will not need new 840 EID tags.
- Producers will need to establish a premise ID number or work with and use the premise ID number of their veterinarian.
- You or your veterinarian may put in 840 EID ID only tags. Vets will put in 840 EID OCV tags and will record those EID numbers when heifers are vaccinated for brucellosis.
- While electronic readers can be used, no additional equipment will be needed to read the tags, as long as they are placed in the middle rib of the ear with the 15-digit number readable from the backside of the ear.

More information can be found at the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) website at: <https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/division-of-animal-health/animal-disease-traceability>. Forms for establishing a premise ID number, as well as sources to order official EID tags can be found on this website. Additionally, the U.S.CattleTrace website has information related to animal disease traceability. <https://www.uscattletrace.org/>

October 4, 2024

Laura Phillips  
District Extension Agent, Horticulture

No news article this week.

Teresa Hatfield  
District Extension Agent, Family and Community Wellness

## **Know Your Numbers: Cholesterol**

They say that the older we get, the more unique we become. Aging is an unavoidable part of living and a different process for each of us. Taking good care of ourselves when we are younger can impact how we age. K-State Research and Extension offers a program that looks at the keys to aging gracefully. One pretty simple thing is to pay attention to your health numbers. Numbers flood our lives: PINs, phone numbers, passwords, identification numbers, but specific health care numbers you need to pay attention to.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance found in the blood. It is essential for building and maintaining healthy cells and hormones. Around twenty-five percent of cholesterol comes from the food you eat, and the body makes the rest. There are two types of cholesterol: low-density lipoprotein (LDL), which is known as bad cholesterol, and high-density lipoprotein (HDL), which is known as good cholesterol. Too much LDL cholesterol creates plaque that can accumulate and clog our arteries, causing heart disease and stroke. HDL helps to clean the artery walls and carry away the excess bad cholesterol. There are no symptoms to tell you if your cholesterol is too high, and many people do not know they are at risk. Certain risk factors for high LDL, such as diet, adequate exercise, and weight, are within your control. Other risk factors are outside your control, such as family history, age, and sex (postmenopausal women are at the most significant risk).

You can check your cholesterol through a simple blood test. The American Heart Association recommends a "fasting lipoprotein profile" every five years, starting at age 20. This test will measure your blood's total cholesterol, including LDL, HDL, and triglycerides. Additional screenings are recommended for men over age 45 and women over age 50 with total cholesterol of 200mg/dl or higher. The desirable total cholesterol should be below 200, the LDL from 100 to 129 mg/dl, the HDL 60+ mg/dl, and Triglycerides lower than 150 mg/dl.

Keep track of your health numbers by writing them down in a journal, a medical log, or on an App. This will help you track your health patterns over time and set health goals. Dietary lifestyle changes can help lower your numbers.

- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Avoid fatty foods high in cholesterol, such as processed meats, fried foods, and whole-fat dairy products.
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and nonfat or low-fat dairy products.
- Eat foods high in good, unsaturated fats (for example, olive or canola oil).
- Do not drink alcohol in excess.
- Exercise moderately for at least 150 minutes per week.

Make regular appointments with your healthcare provider to ensure you make the most out of preventative care.

October 4, 2024

Cindy Williams  
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No news article this week.