



## Kansas farmers and ranchers remain resilient after wildfire

By Greg Doering,  
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Kansas Farm Bureau

Stephanie Dickerson spent an “eternity” on Dec. 15, 2021, huddled with her husband, son, a neighbor and a hired hand in the cab of a pickup truck as a wildfire made the doors too hot to touch. It didn’t matter that they were parked in the middle of a green wheat field. It didn’t matter that a volunteer firefighter was dousing the vehicle with water from a tanker truck. The heat was still seeping into the cab.

“They basically poured water on us for about 15 or 20 minutes,” Dickerson says. “The only thing not burned in that field was the circle where we were all sitting with the tanker truck.”

It wasn’t Dickerson’s first close call with fire that day, and it wouldn’t be the last for the fourth-generation rancher who, alongside her family, operates the Bar S Ranch in the Smoky Hills region north of Russell near the town of Paradise.

They raise purebred Angus, red Angus and Charolais they primarily sell to other ranchers looking to incorporate those genetics into their herds. The Bar S has a retained ownership program in place for its commercial cattle, managing the herd through the processing stage to collect carcass data.

The ranch and surrounding territory became the heart of what’s called the Four County Fire that charred more than 120,000 acres — or just shy of 200 square miles — across portions of Ellis, Osborne, Rooks and Russell counties. Fires across central and western Kansas burned another 40,000 acres that day.

### Recipe for disaster

The groundwork for the December disaster was set long before fires swept through the area. A wet spring caused rapid growth across the prairie, but the months-long drought that followed not only dried out the ground but also withered the ample grass and desiccated fallen trees.

Sustained southern winds in excess of 70 mph pushed the temperature in Paradise to 75 degrees on Dec. 15. The atmosphere served as a kiln, drawing every ounce of moisture from the vegetation and creating a tinderbox primed to ignite at the slightest spark.

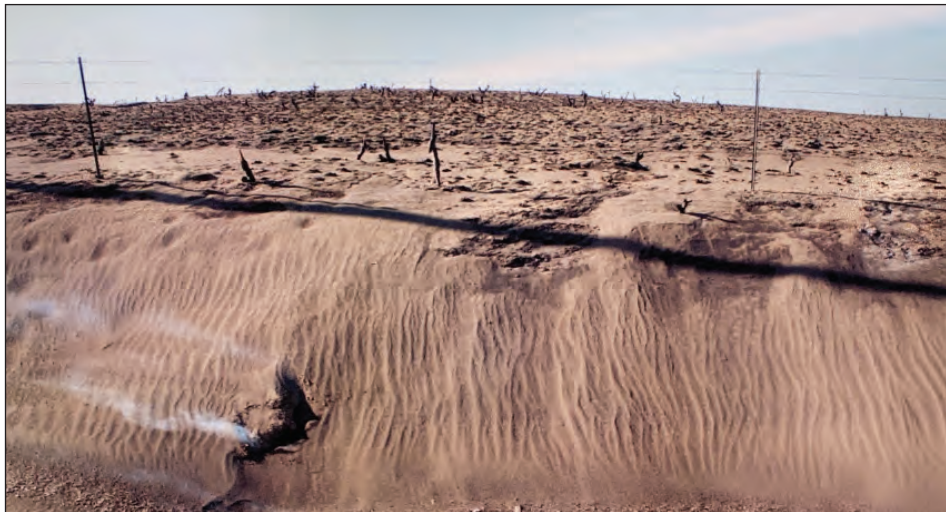
By early afternoon, it became a question of not if but when a spark would ignite a firestorm. Volunteer firefighter and rancher Dustin Finkenbinder says he was helping his children unload FFA fruit baskets at the Waldo Community Center a little after 2 p.m. when he heard the first siren go off. “You just felt absolutely sick to your stomach because you knew it was going to be bad,” he says. “No matter if you got there in time or not.”

### Invisible danger

The combination of high winds and drought created a dust storm so bad it limited visibility to less than a quarter mile, making it nearly impossible to spot a fire from any



Neighbors helping neighbors, even while dealing with their own losses, was one of the hallmarks of the Four County Fire that burned more than 120,000 acres in December 2021.



A dust storm was created by the high winds and drought that limited visibility to less than a quarter of a mile, making it difficult to even spot the fire, or determine the path it would take.



Victims of the wildfire lost homes, livestock, buildings and hay as it raged across the countryside.

distance or judge its path.

“We actually had to find that first fire by smell,” Finkenbinder says. “Once we found it, we got to work on it. We were actually making some progress, and that’s when the real wind started — we got those gusts of 100 mph or more.”

Finkenbinder says the closest any of the volunteer firefighters had ever come to an event like Dec. 15 was a fire near Wilson Lake, about 30 miles southeast of Paradise, where the winds blew 60 to 70 mph. But there was one significant difference. “It was clear skies and sunny,” he says of the Wilson Lake fire. “This looked like midnight at 5 o’clock in the evening.”

Finkenbinder says the last call related to the Four County Fire came in

at about 8 p.m. on Christmas Eve, meaning volunteer firefighters spent the ten days before Christmas battling fires and watching hotspots to preserve what hadn’t yet burned.

### Helping a neighbor

Stephanie Dickerson and her family were in their barn preparing show cattle for the Cattleman’s Congress in Oklahoma City. Around noon, Dickerson noticed the wind picking up, enough that it lifted the roof off the rafters by several inches.

“I told my husband, ‘This is not normal,’” she says. “If there’s a fire, it’s going to be really bad.”

A couple of hours later, neighbors called asking for help evacuating their horses because a fire had broken out near their homeplace. Dickerson’s husband David and one of their sons got in one truck with a trailer in tow while Dickerson and a hired hand followed in a second for what is usually a ten- to 15-minute drive.

By the time their convoy arrived 45 minutes later, the neighbors had turned the horses loose to fend for themselves. The

Dickerson crew began the trek home, heading south back to the Bar S. That’s when the real trouble began. David was driving in the lead position going around a curve when the wind caught the trailer and flipped it and the truck on its side. The trailer on Stephanie’s vehicle also blew over, but it disconnected from the hitch without wrecking her truck.

The occupants in David’s truck were extracted from the vehicle unharmed and climbed into Stephanie’s truck. They drove north until they hit a wall of fire. They turned around and tried backtracking, but soon they were surrounded by fire.

“I took the ditch and drove for a quarter mile with fire going over the top of us,” Dickerson says. “It was a surreal moment. There were flames shooting under the hood and over the top of the windshield. The plastic mirrors melted and dripped off the truck.”

They eventually met up with the volunteer firefighters near where the truck and trailer over-

turned. From there they returned to the neighbor’s house, picked up an additional person and continued on in search of a way out before getting trapped in the wheat field.

### Taking inventory

Near Waldo, another green wheat field was the only thing that stood between the fire and Finkenbinder’s home. Thankfully, a lower amount of flammable material around the field and the wheat’s higher moisture content at the time helped extinguish the fire.

“It burned the ditch off next to one of our green wheat fields,” he says. “If that hadn’t been wheat, it would have made it to our farm and our cattle and our hay. We were very lucky.”

Tanner Lyle, another rancher in the area, says he escaped the fire relatively unharmed, losing about ten miles of fence, a calving shed and other items to the fire and wind-related damage. Lyle had cattle near some of the worst parts of the fire, grazing on milo stalks that had been stripped bare by the wind, preventing the spread of fire. His in-laws were less fortunate, losing their house and more than 80 percent of their herd.

“They spent years developing their cattle herd and they’re pretty much starting from scratch,” he says.

Stephanie Dickerson could see the fire’s impact even before they made it home, just as dusk was settling over the countryside.

“As we got closer, we could see the tree belt north and west of the house was on fire, our house was on fire and we lost five barns,” she says, before ticking off the rest of the inventory stolen by flames: more than 200 head of cattle, another house, 55 miles of fence, more than 4,000 big round haybales and her three dogs.

“I had left our dogs in the house thinking that was going to be the safest place for them,” she says. “Our house was on fire and I’m a mess, telling my husband we’ve got to stop. I’ve got to see if I’m able to save the dogs. But in your mind, you know you’re not going to be able to save them.”

Dickerson ran down her driveway, pulling the hood on her coat up to block the flying embers from settling in her hair. She grabbed

her purse out of a pickup that had two tires fully engulfed with flames. Her husband grabbed the calf book and tagging box from another vehicle. They were the only personal items retrieved.

### Outpouring of support

Lyle says he was able to fix his fence by the fall, and with enough moisture, the pastures will return to their previous production in a season or two. For others, like his in-laws, the scars will take longer to heal. The generosity of fellow farmers and ranchers helped soften the blow for everyone.

“I’ve been impressed with the generosity of the ag industry and people who sent donations,” Lyle says.

Dickerson likened the outpouring of support to attending her own funeral.

“You get to see people that show up who care about you,” she says. “People we didn’t even know came. They just wanted to help. The day after the fire we had probably 300 people show up at our house asking, ‘What can we do?’”

Friends offered the Dickersons a place to stay as they figured out where to begin the recovery process, which was aided by more volunteers than they ever expected.

“We had between 20 and 30 FFA chapters show up on weekends, give up their spring break or show up for an afternoon to help us with cleanup, help us tear out fences — anything we asked them to do,” Dickerson says. “Those kids were just great.”

County Farm Bureaus and the state office joined other organizations to host a meeting to provide information on resources and support for farmers and ranchers affected by the wildfires shortly after Christmas. More than 300 people were able to attend in person, and another 120 watched the meeting online.

### “Just what you do”

Nearly a year after the fire, Dickerson and her husband have had plenty of time to replay the events of Dec. 15 over in their minds, to second-guess their decision to leave their home, herd and most of their worldly holdings to the whims of a wind-fueled wildfire and help a neighbor.

Their minds haven’t changed a bit.

“I can honestly tell you that if put in the same situation again, I would do exactly what we did,” Dickerson says. “If someone called me today, I’d go and help a neighbor. That’s just what you do.”

### Help with prevention and recovery

If you’re interested in helping Kansas farmers and ranchers recover from devastating wildfires, the Kansas Livestock Association offers a place to donate. These donations are tax deductible, and all proceeds are distributed to producers impacted by wildfires.

Visit [www.kla.org/resources/wildfire-relief-resources](http://www.kla.org/resources/wildfire-relief-resources) for more information or to donate.

