WestVirginiaUniversity.
EXTENSION SERVICE
JEFFERSON COUNTY

Emily Morrow
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent
Emily.Wells@mail.wvu.edu
(304) 728-7413, ext 2

Eastern Panhandle Ag News

Understanding Farm Taxes

The first signs of fall may be in the air, and on the farm that means a busy season of harvest lies ahead. What may not necessarily be on your mind is a task usually left for the winter months — farm taxes. And for many of us, tax season means hastily tracking down the year's receipts and getting them to a person lucky enough to handle this grueling task. Taxes, and especially farm taxes, is a topic that seems as if the more you begin to read into it, the less you feel you understand.

Don't miss three upcoming opportunities to learn more about farm taxes, two FREE webinars and a local event held by the WVU Extension Small Farm Center on September 25. Speakers at this in-person training will include Mark Ribas, a licensed CPA and retired IRS Agent, Daniel Staggers, an estate planning, elder law, and business organization attorney, and Tom McConnel, Program Leader for the WVU Extension Small Farm Center.

Webinar

Getting Started Right with Farm Taxes
Tuesday, September 10
12:30 PM—1:30 PM
Phone Number: 1-786-535-3211
Access Code: 960-186-461

Webinar

Things You Should REALLY Know About Farm Taxes
Thursday, September 12
12:30 PM—1:30 PM
Phone Number: 1-571-317-3122
Access Code: 781-754-117

In Person Workshop

Farm Taxes
Wednesday, September 25
1 PM—4:30 PM, Cost: $10

Blue Ridge Community and Technical College
5550 Winchester Ave
Martinsburg, WV 25405

In Person Workshop Topics Include:

- Crop Profitability through Recordkeeping
- Allowable Expenses & Deductions
- Farm Vehicles
- Tax Returns
- Capital Assets
- Easements
- Qualified Business Income Deductions
- High Tunnel Deduction Reporting
- Estate Planning Documentation
- IRAs & Retirement Considerations
- Social Security Benefits
- Spousal Employment
- Reducing Liability with Timely Prepaid Expenses
- Managed Timber Land & Purchases
- Weather Related Sales
- Feed Shortages
- Reporting Options on Crop Insurance Income

If you are interested in one or more of these opportunities, call the office or email me at Emily.Wells@mail.wvu.edu so we can provide you with the registration information for the in person workshop when it becomes available. The webinars can be attended via phone only through the listed phone numbers and access codes, or online with a secure internet connection. Attending the webinar online will allow you to see the slides being presented. If you are wanting to attend the webinars online, email me for the website link.

Farm Business Planning Course

Join us for a six week course that will cover the basics of agriculture entrepreneurship. Whether you are a current producer looking to better understand your finances, customers, or diversity your farm, or a beginner just starting out with a farm business, this course will provide you with the tools to succeed. This class will cover:

- Evaluate your business idea for profitability and growth potential.
- Connect with industry professionals and other agriculture entrepreneurs.
- Create a farm business plan
- Understand business financials
- Create a marketing plan

Details

Time: 6—9 PM

Location: Jefferson County Extension Office
1948 Wiltshire Road
Kearneysville, WV

Cost: $15 (all sessions)

Preregistration ends October 3. To register or for any questions, email Emily.Wells@mail.wvu.edu or call 304-728-7413.
Make checks payable to WVU.

Schedule

Session 1 - October 7

The Basics of Business Planning

Session 2 - October 14

4 P's of Marketing

Session 3 - October 21

Know Your Customer

Session 4 - October 28

All About The Money Part 1

Session 5 - November 4

All About The Money Part 2

Session 6 - November 11

Putting it All Together

Landscaping—Fall or Spring Planting?

If you're like me, and never quite got around to the landscaping projects on your To Do List this summer, you may be wondering when the best time to plant is – fall or spring. The fact is that both of those seasons are excellent for planting trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials.

In areas where an early fall frost is unlikely, fall planting is recommended because the soil is still warm, rains are frequent and being outside is still enjoyable.