Preventing wildfires takes all of us. Whether you live in the city, a suburb or a rural area, being cautious when it comes to fire is important for everyone’s safety. The Office of the State Fire Marshal website, [firemarshal.ks.gov](http://firemarshal.ks.gov), offers prevention tips for home fires, wildfires and more. Also, be sure to check out the free alarm program, Get Alarmed Kansas, which allows trained volunteers to install free smoke alarms in homes.



## Representing All of Agriculture

By Joe Newland, Kansas Farm Bureau President

When I was elected president of Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB) earlier this month, it was an incredible honor and a very humbling experience. I don't know if I'll ever be able to adequately express my gratitude for those who supported my candidacy, but I'm excited to work with our members to advance KFB's mission to strengthen agriculture through advocacy, education and service.

I have considered myself a farmer ever since my first ride on the combine, which was long before I was able to operate one by myself. From that formative experience, I knew I wanted to spend the rest of my life caring for the land, tending crops and livestock and raising my family.

About the time I was able to safely operate equipment on my own, I discovered FFA. It helped me better understand the world of agriculture

extends far beyond the farm gate. My FFA adviser helped me discover my lifelong passion of promoting agriculture, both as a business and as a way of life.

After marrying my wife, Dana, I became a Farm Bureau member for the first time because I had to have insurance. I quickly learned the value of a membership went well beyond protecting our home, cars and farm. We thought we were buying protection from financial loss, but we had actually purchased comprehensive coverage securing our way of life.

As I began seeking out ways to advocate for agriculture, the Wilson County Farm Bureau stood out as a place where I could really make an impact for the in-

dustry and my community. My work there gave me the confidence to expand my leadership through civic groups, the local school board, a bank board, Kansas Farm Bureau committees and eventually representing southeast Kansas on KFB's board of directors before serving in the Kansas House.

The support of my wife and our four children has been instrumental in allowing me to spend time away from the farm pursuing these opportunities. I have no doubt they will continue to support and counsel me as I take on this new endeavor. I use "we" to acknowledge all the help I've received from friends and family that's helped me succeed over the years.

A big difference now is "we" extends to every border of Kansas. I am no longer a member of a local board, a district board or the Kansas House, all of which represented a part of the whole. I'm now tasked with helping ensure farms and ranches across the state – from Lenexa to Liberal and Bird City to Baxter Springs – prosper.

The challenges you face on the farm, the issues you see in your schools and the obstacles you notice in your community aren't just yours, they're mine too. We must view these as opportunities rather than barriers. I have no doubt Kansas Farm Bureau can solve the most vexing matters facing agriculture today because I've experienced firsthand how the

organization's grassroots structure keeps us at the forefront of what matters.

Of all the titles I've held, farmer is still the one I'm most proud of. I've come a long way from that first combine ride, but I've had plenty of help along the way. I'll continue to rely on farmers and ranchers across the state to make sure KFB is successful as we tackle issues like water, taxes, regulation and more. Together we will represent all of agriculture.

"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.

# K-State plans four-part series on leasing farmland

By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service

Kansas State University will host a four-part series on land leasing strategies at 34 locations in Kansas beginning Jan. 18.

The series is titled, The Power of Negotiation and Communication: Land Leasing Strategies for Midwestern Agriculture Women, though K-State Research and Extension farm economist Robin Reid says the sessions are open to all participants.

"In Kansas, agricultural land covers more than 49 million acres," Reid said. "Of that land, 55% is farmed or grazed with a lease agreement. Many farms and ranches rely on leased ground to have an adequate amount of land to maintain a viable farming operation."

Reid said the program – held each week through Feb. 8 on Wednesday evenings – will teach principles of managing land leases as a tenant and landlord. "The goal is for participants to acquire skills they can apply directly

their own agricultural lease situation," she said.

Topics that will be covered include:

- An overview of the agricultural economy, and how it affects land values and lease rates.
- Advantages and disadvantages of various types of leases.
- Kansas lease law and fence law.
- Why a lease agreement should be in writing and what it should include.
- Best practices of negotiating and communicating about a lease.
- Conservation programs and practices.

Reid said women are encouraged to attend because they have routinely become lease managers due to family circumstances.

"Women often become landowners through inheritance of a family estate or because they outlive their spouse," she said. "Suddenly becoming a landowner and working with a farm tenant can be particularly chal-

lenging if you do not have knowledge of current farming practices, lease laws and going market rates."

Reid said the program also will be helpful to farmers and ranchers who sometimes find themselves working with multiple landowners that, she notes, "are becoming more geographically and generationally removed from agriculture."

More information about the series is available online at [www.agmanager.info/events](http://www.agmanager.info/events) (look for the link to The Power of Negotiation and Communication.) An online option is available for those not able to make it to one of the 34 sites in Kansas. The program will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Central time) on four consecutive Wednesdays.

Information also is available at local Extension offices in Kansas.

The program is made possible by a grant from the North Central Extension Risk Management Education Center and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## Flickner Innovation Farm to present current projects at workshop

The Flickner Innovation Farm will host a January 12 workshop to present up-to-date outcomes from the farm's technology implementation and projects studying natural resource use. There will also be a presentation from NASA about how their programs can bene-

fit farm management.

The workshop will take place at the Inman Community Center and will feature a range of experts speaking on a variety of subjects, including groundwater nitrate dynamics, protein sampling and grain quality, using cover crops for soil

health, irrigation management, and more.

Organizers say the investigations from Kansas State University and University of Kansas researchers, local producers, and industry partners are helping to fine-tune current and emerging technologies that

conserve water use while improving water quality and soil health.

"We have done just about everything this year, from looking at the water quality in our wells to chatting with scientists from NASA about the satellites in space," said Ray Flickner, who owns and operates the Flick-

ner Innovation Farm, located near Moundridge, Kan. "I'm excited to let people know what we've learned, in hopes that it will make a difference for other producers."

The program begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. The event is free, and lunch will be provided. More information,

including registration, is available online from the Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment (KCARE). Those interested in attending should register with KCARE by January 9.

The Innovation Farm is a partnership between Flickner, university scientists, watershed specialists and industry leaders. Together, they are conducting studies in a large-farm setting to identify the most efficient technologies and techniques for Kansas producers to use on their own farms.

Several K-State faculty members are conducting research at the Innovation Farm, including studies about soil health and cover crops; nutrient management; weed management; protein mapping and grain quality studies; and investigations on the effects of long-term cropping systems on fertilizer requirements.

In addition to presentations about ongoing projects and upcoming research, the meeting will also include opportunities to meet with vendors and other industry representatives.



As I write this, we have a winter storm predicted to come in this week. The kids and I have spent the last three days trying to get everything together and make as many preparations as we can. Somehow, every time I check an item off my list, three more get added. Like many other events we prepare for, there is only so much we can do and the rest we just have to pray and hope for the best. Fortunately, this event does not look to last exceptionally long, and we are not calving or lambing yet.

I know if I lived a little farther north this would be the norm and not a special weather event. I am not sure how I would survive if I had weeks of this. I guess you get used to it and adapt but I may not be tough enough. In any case, my hats off to those of you up North, you are better, tougher ranchers than I am.

We have been moving cows to warmer spots and feed to places it will be handier. The ewes all have barns they can get into, and we have prepared the waterers the best we can. Someday I will have all frost-free waterers, I hope. This cold front will test even the most frost-free of waterers. The only winners out of all of this will be the dogs; they get to spend the next three or four nights inside.

I know I am preaching to the choir; all of you are in the same boat I am. Okay, maybe most of you are in a more organized boat, but we are all making those last-minute preparations to make sure our animals are cared for as best we can. We all go the extra mile and, in many ways, put our own welfare in danger for our livestock. Yet the animal rights crowd will call us out and cast some doubt in our customer's minds that we have our animals' best interests in mind. My guess is that you are all like me. I will not get much sleep the next few nights. I will lay in bed and listen to that cold wind blow and stew about whether there was more I could have done. I will pace the living room the next three days looking outside and wonder how the cows and ewes are doing. Last week I watched the videos of the blizzard in the

states north of me and my heart hurt for those producers. In all the videos I saw, the livestock came out of the storm just fine and all of that was due to the extra precautions those ranchers took.

Here too, I know that I put out enough feed and made sure they have adequate water. Each place has good protection, and the livestock are smarter than we give them credit for. In many ways they are smarter than humans. Need proof? Go check out the local mall and see how many are wearing shorts and hoodies in the bitter cold. The hard part for me is knowing that if I don't disturb them, they will hunker down out of the wind and be fine. Unless I can't stop myself and have to go look at them. Again, proving that many times the cows are smarter than we are.

This is one of those times that we, as livestock owners, should take videos showing the extra miles and effort we go to make sure that our animals are well cared for. We also need to show them how well adapted our animals are to the elements. In many cases the public's only point of reference is their dog or cat that spends all of its time indoors and has lost all its natural adaptation to cold weather. I mentioned that my dogs come in on the bitter cold nights, I get the feeling they really don't like being indoors and would rather be outside.

I mean to take videos and pictures. I want to post to social media, so why don't I? I am too busy taking care of the animals that I am accused of not caring about. Sorry, that is a sore point to me. It is hard to tell others about the good we do, when we are consumed with getting the job done. Taking videos and pictures takes away from that. However, it is a sign of our times and something we all should be doing.

I'd better close this column and get back to battenning down the hatches. By this evening everything should be done but I promise you I will be nervous as a cat for the next few days. I know we will come out of this storm fine but that won't keep me from worrying. Here's to warmer weather and green grass.



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# U.S. Senate can stabilize our agricultural workforce and ease pressure on American pocketbooks

**By Beth Ford, Land O' Lakes president and CEO**  
 Right now, stressed American consumer budgets are paying the price for inaction on labor that could help reduce food prices. Farmers, food producers and rural communities are currently facing significant challenges. The impact of drought and water access is crushing production; supply chain challenges resulting from COVID disruptions and the war in Ukraine have brought instability in commodity markets and the lack of access to critical crop nutrients. This year alone, 6.4 million acres were not planted because of disasters including flooding and drought.