Fall planting gives plants a jump-start on the growing season, which results in more robust plant growth. Trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials have plenty of time to establish their roots, which continue to grow at a slow rate at the low temperatures of 45 and even 42 F. By spring, the transplanted or newly planted plants will have a sufficient root system developed in the fall in a previous season.

Here are a few tips for fall planting:

- Planting should be done about two months, or at least of six weeks, before the first average frost date, which for our area is around mid October. That gives plants enough time to repair and develop new roots before the ground freezes.
- Fall rains ensure good plant establishment. If there is a dry fall, watering the new transplants is a must. About an inch of water per week will need to be added to keep them well irrigated.
- Mulch preserves soil moisture and aids root development. Transplant shock is enhanced by inadequate soil moisture that is either too dry or too wet.
- Mulching also helps prevent rapid cooling of the soil. Moist soil tends to stay warmer longer.

Fall is an ideal time to divide some of the spring and summer blooming plants. The new plants/divisions will be able to establish themselves enough for a good start in the spring.

Spring Planting

In areas where an early fall frost is likely, spring planting is preferred. Planting should be done after the last spring frost. By that time, the soil temperature should be in the high 40s to mid 50s F. Gardeners, and growers alike, should consider the average date for the last spring frost in their region. Typically, the average last spring frost date in the Eastern Panhandle is late April.

Here are a few tips for spring planting:

- At least 10 days prior to planting, remove mulch from the beds or designated planting areas to accelerate soil warm-up.
- Loosen the soil by digging the hole big enough to allow the roots stretch out, and not having to bunch or fold them. Allow plenty of room to spread around to avoid coiling and subsequent girdling. The standing rule is that the hole should be about three times larger than the root system and twice as deep to allow for backfill and positioning of the plant. The plants should be buried at the same depth as they were in the nursery or in the pot.
- Water generously immediately after planting to push out any air pockets around the roots and to ensure a good, firm contact between the roots and soil. Apply mulch 3 to 4 inches deep. Pull the mulch away from the bark at the base of the tree trunk to avoid potential collar rot, winter injury, root rot, and increased insect and rodent damage.

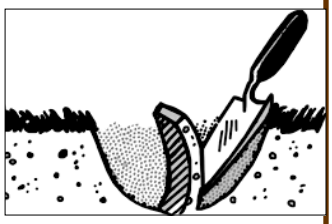
Time to take Soil Samples

Fall offers the perfect time to take soil samples for the 2020 growing season. Soil nutrients can vary with the changing seasons, so if you start sampling in the fall, it's best to keep this tradition in order to better compare results and changes in the soil year to year. Some advantages of taking soil samples in the fall are:

- Better sampling weather
- Fall is the better season for lime applications
- More time to make fertilizer decisions. Fertilizer is often cheaper in the fall, and can be purchased to account on the coming year's taxes.

If you're rusty on taking a soil sample, sampling is free through WVU's lab. The only cost is postage. Your results will only be as good as your sample, so make it count. To take a good sample, move in a random pattern across the field, and take samples as you go.

A soil test is meant to take the average of the nutrients within the field, so more samples provide a better representation of what's underfoot. If you don't have a soil probe, use a small garden spade, dig a hole and back the spade up to take a nice clean cross section of soil approximately 1 inch thick. This prevents any subsoil mixing in with the top layer and collects a more accurate sample.



For horticulture crops, sample to a depth of 6-8 inches. For lawns, pastures, and hay fields, a depth of 2-4 inches is sufficient.

Mix all samples in a bucket, and remove anything that is not soil—rocks, roots, and plant debris. Air dry the sample and mail it to the University's lab, along with a completed soil sample form, which can be found online at soiltesting.wvu.edu.

The Vanishing Middle: What changes are ahead with the decline of midsized farms?

From *Farm Progress*, By Gail Keck

The notion that birth order determines aspects of a person's personality is controversial, but I've come to believe there is some truth in it. For instance, I'm a middle kid, and middle kids are said to be innovative and diplomatic, with superior leadership and peacekeeping skills. That seems accurate, if I do say so myself. But saying we tend to be melodramatic and overly sensitive because we feel overlooked is just ridiculous! And hurtful! How could anyone say such a thing?

Through history, middle kids have dominated in leadership roles. Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and John F. Kennedy were all middle children. In fact, 52% of U.S. presidents have been middle children. Of course, for most of our nation's history, people tended to have large families, so middle children outnumbered first- and last-borns. However, it's best not to overanalyze when you are using statistics to prove a point.

Fewer middle children, fewer midsized farms: In the future, we're likely to see the influence of middle children in leadership roles diminish, simply because middle children are becoming rarer as family structures change and people raise smaller families. A similar change is occurring in agriculture's family of farmers. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture, numbers of very small and large farms are increasing, while there's a sharp decline in the number of midsized operations.

The large commercial farms that produce the majority of our farm products act like the big kids of the farming world. They tend to be reliable and high-achieving, but they can also be reluctant to take chances and try new ideas. Meanwhile, tiny hobby and lifestyle farms act like the adorable younger siblings. They tend to have great social skills, and they thrive on attention — which might explain all their charming farm photos on social media. They're also the ones who can break long-standing rules and get away with it.

Like middle kids, middle-sized farms tend to look for ways to distinguish themselves from their bigger siblings in order to find their own paths to success. They've often been the innovators, testing out new production and conservation practices. As the number of midsized farms declines, will large farms take it upon themselves to set up research programs to replace those back-field experiments?

Historically middle-sized farms have also been the ones providing leadership for community groups and farm organizations. Will the large farms encourage more employees to engage with their communities? How about the small farms? Will they pick up the slack, or are those farmers too busy with the off-farm careers they need to keep their farming fantasies going?

Middle's essential function:
Middle-sized farms also help provide the critical mass that keeps rural communities and ag-related businesses healthy. Those little kids aren't big enough to do it on their own, and the big kids have enough clout that they don't have to rely on local connections.

As middle kids and middle-sized farms dwindle, future families and the farming industry will settle into different dynamics, but few people seem concerned about the changes. Maybe those in the middle have good reason to feel overlooked.

Farmers Talk Frost Dates and Farm Stress

From *The Progressive Farmer*, by Emily Unglesbee,

ROCKVILLE, Md. (DTN) -- It's the billion-dollar question on everyone's mind. The dreaded F-word is dominating conversations in the Corn Belt.

"The biggest stressor right now is will the crop finish ahead of frost," confirmed Bob Birdsell, a farmer in northwest Missouri. "An early one would be a disaster."

Birdsell is a member of DTN's Agronomy Advisors, a group of trusted farmers and ranchers that reports monthly on their operations and current events in ag. This month, DTN quizzed these growers on expected frost dates and what they might mean for millions of acres of late-planted crops.

It's an anxiety-inducing topic, in a historically difficult year, and that stress has taken a toll on farmers and the agricultural community that works with them. With that in mind, the Agronomy Advisors also reported on how the pressures and uncertainty of the season have affected their mental health and how they manage that stress.

RACING THE FROST

A clear line emerges in the Great Frost Speculation of 2019, between the southern and northern Corn Belt. In states such as Missouri, Arkansas, Indiana and southern Illinois, most farmers are optimistic that corn and soybean fields will reach maturity before the first frost of the season. Farther north, in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Michigan, it is quickly becoming clear that many fields, but especially cornfields, might not make Mother Nature's deadline.

In southern Minnesota, farmer and ag consultant Mark Nowak has been crunching numbers all summer. He tracks the growing degree units (GDU) his corn has accumulated, calculates future GDUs based on weather forecasts, and compares them with his fields' slow march toward maturity.

As harvest time approaches, his calculations look grim.

"Most of our 105-day corn needs 2,500 GDUs to reach black layer," he explained. "That puts us out to October 10. Normal first frost for Nowak Farms is October 5."