Food security is national security. We must control the factors we can – enabling farm labor immigration first among them. This labor crisis is impacting our nation's ability to grow and produce the food we need and at this critical juncture we have an opportunity to reform our broken immigration system. In March, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan Farm Workforce Modernization Act. This important piece of legislation would increase the supply of farm workers, help lower food prices at the store and ensure people in this nation and around the world have access to food at a time of high inflation and global food insecurity. At Land O'Lakes, our farmer and retail member-owned cooperative brings people together to find solutions for tough problems facing our country. Right now, we need leaders on both sides of the aisle to find a compromise that will advance

ag labor reform during the lame duck session. We are approximately 2.5 million workers short of the necessary levels to meet production needs. Agricultural workers here on H-2A visas help fill the void. While more than 90 percent of farms are still family-owned, they rely heavily on hardworking individuals who work with and for them to deliver the food that feeds the nation and world. This workforce is heavily supported by immigration. Consider the numbers: Immigrants make up 22 percent of workers in the U.S. food supply chain. Without immigrants, our food supply would be significantly compromised. While farmers have increased wages, they are still unable to attract workers for these labor-intensive jobs. Without the ability to access hard working, skilled labor, crops are being left in the field, opportunities to increase production and lower costs are being wasted. A study

published in the Journal of Conservation and Recycling found that 33.7 percent of hand-harvested field crops in California went unharvested in 2019. Now, produce prices are projected to increase by 40 percent. Nearly 20 percent of U.S. produce never left the farm this year due to a lack of farm labor. We have reached the tipping point. The economic impact lost by inaction is serious and is now directly impacting our food security and prices on the U.S. retail shelf. That is why the U.S. Senate must act now to build on the House proposal and pass the Affordable and Secure Food Act in the lame duck session. This bill would not only allow more workers to come into the country every year to help bring in the harvest, but it allows the workers and families that have been working here for years and have become part of the fabric

of farms and communities, to achieve legal status in a smart, safe manner. The bill would crack down on illegal immigration by requiring employers to use the E-Verify system which will make it much harder for someone with fake documents to get a job in the U.S. Everyone is concerned about securing our borders, and the agriculture industry is ready to

do our part, as well. This legislation also provides that pathway. Advancing this legislation is critical to the nation. All Americans should be concerned about the consequence inaction will have on global food security and a safe and affordable food supply at home. We ask leaders in the Senate to act quickly and decisively.

## Rabobank: what does the future of the U.S. beef supply hold?

Rabobank's fourth-quarter beef report shows cattle prices are generally favorable across the country, but consumer confidence is falling which could signal problems for the beef industry. The big question is whether beef prices will be impacted by supply-side pressure or the demand side. With the U.S. staring down the barrel of a potential 400,000- to 500,000-metric-ton annual loss in production, RaboBank expects the decline in the country's beef production will not be met by production growth in other major exporting countries. This is without considering any other increases in global beef demand over the same period. Consumers will need to pay to access available supply, given the supply pressures in many markets, which could create a strong upside to prices and the redistribution of trade volumes.



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# GRASS & GRAIN Our Daily Bread

\*\*\*\*\* By G&G Area Cooks \*\*\*\*\*

## Claire Martin, Salina, Wins Final Grass & Grain Recipe Contest Of 2022

Winner Claire Martin, Salina:  
**BACON-WRAPPED PORK TENDERLOIN**

- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 2 pounds pork tenderloin
- 4 slices bacon
- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup

Combine seasonings in a bowl. Rub over pork. Place in a baking dish. Wrap with bacon. Brush with oil. Pour milk, water and soup over pork tenderloin. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 to 60 minutes or until meat reaches 145-155 degrees. Remove from oven. Tent with foil and let stand 10 minutes before slicing. Makes 6 servings.

\*\*\*\*\*

- Jackie Doud, Topeka: PRESERVE COOKIES**
- 1/2 cup shortening
  - 1 package vanilla pudding (dry)
  - 1 egg
  - 1 cup flour
  - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
  - 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
  - 1/4 teaspoon salt
  - 1 cup dry oatmeal
  - Egg white
  - White sugar
  - Chopped nuts
- Preserves, your choice
- Cream shortening, dry pudding mix and egg until lightly creamed. Add flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, salt and oatmeal. Shape into small balls. Dip each ball in egg white then roll in sugar and nuts. Press hole down in middle and fill with preserves. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Kellee George, Shawnee: BROCCOLI BACON RAISIN SALAD**
- 1 bunch fresh broccoli, washed, drained & broken into florets
  - 1/2 cup chopped red onion
  - 1 cup chopped celery
  - 1 pound bacon, fried & crumbled
  - 1/2 cup sunflower seeds
  - 1/2 cup raisins
- Dressing:
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
  - 1/4 cup sugar
  - 2 tablespoons vinegar
- Combine salad ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Set aside. Combine dressing ingredients together. Pour dressing over salad ingredients. Stir to blend. Serve chilled.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Millie Conger, Tecumseh: STUFFED MUSHROOMS**
- 1 pound large fresh mushrooms
  - 6 tablespoons butter
  - 1 cup chopped onion
  - 1 cup soft bread crumbs
  - 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
  - 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
  - 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- Rinse mushrooms and pat dry. Remove stems (chop stems and set aside). In a large skillet melt butter. Brush mushroom caps with melted butter and place on a lightly buttered shallow baking pan. To remaining butter in the skillet add onions and reserved mushrooms stems. Sauté 2 minutes. Add bread crumbs, cheese, walnuts, salt and pepper. Stir lightly. Spoon into mushroom caps, piling high. Bake at 350 degrees for 2 minutes. Serve hot.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Kimberly Edwards, Stillwater, Oklahoma: BAKED SQUASH WITH SAUSAGE**
- 2 acorn squash
  - 4 tablespoons pure maple syrup
  - 2 tablespoons butter
  - 8 ounces Italian sausage
- Cut both squash in half and clean seeds from cavity. Place a quarter of the maple syrup, butter and sausage into each half. Place squash on baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes or until fork-tender.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Annette Reilly, Abilene: "Here's a different recipe. One can substitute pork cutlets for the cube steak. Throw it into the crock-pot and enjoy later!"**
- CUBE STEAK MEDLEY**
- 4 cube steaks, cut in half
  - 4 to 5 potatoes, cut lengthwise (or quarter if large)
  - 4 carrots, cut into 2-inch lengths
  - 4 ribs celery, cut into 2-inch lengths (save leafy top for layering atop dish)
  - 2 sweet onions, thinly sliced
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Spray a nonstick coating into a 5- to 6-quart crock-pot. Layer potatoes in bottom followed by carrots, celery, and half the onion slices. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Layer cube steaks atop vegetables. Layer remaining onions atop steak followed by leafy celery tops. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours; turn to low and cook an additional 3-4 hours. Serves 4-6 farm appetites. Great as leftovers!
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Rose Edwards, Stillwater, Oklahoma: CHEDDAR CHEESE SPREAD**
- 1 pound grated sharp Cheddar cheese
  - 1 cup chopped walnuts
  - 1 cup mayonnaise
  - 1/4 cup finely diced green onion
- Crackers

- Combine all ingredients and mix well. Pack into a bowl and refrigerate until firm. Serve on crackers.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- There were a few Holiday Contest recipes that did not make it in. They are printed below.*
- Anna Kusmaul, Allen: RATTLESNAKE TAILS**
- 1 pound sausage
  - 8 ounces cream cheese
  - 2 cans crescent rolls (8-count), separated into triangles
  - 1 tablespoon fresh jalapeno, chopped (1 large pepper)
  - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Cook and drain sausage. Lay on paper towels to absorb grease. Mix in cream cheese, jalapeno and garlic. Drop about a spoonful onto each strip of dough. Roll up and bake according to can directions.
- NOTE: If you prefer, you can omit the jalapeno. Freezes well.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Loretta Shepard, Helena, Oklahoma: "This is the best potato soup!"**
- POTATO SOUP**
- 6 cups cubed potatoes (red ones are best)
  - 1 cup diced celery
  - 1 cup sliced carrots
  - 1/2 cup chopped onion
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - 1 teaspoon pepper
  - 1 or 2 teaspoons parsley flakes
  - 2 chicken bouillon cubes
  - 2 tablespoons flour
  - 2 cups water
  - 3 cups milk
  - 8 ounces process American cheese, cubed
- Combine potatoes, celery, carrots, onion, bouillon cubes, parsley flakes, salt, pepper and water in a 4-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to low. Simmer 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Blend flour into 1/4 cup milk to form a smooth paste. Stir into soup. Add remaining milk and cheese. Cook over medium heat until thickened, stirring frequently. Serve with crackers or cornbread.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Dorothy Wulfkuhle, Carbondale: HAWAIIAN CHICKEN**
- 1 whole chicken or the meaty pieces of 2 chickens
  - 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 cup tomato sauce or ketchup
  - 1 teaspoon chile pepper
  - 1/2 cup brown sugar
  - 2 tablespoons vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons corn starch
- Juice from a 15-ounce can of pineapple chunks (reserve pineapple)
- Brown chicken. and arrange in baking dish. In a saucepan heat remaining ingredients until thick. Add pineapple and spoon over chicken and bake until done, about 1 hour at 350 degrees.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Millie Conger, Tecumseh: CHEESY POTATOES**
- 8 Russet potatoes
  - 1/2 cup grated Gruyère cheese
  - 1/2 cup sour cream
  - 2 eggs
- Heat oven to 400 degrees. Bake potatoes until tender. Cut tops off potatoes and scoop out flesh from tops and bottoms into bowl. Discard top skins. Mash potatoes until smooth. Add cheese, sour cream and eggs and stir. Arrange bottom skins on baking sheet. Spoon mixture into shells. Coat tops with cooking spray and bake until hot, 20 minutes.
- \*\*\*\*\*
- Claire Martin, Salina: "A recipe from 'Down Under'."**

- AUSSIE ROLLS**
- 1 1/4 pounds bulk sausage
  - 1 onion, chopped
  - 2 teaspoons chives, fresh
  - 1/2 teaspoon basil
  - 2 garlic cloves, minced
  - 1 teaspoon paprika, divided
  - 1/2 teaspoon salt
  - 1/4 teaspoon pepper
  - 1 package frozen puff pastry, thawed
- Set oven to 350 degrees. In a bowl combine all ingredients except pastry, reserving 1/4 teaspoon paprika. Unfold pastry onto lightly floured surface. Roll each sheet into an 11-by-10 1/2-inch rectangle. Cut width-wise into 3 1/2-inch strips. Spread 1/2 cup sausage mixture down center of each strip. Fold pastry over and press edges together to seal. Cut each roll into 6 pieces. Place seam side down on a shallow baking pan. Sprinkle with remaining paprika. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 3 dozen.
- \*\*\*\*\*



Six years ago on the 19th of December my life changed in ways that I did not know were possible. My brother and sister-in-law allowed me the opportunity to be in the delivery room when Mika was born. I had no idea what I was in for, but I knew my brother's world was about to change and there was nowhere else I would rather be. I showed up at their house the night before to find Marissa on a stability ball and Mike pacing. I eventually told them goodnight and headed home. The next morning, I was Manhattan bound, anxiously awaiting the moment that everyone else was kicked out of their room.

and eat lunch with her. Although completely perfect in so many ways, she counters those perfections, with immense sass and an incredibly competitive nature that mirrors her grandma's.