In southeast Michigan, where some corn has yet to tassel, Raymond Simpkins is watching a similar timeline unfold. "We probably need until the third week of October for good maturity," he said. "We usually get a hard frost the first week of October."

Nowak is actually ahead of many in his region; he planted most of his corn in early May while many acres were planted after May 20. "[I see] a 50-50 chance that a normal first frost or close to there will wipe out half a billion bushels of corn," he said.

Farther south, farmers are more hopeful. "Average frost for us is around November 15," noted southern Illinois farmer Josh Miller, who planted soybeans deep into July. "The corn will be fine. But some of the beans might be hurt by an early frost."

In west-central Illinois, farmer John Werries also expects to dodge the region's typical late-October frost. "We do have a sizeable efficient dryer and aim to start corn harvest September 9th, if not sooner," he said.

A SEASON OF STRESS

Nearly all of the DTN Agronomy Advisors reported that this season's many stresses -- the trade war, an historically bad crop year, consecutive years of low prices and the caustic cauldron of current politics and farm policy fights -- are taking a toll on their mental health and wellness.

In Arkansas, Williams has watched a neighbor go bankrupt and hears talk of looming farm liquidations. "I'll be gathering my 25th crop this year, and it's as tough as I've ever seen it," he said. "The biggest challenge for me personally is finding motivation to keep moving forward."

Missouri farmer Kyle Samp echoed that sentiment. "This has been, without a doubt, the most difficult summer of my 16 years of farming," he said. "This has always been a volatile business, but it seems like it has been turned up to 11 the last 12 months. That, coupled with having a young family and being in a time of transition on our farm, will always make things that much more stressful."

Managing that stress is not easy, particularly in a traditionally conservative industry such as agriculture, where toughness and stoicism are highly valued and mental health issues stigmatized. The DTN Agronomy Advisors shared some of their tried and true ways of managing stress -- and even transcending it.

Faith, family and community topped the list of favored methods -- isolation, as Samp noted, is a particularly dangerous dynamic for farmers living in rural areas. "My circle of peers that farm as a full-time profession locally is pretty small, but social media has made it so much easier to connect with others in the same station in life," he noted. "Connecting with others that deal with the same stress, at a minimum, makes this a little less lonely."

In Missouri, Birdsell relies on the demands of the livestock side of his operation and his growing family to take his mind off looming frost dates and cratering commodity markets. "You have to find what works for you to relax -- for me, church, family time and two granddaughters help a lot," he said, adding that "It's amazing how relaxing holding a 4-month-old baby is, especially if you don't have to be the one changing the diaper!"

Supportive spouses have proven invaluable, several farmers noted. "I've always gritted my teeth and just waited out the tough times in the past, but I finally sat down and shared where I was with my wife one night," Samp recalled. "I'm married to a saint, and she has really helped me shoulder the load this year." Miller, of southern Illinois, also reported that his wife helps him deal with the stress that strikes him "somewhat randomly" and leaves him reeling. "Sometimes blaring music works," he adds, "But other days, the stress outweighs the musical benefits."

Continued on page 5

Farmers Talk Frost continued...

Some farmers noted that life has given them heavier crosses to bear than even the weighty woes of the agricultural industry right now -- and those challenges have the benefit of putting farm stresses into perspective.

Keith Peters' son flies night missions in Afghanistan, which gives the Ohio farmer daily lessons on letting go of things beyond his control. "So the usual stressors from farming seem a little less important," he said. "We all need reminders of what's important in life."

In Illinois, Werries is traveling through a gauntlet of medical scares that have helped him find surprising peace about the transitory troubles of farming.

"I want you to know that what I used to think was so important, like too much rain, not enough rain, low prices and a multitude of other things, have not been so important to me the last three years," he said.

Three years ago, his wife Ruthie was diagnosed with a rare, incurable form of cancer. After years of treatments, an experimental clinical trial finally gave her some relief, only for Werries to face his own cancer diagnosis this summer.