Before we knew it, Mika was here, and everyone slowly flowed back in to meet the little girl who was about to change all our lives for the better. Even though I was in the room while she was born, I waited until everyone else that was there had, had their turn to hold her, before I took mine. The moment I looked into those little eyes, I knew we were in for quite the ride, and I could not wait to see where the world was going to take her and all of us.

I like to tell people that Mika broke me, meaning she took me, an anti-kid person and wrapped me around her little finger before she even graced us with her presence. I do not think I really realized what true love was until Mika was born, I knew I loved the idea of her, but holding her in my arms that first time, my heart swelled in ways I did not know was possible; true love. She also made me realize how quickly an unbreakable bond could be created and how important they are.

Six years later and those little eyes have managed to completely steal my heart. Mika is incredibly smart, often making us all ponder just where she got that brilliant brain of hers. She loves animals to her core and never hesitates to pick any living creature up, often being found toting around one of her cats or cuddling her dog, Bo. She is officially in kindergarten and while she continues to find her independence, she still welcomes a friendly face to come to her school

Mika is truly one of a kind and we are all so blessed to have her. I have no idea what year six is going to bring, but I am eager to continue to watch her grow, chase her dreams, and continue to challenge the world around her.

Mika, I hope six is the best year yet. Always remember to stay true to you, to never apologize for being you and to be the best version of you possible. Happy birthday, sweet girl, I will love you forever and always!

*Michele grew up in Junction City and graduated from Kansas State University. She worked in the restaurant management field for six years before deciding to switch careers and now works as an office manager for a company that manufactures oilfield products. Her passion for blogging and food can be followed on Instagram: boobbrainsandbaking. If you would like to contact Michele with comments please email mearly-on88@gmail.com*

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# Prairie Gal Cookin'

Recipes and Ramblings from the Farm

## Simple Resolutions for the New Year

By Ashleigh Krispense

The Christmas season has passed once again and even though I tend to leave my decorations up longer than most, they will eventually have to come down. A new year is just around the corner and with that people often begin to lay out plans and dream of what changes they would like to see in their lives. From weight loss and diets to business plans and travel, resolutions often fill our end-of-December minds.

What if we skipped the traditional new goals and resolutions and considered making some more simple changes? Rather than trying to plan it all out and find the perfect time slot for each activity, what if we recognized that the "perfect time" and schedule doesn't exist. If you didn't have time in 2022, chances are that you still

won't in 2023.

Finding the beauty in the simplicity of everyday moments is something that I'm coming to appreciate more and more. It's amazing how much more grateful a person feels when you consider your plate to be already full of little blessings. Here are some suggestions for some simple resolutions you can make in 2023:

### Intentional Devotional Time

I try to spend some time each morning listening to the Bible (or reading it, if I can't listen to it out loud) and then praying. Although far from perfect, it starts the day with my focus in the right place. It is so easy to have thoughts put into our head from the news, radio, advertisements or conversations throughout the day, that I find I need to be intentional about refocusing and

filling myself with the Truth, rather than just whatever happens to infiltrate my mind that day.

### Shut off the news

Have you ever felt tension and depression after watching the news for awhile? Try grabbing the remote and just clicking it off. It will all still be there tomorrow, you likely won't gain anything from continuing to watch it, and you can easily get the weather from an app on your phone or a simple search online. The news is not a requirement for your daily life and it's okay to shut it off!

### Set the table

While paper plates can sure be handy, swap them out for some pretty dishes. Try picking up an easy-to-wash tablecloth at a thrift store and dressing your kitchen table up a bit. Put a small bouquet of flowers on it and light a candle. You might be surprised at the little bit of happiness you feel each time you see it.

### Dinner Together

Whether you set a designated evening each week for a family dinner or just do it whenever everyone can get

together, make an effort to gather the family for a few hours of sharing over a meal. Pull out the crock-pots and bread machines to make the meal ahead of time and avoid frantic last-minute cooking. You can even just order pizza one night or cook outside on the grill that afternoon.

### Simplify your space

For too long now I have enjoyed finding treasures and bringing them back home. Now I'm to the point that some simplifying and organizing needs to take place! When my house is messy and cluttered, I find that I am a much grumpier person. If you've struggled with this too, consider tackling just one room at a time. Clean it out, switch up some decorations or rearrange furniture as desired, bring in some fresh flowers, and you might be surprised at the feeling of peace and joy you feel each time you walk into it!

### Go for a walk

The goal of daily exercise is something many people might find at the top of their resolutions. While it would be nice

(and at some point I'd like to get there!), I find that I already tend to stand and walk during my day anyway. What if I were to simply take my free moments when I'm standing around waiting on someone to go take a walk around the yard? Maybe walk out the lane and back. During warmer evenings, I could go for a walk on a dirt road somewhere or down the sidewalk in town just to get a little more exercise in. We might be surprised at the benefits!

### Plant a smaller garden

If you're like me, the seeds are ordered early, plans are drawn up on where each kind of plant is supposed to be placed in the soil, and spring is (usually) eagerly looked forward to. After awhile though, the summer sun gets to be too strong, the weeds too tall, and by this point, the excitement is mostly gone. So why not try planting a smaller garden patch? Something not so spread out and a little more manageable. If possible, consider raised beds where you won't have to bend over so far. They can even be made with

stock tanks or railroad ties. (Just watch them to make sure they don't dry out too quickly in the summer!)

### Stay at home

This last suggestion might just sound silly for busy people and parents. Sometimes we just have things going and we need to go, but other times it's okay to say "no, not tonight." Maybe it's the cold weather, maybe it's the pull of tasks I'd like to do at home, or maybe it's just a season of being tired of going and doing, but the urge to stay home has been strong recently. Maybe try pulling out that crock-pot and putting something in it for supper later tonight? If you have a fireplace or wood stove, get it started and pull out some board games or a puzzle to work on. Staying at home (and not even for a particular task) is okay. It's good for you and your family!

Ashleigh is a freelance writer and the gal behind the website, *Prairie Gal Cookin'* ([www.prairiegalcookin.com](http://www.prairiegalcookin.com)), where she shares step-by-step recipes and stories from the farm in Kansas.

## Fruit, Nut Gifts Should Be Refrigerated To Maintain Quality

### K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN — If you've received a beautiful basket filled with fruit and other goodies for Christmas, enjoy it.

But, maybe not for too long.

If you want the fruit to maintain its freshness, Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham suggests you disassemble the basket and place the fruit in refrigerated storage.

"If all of the products in the basket are tree fruits — apples, pears, oranges, grapefruit, for example — you can place

the entire basket in a cool place," or about 40 degrees Fahrenheit, according to Upham.

If the basket contains bananas or other tropical fruits (with the exception of citrus), remove those fruits and store separately. "About 3-4 weeks is about as long as you can expect to store these fruits without some shriveling and loss of crispness," Upham said.

### Nuts for the holidays

Pecans and other nuts are another popular gift during the holiday season. Like fruit, Upham said nuts can quickly lose quality if not stored

properly.

"Excessive water loss can lead to shriveled nutmeats, and the fats and oils in nuts can quickly spoil, developing an off-flavor or rancid taste," he said.

Store shelled or unshelled nuts in the refrigerator or freezer. Upham said nuts quickly absorb flavors from other stored products so he recommends storing them in a tightly sealed container.

"A solid plastic container with a tightly fitting lid is preferred," he said. "You can use a heavy grade resealable plastic bag, as well.

If nutmeats are tightly sealed, they can be stored in a freezer for up to one year, but using them within six months is preferred."

Upham and his colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden- and yard-related questions to Upham

at [wupham@ksu.edu](mailto:wupham@ksu.edu), or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

Links used in this story: K-State Horticulture Newsletter, <https://hnrc.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/>

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## Tips For Caring For Christmas Cacti In The Winter

### By Maddy Rohr, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN — A popular houseplant known for its colorful flowers, the Christmas cacti (*Schlumbergera bridgesii*) should have begun to bloom just in time for Christmas festivities.

Christmas cacti and other epiphytic plants are native to South American jungles and grow on other plants for support, said Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham. Christmas cacti can hybridize to produce differing stem shapes.

"These cacti prefer bright indirect light," Upham said. "Too much sun can result in the leaves turning yellow."

Upham said typical household temperatures are fine for growing Christmas cacti. The plant's soil should be kept moist, "but be sure not to overwater." He also encouraged adding light fertilizer every other week.

"Blooming will normally cease in late winter to early

spring, but continue to keep them moist and fertilized," Upham said. "Though these plants seem to flower best if kept a little pot bound, flowers will diminish if they are too crowded. If you haven't repotted in several years, or if you notice a decrease in flowering from the previous year, move the plant to a larger pot in the spring."

Upham said moving Christmas cacti outside in a shady spot during the summer is ideal, but bring them back inside before the first frost.

"Normally, the plants will have received enough cool nights in the 50-55 degree Fahrenheit range that flower buds will have formed," Upham said. "However, if they haven't, subjecting the plants to nights greater than 12 hours long and temperatures between 59-69 F can also generate flowers."

Upham suggests placing plants in a dark room or cardboard box to ensure they receive enough darkness. About 25 long, dark nights will initiate flower-

ing, he said.

"After the flower buds have formed, it takes an additional 9-10 weeks for flowers to complete development and bloom," Upham said.

Upham and his colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Upham at [wupham@ksu.edu](mailto:wupham@ksu.edu), or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

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## What's in a Name... Or Number?

There are some cow tag numbers that are unforgettable. Seems to me that the ones most memorable are the ones that pose a physical threat. The ole pets, mostly, you hang a name on 'em. I had one big old redneck cow that was such a pet I could jump up on her back and sit there as she worked her way along the cube line. "Lizzy" was her handle, and it was a sad day when she finally came up open at the age of 14. I have no idea what her tag number was. "Boss" was another one who would beg for a hand-fed morsel, and stand for a good scratching along

her back. Again, I have no recollection of her tag number.

Some have advised that you should take great care in the naming of your children with the concern, or the hope perhaps, they will grow into it. My father, for example, was named Benjamin Franklin by his parents. They obviously had high hopes for the boy! Now, Dad was knowledgeable about many things, went to Europe as an attache for his country, was self-educated, encouraged me to save my pennies, and taught me how to get by on very little. But he never started a country or flew a kite

in a thunderstorm!

Conversely, I've never met a woman actually named Jezebel...

I have, on the other hand, known a few cows that I referred to as "Jezebel." Well, maybe not that specific name, but that's the one fit for print!

Likewise, one should take great care in the names you pick for registered stock. I bought two registered heifers one time at a seed stock sale. One, named "Mattahorn" was gentle as a kitten and I gave her to my daughter for a 4-H project. The other was named "Titanic." I kept her as a commercial brood cow. I think she actually raised one calf in the three years she was on the ranch. She actually did sink. Twice. In the same bog, requiring extraction by a front-end loader. Yeah, that project was a genuine shipwreck.

Back in 1990 I had kept back the best 50 heifers out of our 1300 head of Dakota stockers to start

a cow herd. My numbering system back then was simple; first digit was the year she was born. So, that first set of heifers were "9" series, being '89 born. So, naturally, the eleventh heifer to go through, a nice big Char/Simmi cross, got the number "911." I never gave it a second thought. And frankly, she was fine. Until she calved...

After a few calves, she had grown a respectable rack of horns, about 24" wide, which I had previously tipped, and she probably weighed an easy 1400 pounds in medium flesh.

I had a new ranch hand at the time, and we were going through calving pastures on a nice sunny day in March. 911 had calved the evening before but I had not tagged the baby for obvious reasons, hoping to catch him the next morning while mom was in the cake line. As planned, ole 911 put her head in the feed line and

baby was laying in some hay fast asleep. We both slipped out of the truck and had that calf weighed, tagged and castrated before mom remembered! But, once she realized what was going on she came bellowing like a scalded hound to the rescue. Bret went back through the cows to a convenient brush pile and took refuge there. I began retreating backward toward the truck thinking, with the calf between her and I, she would stop at the calf once she saw he was okay. Nope!

She picked up speed as she blew past her baby, and was determined to use her horns and ID number to remind me what it meant! I turned and sprinted for the truck. She was close! Not quite close enough to hit me, but close enough I dared not take the time to plant a boot and swing up on the truck. It took me orbiting that truck three times to put enough space

between those horns and me to even make such an attempt. As I made the final round past the cab door I caught sight of my assistant, standing on top of that brush pile, laughing himself silly. Finally, I calculated I had enough lead time to grab the bale arm and swing my legs and feet up onto the truck bed just as she passed by!

She continued to finish her lap and went back to check on her baby, allowing me to make my way to the cab. I drove down to the brush pile and picked up my compadre.

As he crawled into the truck, I advised as calm and collected as I could manage, "And don't worry about tagging 911..."

Kirk Sours is a ranch manager in northeast Kansas, shaped and molded by the Kansas prairie since the age of eight. His major hobby is writing commentary, short biographical stories, and he is active in the community. Email him at: [sours.kirk@yahoo.com](mailto:sours.kirk@yahoo.com).

## Governor Kelly announces over \$23M to expand broadband in rural Kansas

Governor Laura Kelly has announced that \$23.1 million will be awarded to six service providers that will bring high-speed broadband service to nearly 4,200 homes, businesses, schools, health care facilities, and other institutions in unserved and rural areas of the state. This is the second of three rounds of awards from the Kansas Capital Project Funds (CPF) Grant Program.

The goal of this funding is to solve the "last

mile" of broadband need in critical areas. The targeted counties have as few as five locations per square mile, which until now has prevented companies from investing the resources to deliver a quality broadband option. The CPF Grant Program provides the funding needed to implement high-speed broadband in these areas of the state.

"By connecting nearly 4,200 more Kansas homes, businesses, and schools to high-speed internet,

we're continuing to deliver on our goal of giving every Kansan a connection to the world," Kelly said. "This funding knocks down a barrier for Kansans looking to participate in the digital economy, access telemedicine, and take advantage of online education."

The grant program results from the U.S. Department of Treasury's approval of Kansas' Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) broadband infrastructure plan. The

federal CPF program is a \$10 billion initiative available to states, territories, and tribal governments under the American Rescue Plan Act to fund capital projects. Kansas was one of the first eight states in the country approved for funding under this program and was allocated \$83.5 million. The CPF program opportunity resulted in 141 applications from providers requesting \$693 million in funding support to build out broadband infrastructure

across Kansas.

"The Capital Projects Fund program provides the funding necessary for providers to connect Kansans located in some of the most underserved areas of our state," Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland said. "We will continue to work with partners across Kansas to ensure all communities have the high-speed broadband they need to compete and succeed."

Once matching funds from the service providers are included, the total broadband investment in Phase 2 surpasses \$30 million.

"The Capital Projects Fund represents the largest grant opportunity to date from the Office of Broadband Development," said Jade Pires de Carvalho, director of the Office of Broadband Development. "We are excit-

ed about partnering with providers to make a positive impact in communities that have fallen in the digital divide."

Grant awardees and communities that will benefit from the second phase of the Kansas CPF Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program include:

- IdeaTek (Finney, Haskell, Scott, Seward counties) - \$7,943,385 to connect 1,121 premises
- KwiKom (Franklin, Lyon, Osage counties) - \$1,810,941 to connect 1,333 premises
- Mokan Dial (Franklin County) - \$6,948,173 to connect 663 premises
- PGB Fiber, LLC (Finney County) - \$1,811,463 to connect 137 premises
- S&T Communications (Wallace County) - \$997,844 to connect 118 premises
- WTC (Geary, Pottawatomie, Riley, Shawnee counties) - \$3,599,749 to connect 814 premises

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# K-State lands funding to develop nanotechnology for pest management

By Pat Melgares,  
K-State Research and Extension news service  
Kansas State University entomologists are going to the nano world to take on many of the pests that stunt the growth of agricultural crops – and just may find a way to reduce a pesky summer insect, as well.

(which protect seeds and seedlings from early-season insect pests and diseases) came along 30 years ago, and then there were genetically modified crops to help with that, as well,” Whitworth said  
“Well, in the next 20 years, we may lose those as ways to protect against pests and diseases, so we’ve got to come up with something new.”

Nanotechnology is a term given to areas of science, engineering and technology in which matter is manipulated to produce new structures, materials or devices. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health describes the technology

as promising for such sectors as medicine, consumer products, energy, materials and manufacturing.

Whitworth said nanotechnology may help uncover ways to protect agricultural crops in the future while applying less pesticide.

“There is a lot of promise for nanotechnology to be used in agriculture,” said Amie Norton, a nanotechnology specialist formerly with the USDA but hired by K-State as a result of the new funding. “What we’re hoping is that we can bring down the cost of agricultural production, while increasing overall production.”

Norton said the hope is

2nd Place: Matthew Long, Wichita County; Yield: 223.51 bu./acre; LG Seeds LG66C44-SSRIB

**SOUTHWEST DISTRICT 3**

Irrigated  
1st Place: Ryan Jagels, Finney County; Yield: 323.7 bu./acre; Pioneer P1718AML™

2nd Place: Ryan Jagels, Finney County; Yield: 322.1 bu./acre; Pioneer P1847AML™\*

3rd Place: Grant Webber, Haskell County; Yield: 321.78 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC70-27RIB

**NORTH CENTRAL I DISTRICT 4**

Dryland  
1st Place: Ronald Ohlde, Washington County; Yield: 245.9 bu./acre; Ohlde Seed O 22-13

2nd Place: Rod Stewart, Washington County; Yield: 228.9 bu./acre; Pioneer P1089AM™

3rd Place: Ryan Stewart, Washington County; Yield: 225.17 bu./acre; Pioneer P1089AM™

Irrigated  
1st Place: Cordell Cyr, Cloud County; Yield: 285.2 bu./acre; Pioneer P1718AML™

2nd Place: Todd Cyr, Cloud County; Yield: 283.7 bu./acre; Pioneer P1718AML™

3rd Place: Todd Cyr, Cloud County; Yield: 283.5 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC70-27RIB

**CENTRAL DISTRICT 5**

Irrigated  
1st Place: Chad Penner,

to build nanoparticles in K-State laboratories that carry lower levels of active pesticide ingredients, and then apply those structures to crop fields.

“The reason we can do that is because nano material has a larger surface area, so more of the pesticide is actually applied, even though we are using less material,” she said.

Nanoparticles are considered part of a bright new future for science and technology. By definition, a nanometer is one-billionth of a meter, so small that it cannot be detected by optical microscopes.

For perspective, however, consider that one sheet of standard copy paper is

100,000 nanometers thick. Or, one nanometer compares to a standard tennis ball similarly to how that same tennis ball compares to all of planet Earth.

Norton originally developed nanoparticles at the USDA out of grain. “We put silver and gold on that material; we made nano gold and nano silver,” she said. “Silver and gold is antimicrobial, which means it kills bacteria. What we found was that when we exposed mosquitoes to that material, they were killed at a (greater) rate than what was in the literature. So we thought that was kind of neat.”

Whitworth said K-State’s project – which

is funded for four years – is expected to take on treatments for such pests as the Hessian fly, corn rootworm, grasshoppers, termites – and, yes, even mosquitoes.

“We’re looking at a wide range of medical, veterinary, household and agricultural pests,” he said. “In most of these areas, we hope to do at least a cursory look to determine if there is potential for nanotechnology.”

“By the end of our four years,” Whitworth added, “we’ll have an idea about whether there’s a place for nanotechnology in agriculture. That’s what we’re shooting for.”

# Kansas Corn announces 2022 state Corn Yield Contest winners

Despite drought impacting many areas of the state, the 2022 Kansas Corn Yield Contest was highly competitive. Top yield contest entries for the Kansas Corn Yield Contest came from Ryan Jagels of Finney County in the irrigated division with a yield of 323.7 bushels per acre; and Jeff Koelzer of Pottawatomie County in the dryland division with a yield of 308.96 bushels per acre.