One surgery and one dangerous bacterial infection later, Werries is cancer-free, but his beloved Ruthie continues to face an uncertain future.

"We don't know what we are facing next," Werries explained. "Have you heard all things are relative? Well, the problems in the farm community are minuscule compared to what is on my mind these days."

The Werries' faith and community has been their bedrock, and the experience has been a master class in finding peace amid worldly stresses, he said. "We are all trusting the Lord above," he said. "That is how we handle stress."

Fall Grazing Management to Benefit Your Forages

From *On Pasture*, by Howard Moechnig

One of the greatest temptations in the fall is to "open the gates" and "let the livestock have the run of the pasture". In terms of pasture for the following year, this is one of the most costly mistakes that can be made. Even in the fall, it is just as important to control the movement of the livestock through the grazing system as it is during the earlier parts of the grazing season. Here's why proper fall grazing management is essential:

Residual Forage Protects the Soil to Provide for Spring Regrowth
Adequate residual stubble (at least 4") or adequate trampled forage residues (at least 1,500 lb/A) on the pastures at this time of the season will modify the microclimate at the soil surface for better survival of the forages through the winter. The temperature at the soil surface will be more uniform than in an overgrazed pasture. This helps new buds, which are developed in the forage plant in the fall for the following spring, to survive. Many types of forage will grow a bud on the root or crown in the fall ready for growth right away in the spring. This bud can be damaged by extreme cold, fluctuations of temperature above and below freezing, desiccation, and crushing by livestock hooves.

Residual Traps Snow More Effectively
Snow provides insulation for the soil surface and the new buds on the plants. The trapped snow also provides additional moisture in the spring. On average the lack of moisture is an issue more often than excess moisture in pastures. This strategy helps to create the moist conditions necessary for the plants to get a good start in the spring.

Adequate Residual Means Earlier Growth in Spring
Plant residues are a raw source of organic material for living organisms in the soil in the early spring. Without this they would suffer from lack of materials to "feed on". They would not effectively perform the functions of recycling nutrients and mineralizing the soil to provide fertility for the plant to grow. Pastures with adequate residues left over winter will emerge 10-14 days earlier in the spring.

Soil Compaction is Greatly Reduced
When the livestock have access to the entire pasture, they will walk over it again and again, selecting the best of the remaining forage. This leads to compaction because they travel over the same areas many times. It does not take much compaction to effectively reduce infiltration of rainfall or snow- melt, and to reduce the exchange of air between the soil and the atmosphere. The net effect is to reduce the available moisture for plant growth and reduce the populations of organisms in the soil.

Root Reserves Are Protected
Root reserves in the plants will be reduced with continued grazing in the fall. This reduces plant vigor and spring growth.

What should you do to properly manage forages?
1. Maintain control of the livestock through the entire year. Continue to rotate them through the pasture system, paddock by paddock, in the fall until they have used the forages to the point where there is no more available forage.

2. Rest paddocks that need it. This is a good time to rest the paddocks that have been damaged during the grazing season due to weather conditions or factors that disrupted the rotation of the livestock through the system.

3. Plan your Fall grazing to enhance Spring regrowth. Pastures that are allowed to rest for 30 days prior to a killing frost will emerge from winter dormancy 10-14 days earlier in the spring. This represents a significant extension of the grazing season.

4. Use crop residue to extend your grazing season. If alternative sources of forage (corn stalks or soybean residues, hayfields that will be tilled out next season, etc.) are available at this time, use them to give your pastures a longer rest period than they would normally have.

5. Select your sacrificial winter paddock. Keep livestock in the pasture for as long as possible, without grazing below a 4" residual stubble height. When there are no more forages to graze in the pasture and livestock are being fed hay, move both the livestock and bales around the field to reduce winter injury and add nutrients back to the pasture.