“Improvements in technology and management have produced not only record Kansas corn yields, but more importantly, allowed for relatively impressive corn yields when farmers are faced with drought conditions and high input prices,” says Josh Roe, Kansas Corn vice president of market development and policy. “The farmers that participated in this year’s yield contest exhibit the very best of the technology and management techniques available.”

This is the second year for the combined state-level yield contest and National Corn Yield Contest, bringing greater competition and entries. The state contest awards dryland and irrigated winners in ten districts, along with one statewide dryland and one statewide irrigated winner. The winners will be recognized at the Kansas Corn Symposium on Jan. 26 in Salina. The Kansas Corn Yield Contest is

sponsored by Kansas Corn and K-State Research and Extension.

The Kansas Corn Yield Contest was created to recognize high-yielding Kansas corn farmers and gain information to improve practices and increase efficiency for greater sustainability and profitability. Sharing the data collected among Kansas farmers benchmarks the corn yields and provides information for improving management practices.

**2022 Kansas Corn Yield Contest results**

**OVERALL STATE YIELD WINNERS**

Irrigated: Ryan Jagels, Finney County; Yield: 323.7 bu./acre; Pioneer P1718AML™

Dryland: Jeff Koelzer, Pottawatomie County; Yield 308.96 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC65-84RIB

**NORTHWEST DISTRICT 1**

Irrigated  
1st Place: Brett Oelke, Sheridan County; Yield: 296.78 bu./acre; Pioneer P1366AML™

2nd Place: Taylor Brack, Sherman County; Yield: 285.76 bu./acre; Pioneer P1366Q™

3rd Place: Brett Oelke, Sheridan County; Yield: 282.51 bu./acre; Pioneer P1278Q™

**WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT 2**

Irrigated  
1st Place: Matthew Long, Wichita County; Yield: 239 bu./acre; Golden Harvest G13N18-3111

2nd Place: Chris and Myreon Menold, Nemaha County; Yield 288.36 bu./acre; Pioneer P1828AM™

**SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT 6**

Dryland  
1st Place: Bruce Seiler, Sedgwick County; Yield 176.29 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC65-95RIB

2nd Place: Michael Speer, Sedgwick County; Yield 173.38 bu./acre; Golden Harvest G13N18-3111

3rd Place: Aaron Pauly, Sedgwick County; Yield 169.19 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC70-27RIB

**EAST CENTRAL I DISTRICT 8**

Dryland  
1st Place: Robert Litch, Osage County; Yield 276.1 bu./acre; Pioneer P1464AML™

2nd Place: Brad Spencer, Franklin County; Yield 222.34 bu./acre; Golden Harvest G17E95-3110

3rd Place: Joe Heathman, Chase County; Yield 214.38 bu./acre; Taylor

Seed Farms 6012 Irrigated  
1st Place: Brad Spencer, Franklin County; Yield 244.29 bu./acre; Golden Harvest G15J91-V

**NORTH NORTHEAST DISTRICT 10**

Dryland  
1st Place: Jason Taylor, Doniphan County; Yield 302.31 bu./acre; Taylor Seed Farms 9913

2nd Place: Jason Taylor, Doniphan County; Yield 295.53 bu./acre; Taylor Seed Farms 8013

3rd Place: Joe Elias, Atchison County; Yield 289.77.42 bu./acre; Agri-Gold A643-52VT2RI

**EAST CENTRAL II DISTRICT 8**

Dryland  
1st Place: Jeff Koelzer, Pottawatomie County; Yield 308.96 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC65-84RIB

2nd Place: Dean and Victor Menold, Brown County; Yield 283.38 bu./acre; Beck’s Hybrids 6374V2P

3rd Place: Douglas Armstrong, Atchison County; Yield 275.96 bu./acre; Agri-Gold A645-16VT2RI

**NORTHEAST DISTRICT 7**

Irrigated  
1st Place: Alex Noll, Jefferson County; Yield 295.3 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC70-27RIB

Irrigated  
1st Place: Alex Noll, Jefferson County; Yield 295.3 bu./acre; DEKALB DKC70-27RIB

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Full of Bullz - January 10<sup>th</sup>  
Crop Production & Protection - Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>  
Farm Building - February 28<sup>th</sup>  
Equifest (BOGO) - March 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>  
Salina Farm Show (BOGO) - March 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>  
Bring on Spring - March 21<sup>st</sup>

**DEADLINES:**

Topeka Farm Show - December 28<sup>th</sup>, before Noon  
Full of Bullz - January 4<sup>th</sup>, before Noon  
Crop Production & Protection - February 8<sup>th</sup>, before Noon  
Farm Building - February 22<sup>nd</sup>, before Noon  
Equifest (BOGO) - March 1<sup>st</sup>, before Noon  
Salina Farm Show (BOGO) - March 8<sup>th</sup>, before Noon  
Bring on Spring - March 15<sup>th</sup>, before Noon

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## 2023 Corn Schools schedule announced

By David Hallauer,  
Meadowlark District  
Extension agent, crops  
and soils/horticulture

The 2023 Corn School schedules are out, offering in-person and virtual opportunities in January/early February. Schools are a collaborative effort of K-State Research and Extension and Kansas Corn supported by sponsorship from Pioneer and Farm Credit Association of Kansas.

The Prairie Band Casino and Resort will host the Northeast Kansas school on Thursday, January 19th. Doors open at 8:30. The program begins at 9:00. Dr. Ignacio Ciampitti and Dr. Adrian Correndo, KSU Department of Agronomy, will share their research efforts relative to corn production, plus additional findings from other

members of their research team as well. Dr. Correndo's focus is in soil fertility, crop nutrition, and data analysis. Dr. Ciampitti is an associate professor in the Department of Agronomy with a research focus on plant physiology and remote sensing and modeling tools.

Tar Spot and other corn diseases will be the focus of Dr. Rodrigo Onofre, KSU Extension Row Crops Pathologist's presentation. Dr. Onofre's work on disease management in corn and soybeans has included research efforts in Gray Leaf Spot and now Tar Spot.

Budget and market outlooks from KSU Agricultural Economist Dr. Dan O'Brien will wrap up the morning as he shares insights as we look to the 2023 economic situation.

Kansas Corn will also share a look back on their work over the past year in the area of ag policy plus share a look forward to projects they'll be working on in the future.

Lunch is courtesy of the aforementioned sponsors. RSVPs are requested by visiting <https://kscorn.com/cornschoo/> (or contacting any District Office or dhal-lae@ksu.edu).

Can't make the 19th? If you don't mind a road trip, similar programs are scheduled for January 13th in Salina and January 20th in Parsons. A virtual option is available on February 2nd (6:00 p.m.) and will include an additional presentation entitled Revisiting Residual Herbicides in Corn from KSU Extension Weed Management Specialist Dr. Sarah Lancaster.

## Animal Ag Alliance efforts in 2022

Animal Agriculture Alliance (AAA) drove significant progress this year with its work to safeguard the future of animal agriculture.

In 2022, the group welcomed 21 new members who all have access to farm and facility security information, crisis management resources, alerts, special reports and more. AAA continued to build confident and effective communicators for agriculture through its College Aggies Online (CAO) initiative. More than 180 students across the country signed up for the individual program and 13 clubs competed in the club division. AAA also revamped its modules for its Animal Ag Allies program. The program provides

opportunities for networking, training and continuous development of issue expertise and communication skills across the animal agriculture industry. Currently, more than 140 farmers, ranchers, veterinarians and industry professionals have completed the program.

The Alliance team also gave over 54 presentations throughout the year on topics including animal rights activist tactics, farm and plant security, crisis management, consumer engagement and advocating for agriculture on social media. The group has so far reached more than 3500 people with more presentations scheduled through the end of December.

## Ag Business group re-elects Johansen, Seeber as 2023 Leaders

Dustin Johansen, senior vice president, Enterprise Solutions, Farm Journal, was re-elected chairman of the Agricultural Business Council of Kansas City at the group's annual meeting held December 14. Ron Seeber, who serves as CEO Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association, Kansas Grain and Feed Association, and Renew Kansas Biofuels Association was re-elected vice chairman.

Johansen leads business development initiatives for Enterprise Solutions division of Farm Journal, driving revenue growth for data services, market research and custom projects for livestock and row crop industries. Previously, Johansen managed the Kansas City office of Osborn Barr Paramore and led the animal agriculture and equipment practices. He also spent nearly 20 years at Caterpillar, Inc. in equipment sales and dealer sales and marketing operations. Johansen was raised on a purebred Charolais operation in Tipton, Missouri and is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Ron Seeber assumed his current position with the three associations in 2017 after working for the groups since July 2008. An expert in state and federal legislative affairs, Seeber also worked for Senator Bob Dole in policy and political capacities. He has spent his entire career in the regulatory arena.

The Council's Board of Directors is composed of 20 persons who serve staggered two-year terms. Those elected to the Board for a two-year term commencing January 1, 2023, were:

- Eric Bohl, Missouri Farm Bureau
- Justin Gilpin, Kansas Wheat
- Brad Hamilton, Seaboard Foods
- J.J. Jones, Cultivated Conversations
- Jackie Klippenstein, Dairy Farmers of America
- Haley Larson, Kansas State - Olathe
- James Nygren, Frontier Farm Credit/Farm Credit Services of America
- Emily Schuckebrock, Agriculture Future of America
- Brad Tolbert, John Deere
- Bill Vaughn, Merck Animal Health

And, to fill a mid-term vacancy, the Council elected Jackie McClaskey, American Royal, to a one-year term.

The group also named Jim Staiert, associate administrator of USDA's Economic Research Service as an ex-officio, advisory member of the Board of Directors.

Those directors elected for new terms join these incumbent directors:

- Julie Abrahamzon, Cargill Animal Nutrition
- Tom Brand, NAFB
- Chris Daubert, University of Missouri - CAFNR
- Kelly Farrell, Farrell Growth Group
- Terry Holdren, Kansas Farm Bureau
- Chris Klenklen, Missouri Dept. of Agriculture
- Kristie Larson, The DeBruce Foundation
- Paul Schadegg, Farmers National Company
- Matt Teagarden, Kansas Livestock Association

Bob Petersen and Erica Venancio continue to serve as staff members for the Council, Petersen as the executive director and Venancio as director of member services.

## KLA, NCBA affiliates benefit from auctions

The benefit auction held during the Cattle-men's Banquet at the KLA Convention raised \$42,000 for three organizations. More than 500 KLA members and guests attended the banquet and auction.

Items sold to benefit the KLA Political Action Committee (PAC) brought \$31,950, with the money to be used to help elect candidates for the state Legislature who support the Kansas livestock industry. The high-selling item for KLA PAC was a bull sale credit donated by Gardiner Angus Ranch of Ashland and purchased by Prairie Valley Feeders of

Long Island for \$7,000.

Donated items sold on behalf of Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK), a KLA affiliate, brought \$4,100 in the live auction. Brad and Janell Aust of LaCygne placed the winning bid of \$1,500 on the high-selling lot, which was a round of sporting clays and shells for two, plus lunch or dinner at Flint Oak Lodge, donated by Scott and Patti Strickland.

A total of \$5,950 was generated for the Kansas Livestock Foundation (KLF), which operates solely for charitable, scientific and educational purposes. The high-selling

lot was a 24"x42" original canvas by Stan Shook framed in wood from the Four County Fire. The artwork was donated by the National Drovers Hall of Fame Association and purchased by Terry Nelson of Long Island for \$3,400.

The silent auction in the trade show raised \$4,895 for programs supported by the Kansas CattleWomen, \$1,295 for RTK, \$445 for KLF and \$459 for the NCBA PAC.

Volunteer leaders of KLA and these affiliate organizations would like to thank all the donors and buyers for their generous contributions.

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## NPPC welcomes comment period extension for Packer and Stockyards Competition proposed rule

NPPC appreciates USDA's move to extend the comment period for the Packers and Stockyards Act proposed rule on Inclusive Competition and Market Integrity. Pork producers rely on enforcement of the Act to ensure fair marketing opportunities and support policies that allow them to make decisions that best fit their unique circumstances.

NPPC joined with other stakeholders and members of Congress in requesting the additional time to comment on this proposed rule to allow greater participation throughout the pork and livestock industries and ensure producer voices are heard.

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# Understanding the drop in the food dollar return to farmers

By Lisa Moser, K-State

Research and Extension news service

Anyone associated with agriculture knows there are often many steps involved in getting the commodity from the farm and ranch to the consumer. Dustin Pendell, an agricultural economist at Kansas State University, said each of these transactions cuts into the share of the return on the farm dollar.

Speaking on a recent Beef Cattle Institute Cattle Chat podcast, Pendell cited a November 2022 report from the USDA Economic Research Service showing that U.S. farms received 14.5 cents per dollar spent on domestically produced food in 2021. The ERS reports that this was a decrease of 1.0 cents from 15.5 cents in

2020, and the lowest recorded farm share value in nearly three decades.

"Keep in mind that return will vary greatly by commodity," Pendell said. "As an example, eggs would likely have a higher return as compared to wheat that has to be heavily processed before reaching consumers."

The remaining portion of the food dollar relates to marketing, Pendell said.

"Those costs include transportation, packaging, processing and selling to consumers," he said.

Another reason for the downward trend relates to the increase in spending on food away from home, according to the report.

"As the COVID-19 pandemic eased, a lot more people

started eating out at restaurants and that added one more layer to the marketing component," Pendell said.

Though some may view this decrease in the return to farmers and ranchers as disappointing, Pendell says the numbers don't reflect the profitability of an operation.

"I would argue that even though farmers are getting a smaller share of the dollar, if more total people are consuming goods, that can lead to an increase in the whole industry profits, which is advantageous to all," Pendell said.

To hear the full discussion, listen to the Cattle Chat podcast online or through your preferred streaming platform.

## Online curriculum provides life-saving training to young farm workers

Young farm workers are more susceptible to harm, says Roger Tormoehlen, a professor of agricultural and biological engineering at Purdue University. For over two decades, he and his colleague, William Field, also a professor of agricultural and biological engineering, have addressed this vital issue with their Gearing Up for Safety curriculum.

Completely accessible online and free to down-

load, the comprehensive safety and health training program targets young and beginning agricultural workers ages 12-20. It has recently been expanded with funding from the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

The program seeks to enhance the quality of life for farm families and those working in agriculture by reducing farm injuries and occupational health risks.

To bridge the equity gap for those who may not have internet access, Tormoehlen and Field have distributed the program in flash drive format to all 3,300 Extension offices and 10,000 agricultural science teachers in the U.S. The mailing campaign garnered positive feedback, and Tormoehlen and Field also travel the country to present their curriculum to agricultural science educators.

They hope that all these efforts can provide better preparation for those susceptible to harm while farming while also increasing awareness about agriculture and improving agricultural literacy.

Optimized for remote delivery, home school or independent study, the Gearing Up for Safety program contains 20 lessons, with additional units in development, and 30 professionally produced vid-

eos featuring instructors from across the country teaching individual units. Each lesson includes high-quality PowerPoint presentations with extensive instructor notes, student activity sheets, suggested teaching aids, relevant case studies and evaluation materials. Lessons are aligned with Agricultural, Food and Natural Resource (AFNR) Career Cluster content standards, along with numerous state educational

standards.

Tormoehlen says of young farm workers, "They're excited and want to be involved but may not have the knowledge to be safe. The curriculum really gives them the resources to develop better safety practices."

The entire Gearing Up for Safety curriculum, including all supporting materials, is available for free download at [www.gearingup.info](http://www.gearingup.info).

## 2023 farm bill discussions relate to money

Changes in the new farm bill will mostly be about money.

That was the message Joe Outlaw, Ph.D., Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University co-director in the Department of Agricultural Economics of the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Bryan-College Station, delivered recently during the annual Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show.

Outlaw, speaking about the farm bill, said a lot of action is happening in Washington with different proposals and discussions on the table. However, in the end, it will boil down to what money is available.

The Inflation Reduction Act signed into law by President Biden earlier this year extended the Affordable Care Act, as well as added funding to existing agricultural conservation programs familiar to producers.

The biggest component of the farm bill, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, is expected to increase the cost from \$663.8 billion to \$1.1 trillion and account for over 80% of the funding.

SNAP, however, has nothing to do with the agriculture portion of the farm bill, Outlaw said.

Proponents of minimizing government spending need to know that "If you cut all of the agriculture spending, you wouldn't make much of an impact on overall government spending," he said. "But without more money dedicated to agriculture, we can't make programs better for the farmers."

On the discussion table

Outlaw said several issues are being discussed that could affect the overall cost of the farm bill and

impact producers.

— Higher Reference Prices – The commodity reference prices used to calculate government payments have not changed since they were initiated in 2014. Payments to growers are triggered when the average market price for a crop year falls below the commodity reference price.

"Our costs are up, so there's a need for these reference prices to be moved to be relevant, but that update will cost money."

These statutory reference prices are set by Congress, and the 2018 Farm Bill allows reference prices to increase if prices rise – which they have, Outlaw said. The Agricultural and Food Policy Center is helping evaluate the reference prices and the costs those changes would make on the farm bill.

"In this current bill, corn reference prices will go up as well as soybeans, but a number of commodities like wheat, while prices rose, they didn't move high enough to increase reference prices," Outlaw said.

— Base Update – All farm program payments are made according to a farm's base acreage, which is meant to reflect the long-term average planted acres of each commodity on the farm. The old base acreage was set in 2002 and updated in 2014 for most crops, while seed cotton was updated in 2018. Some producers are growing different crops now but haven't been allowed to update their base acreage to move it from one crop to another, and they would like the opportunity to bring it current.

But a forced base update is different, Outlaw said. This could potential-

ly hurt Texas if it happens, because Texas producers have more base acres than they are currently planting, which means they could lose base acres in a forced base update.

He pointed out, for example, that Dallam, Hartley, Moore, Castro and Parmer counties in the Texas High Plains each have more than 100,000 corn base acres, but they are not planting all of that to corn anymore.

"Expect a fight," Outlaw said. "We could lose about 3.6 million base acres in Texas."

— Margin Coverage – Similar to the dairy industry's program protecting profit margins, there are proposals to evaluate implementing a margin coverage for crop producers. This means crop producers would receive a safety net payment from the government when the difference between the national price of their commodity and an estimate of costs is lower than an announced threshold.

— Permanent Disaster Program – The Emergency Relief Program, created to assist crop producers suffering disaster-related losses, addresses a need. However, the continued use of ad hoc disaster programs raises important issues, particularly related to crop insurance interactions.

"It's very difficult to deal with the disaster program and not affect the crop insurance program," Outlaw said.

Picking a plan for 2023

As those discussions take place on the next farm bill, Outlaw said

producers must go ahead and decide what programs they will utilize this coming year.

When choosing between Agricultural Risk Coverage, ARC, and Price Loss Coverage, PLC, Outlaw said things are different going into 2023.

"For the first time in a long time, I'd go ahead

and say go ARC for most commodities," he said.

Prices are still well above reference prices, so PLC is not likely to provide much support. Because

ARC protects against revenue losses, a producer

might suffer a major yield loss that could trigger an ARC payment even with high prices.



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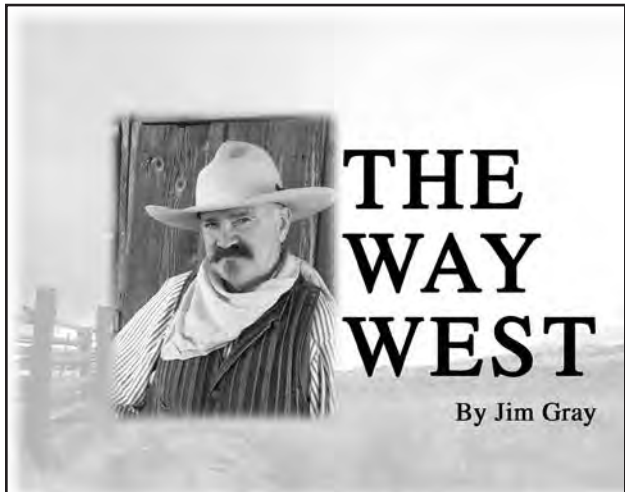
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### A Very Slick Trick

The following story could easily be made into a full-blown historic narrative. The twists and turns make for exciting reading worthy of a book. Newspapers across the United States suddenly exploded with the mystery of the "Frisco Robbery" that occurred just outside of St. Louis, Missouri, on October 25, 1886. There seemed to be no written account beyond the original newspaper articles that span nearly twenty years, requiring extensive research to bring this story to *The Way West*.

Under the headline of "A Very Slick Trick" an early report of the robbery declared, "One of the coolest and most successful train robberies we ever heard of was perpetrated

Tuesday night (Oct. 25) on the St. Louis & San Francisco railroad between St. Louis and Pacific (Missouri), by which the Adams Express Company is left to dance to the tune of \$50,000."

The saga began when a man gained access to the Adams Express car with a letter of permission from an officer of the company allowing him to ride in the express car. The letter had been cunningly forged. As the train rolled along the tracks the new arrival suddenly pressed the muzzle of a pistol against express messenger David S. Fotheringham's head warning, "I don't want any foolishness from you young man. If you give me any trouble, I will put your light out." Fotheringham was

bound and gagged. Then the stranger said, "I am Jim Cummings, the last of the Jesse James Gang." "Windy Jim" Cummings had disappeared from the public eye years before.

Fotheringham told Cummings that he had "made a big haul, \$50,000 or over." Concerned that he would be implicated in the robbery Fotheringham told Cummings that he needed the work to support a mother and brother. Cummings responded that if Fotheringham gave a false description to authorities, he would send money and write a letter to the St. Louis paper to "fix matters all right."

Before leaving the express car Cummings tied Fotheringham to the safe and filled the messenger's pockets with silver coin "for a joke." Near Pacific, Missouri, Cummings left the train and walked to the Missouri River where he shaved his mustache, changed clothes and disappeared from public view.

The Adams Express Company didn't intend to give up on such an audacious outlaw. This was a job for Robert "Bob" Pinkerton. "Bob" quickly put his army of detectives on Cummings' trail.

Meanwhile, a mysterious letter turned up in the hands of a well-known

reformed outlaw. On the morning of November 4th, the Nevada, Missouri, mail carrier handed Frank James a letter while he was in conversation with friends on the streets. Enclosed James found a ten-dollar bank note and three twenties. The letter was dated Oct. 31, 1886. Written in heavy pencil, "Please accept the enclosed as a 'memento' of the late 'Frisco train robbery of Oct. 25, 1886.'" Although Frank James insisted that nothing about the robbery or the letter was Cummings' style, the incident inflamed expectations that Jim Cummings was back in the outlaw business.

True to his word, Cummings wrote letters to several newspapers declaring David Fotheringham's innocence. One of the letters included a P.S. "I sent that bank note to Frank James for a joke not for any desire to get him into any trouble." Cummings even sent money to Fotheringham's mother saying that he hoped that the money would be of use in clearing her son's name. He followed that with a package of mortgages and notes for which he had no need.

Pinkerton found enough clues in the mailed information to suspect a Kansas connection. Agents swarmed Kansas City and

parts of eastern Kansas. Newspapers across the country speculated as to the whereabouts of the notorious Jim Cummings.

Then suddenly Chicago newspapers announced that Jim Cummings was arrested in a Chicago barroom on December 24th. The tricky outlaw had only used Cummings' name. His true name was Fred Wittrock of Leavenworth, Kansas. He had recruited several young men that he had known in Leavenworth, Kansas City, and Chicago, but in the end they all weakened and left him to carry out his daring deed all alone.

Many of Wittrock's accomplices provided information in order to escape prosecution. William Haight, originally of Leavenworth and Thomas Weaver of Chicago, were included in the prosecution and on January 4, 1887, Wittrock and Haight were sentenced to seven

years in prison and Weaver to three years. There were so many twists and turns to the investigation that space does not allow a full account of the Frisco Robbery. Did I say this story was book-worthy? It turns out that Wittrock, himself, wrote "A Lucky Mishap" in 1892. It was sold all over the country but only one library copy exists in the country. The book is described as a novel in which, "Much of the author's own experience is neatly woven into the tale, and the hero is easily recognized as the messenger (Fotheringham) who was the victim of the robbery." Finding a copy would be the one very slick trick that I, for one, would love to see accomplished on *The Way West*.

"The Cowboy," Jim Gray can be reached at 220 21st RD Geneseo, KS. Phone 785-531-2058 or kansascowboy@kans.com.

## Farmers & Ranchers AUCTIONS EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY

**Selling Cattle every Monday Hog Sales on 2nd & 4th Monday of the month only!**

**TOTAL FOR THE WEEK: CATTLE 2,709.**

<b>SPECIAL COW SALE</b>			
<b>TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2022</b>			
<b>BRED HEIFERS</b>			
20 blk	Plevna	@2010.00	10 blk Salina young@1675.00
4 blk	Plevna	@1950.00	25 red Bennington young@1650.00
18 blk	Lindsborg	@1850.00	9 red Gypsum @1625.00
22 blk	Wakefield	@1800.00	19 blk Bennington young@1610.00
6 rwf	Conway Springs	@1800.00	8 bwf Gypsum young@1575.00
6 blk	Conway Springs	@1775.00	40 blk Gypsum young@1560.00
8 red	Conway Springs	@1775.00	26 blk Atlanta young@1550.00
9 blk	Wakefield	@1750.00	11 red Paradise young@1550.00
15 blk	Chanute	@1725.00	6 char Gypsum broken@1000.00
47 blk	Wakefield	@1700.00	18 red Smolan broken@985.00
18 blk	Brookville	@1650.00	
11 blk	Wilsey	@1650.00	
<b>PAIRS</b>			
			8 blk Osborne young@2075.00
			21 blk Yates Center young@1950.00
			5 blk Nebraska young@1925.00
			10 blk Nebraska young@1925.00
			7 red Yates Center young@1925.00
			3 blk Randall young@1900.00
			4 blk Gypsum young@1900.00
			16 blk Atlanta young@1875.00
			2 bwf Osborne young@1850.00
			12 blk Nebraska young@1800.00
			5 blk Nebraska broken@1150.00
<b>BRED COWS</b>			
23 red	Salina	young@1850.00	
16 blk	Lincoln	young@1760.00	
5 red	Cottonwood Falls	young@1725.00	
6 blk	Gypsum	young@1710.00	
28 blk	Salina	young@1685.00	
2 blk	Cottonwood Falls	young@1685.00	

### EARLY CONSIGNMENTS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023 WEANED/VACC. SALE Starting at 10 AM

130 black/char steers & heifers, 650-800, home raised; 180 black steers & heifers, 400-600, home raised; 10 black steers & heifers, 650-900, home raised, 63 days, fall vaccinations; 120 black steers & heifers, 500-700, 60 days weaned; 65 black steers & heifers, 600-850, weaned October 1; 70 black steers & heifers, 750-850; 82 mostly black steers & heifers, 750-850; 25 steers & heifers, 650-800; 100 black steers, 700-800, home raised; 30 black steers & heifers, 700; 65 black steers & heifers, 750; 100 charX steers & heifers, 500-700, Fink sired; 100 black steers & heifers 500-600; 175 black steers & heifers; 35 steers & heifers; 850 black sim/Angus steers & heifers; 60 black/bwf steers & heifers, 500-600, wean 45 days, fall vaccinations; 175 black sim/Angus steers & heifers, 600-800; 250 black/red steers & heifers; 350 black steers & heifers, 650-850; 350 black steers & heifers, 650-850; 58 steers & heifers, 600; 200 black/bwf steers & heifers, 500-700; 60 black steers, 600-800, home raised; 49 black steers & heifers, 600-800; 100 mostly steers, few heifers, 900-950; 36 black steers & heifers, 600-700, home raised; 100 mostly black steers & heifers, 600, weaned October 28; 100 steers & heifers, 500-600; 20 black/rwf steers & heifers, 650-800, 90 days weaned, fall vaccinations, no implants, open; 80 black/bwf steers & heifers, 600-750; 55 steers & heifers, 600-750, 2 round vaccinations, Don Johnson sired, weaned September 26th; 150 black steers & heifers, 500-650, home raised, weaned October 1; 60 black steers & heifers, 625, home raised, 2 round vaccinations, Don Johnson sired; 93 black steers & heifers, 550-650, Nelson Angus sired; **PLUS MORE BY SALE TIME.**

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15 black steers, 600-700; 18 black steers & heifers, 500-700, home raised, 45 days weaned, fall vaccinations, open; 14 black steers & heifers, 600-700; 54 black steers & heifers, 700-750, home raised 2 rounds vaccinations; 24 black heifers, 700-725, weaned October 1, fall vaccinations, poured, open; 16 mostly black steers & heifers, 425-500, 90 days weaned, fall vaccinations, McCurry Brothers sired; 23 red/black steers & heifers, 600-700, home raised, 2 rounds vaccinations, 60 days weaned; 50 black/bwf/red steers & heifers, 500-600, weaned 60 days, fall vaccinations, wormed; 15 black steers & heifers, 600, weaned September 1, 2 round fall vaccinations, Garner Angus sired, bunk broke, knife cut; 50 black/bwf steers & heifers, 600-700, long time weaned, 2 round fall vaccinations, running out, green; 45 black steers, 550-600, 85 days weaned; 25 black steers & heifers, 600-750, October weaned, fall vaccinations, home raised; 200 black steers & heifers, 550-700, Irvine sired; 120 black steers & heifers, 550-700, hay fed; 250 black/charX, 450-750, weaned September 1; 55 black steers, 500-700, home raised, long time weaned, fall vaccinations; 120 mostly black steers & heifers, 600-700, home raised, fall vaccinations, long time weaned, sim/Angus sired; 45 char steers & heifers, 650-850, home raised, fall vaccinations, October weaned; 130 black steers & heifers, 600-800; 145 black/bwf steers & heifers, 500-700; 20 black steers, 800-850, 60 days weaned, 2 rounds vaccinations; 100 black steers & heifers, 700-800, home raised, 2 rounds vaccinations, 60 days weaned; 115 black/char steers & heifers, 650-800, home raised; 120 char/AngusX steers & heifers, 700-800, home raised, October 25 wean; 90 steers, 700; 20 heifers, 700; 55 black steers & heifers, 500; 65 steers & heifers, 700-800, home raised, 120 days weaned, 3 rounds vaccinations; 100 steers & heifers, 700-800, home raised, 120 days weaned, 3 rounds vaccinations; 30 steers & heifers, 700-800, home raised, 120 days weaned, 3 rounds vaccinations; 40 steers & heifers, 500-750; 40 steers & heifers, 400-700; 60 black steers & heifers, 600-750, weaned November 1st, fall vaccinations, open; 320 char/AngusX steers & heifers, 70-850, home raised, weaned October 15th; **PLUS MORE BY SALE TIME.**

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