Fall Cleanup Vital to Prevent Loss and Future Diseases

From WVU Extension's *IPM Chronicle*, Fall 2018

From less than favorable growing conditions, many crops suffer losses from plant diseases. Pathogens from these infected tissues can overwinter and also become next year's problem. This is specifically true for foliar diseases, and it provides an avenue for the disease to spread from one crop to another. For example, early blight and Septoria leaf spot of tomato are major foliar diseases caused by fungal pathogens that can be a recurring problem in the our area. Frequent rain and high humidity can exacerbate the situation causing complete blighting and defoliation of plants in three to four weeks from the initial infection.

Septoria leaf spot infected tomato leaves

These organisms can also infect and survive on tomato stems and fruits.

Remove infected debris

If growers leave infected plant debris intact, next year's crop can be infected from the previous year's inoculum left on infected debris. For instance, Septoria leaf spot or early blight infected leaves fallen on the ground will obviously act as an inoculum source for the next crop if tomatoes or potatoes are planted in the same area.

These organisms need a food source to remain alive during the period from one crop to another. If removal of plant debris is not practical, alternative approaches that will decay or degrade tissues and deprive organisms of their food source may be effective.

Fall tillage

One approach is to deep plow the debris at the end of the season. As crop residue goes underneath the soil, microbes will degrade the tissues exposing organisms in soil that will not support their survival. Numerous studies have proven fall tillage that buries infected residue for six months can reduce disease in the following crop in many host-pathogen combinations. If removal of stubble to a suitable distance or burying by deep plowing is not possible, burning may be another option.

Pruning

In perennial crops where complete removal of plants is not possible, pruning of infected plant parts will achieve the same goal. Examples are removal of fire blight or other canker disease-infected twigs of pome fruits, removal of anthracnose-infected grape vines, removal of black knot or mummified fruits from stone fruit trees, and pruning and destruction of infected limbs or foliage from landscape trees. This principle also applies to greenhouse or high tunnel crops.

Intercultural operations

Intercultural operations are needed for any crop production system. However, subtle adjustments can largely contribute to the management or lowering of disease severity in many crops. Sanitation and removal of plant debris more importantly breaks the disease cycle. Although crop production inside a greenhouse or in some heated high tunnels is possible year-round, it is always wise to take a month-long break from continuous cropping and sanitize the whole area for disease management.

Modification of cultural practices that can have a profound effect on plant disease management include the following:

- Tillage practices – No till can pose disease threat where crop rotation is not possible. Deep plowing allows infected crop stubble to be buried and provides quick degradation.
- Sowing and harvesting practices – Early sowing when soil temps are not high enough or soil is too moist can cause seedling damping off. Delay in sowing or planting seedlings instead of seed sowing can minimize this disease. Seedling diseases caused by *Fusarium* spp. and *Rhizoctonia* spp. are more serious if seeds are planted deeply. Similarly, potatoes, celery and cauliflower are more readily attacked by *Rhizoctonia* if planted too deep. Any unharvested or over-ripened fruit can be infected by pathogens, acting as a source of inoculum for the next crop. Complete harvest and removal of fruit can reduce the potential of future disease.

Mummified grapes, caused by Black Rot

- Mulching – It puts a barrier between susceptible plant parts and pathogens in the top soil layer, which prevents initial infection.
- Scouting – Quick removal of plant disease when it appears only on a few plants or in a small area of a field prevents the spread of the disease to the whole area. This is specifically important for viral disease.
- Timing of intercultural operations – Avoiding intercultural operations when plants are wet can reduce the spread and infections by many fungal pathogens. Fungal pathogens need moisture to germinate and infect plant tissues. Work at suspected diseased areas at the end of any intercultural operation in order to prevent spread of disease to unaffected areas.

Brown rot of plums

There's Nothing Trite About the Bite

From Hay and Forage Grower

The concept is pretty simple: Keep pastures growing and keep animals eating.

A lot goes into that first part of the equation — adequate soil fertility for sure.

But there's also the challenge of keeping pastures within a linear, rapid growth phase by not over- or under grazing such that plants quit growing or are growing extremely slow. This means not grazing pastures too short and doing your best to initiate grazing before or immediately after flowering and heading.

Once pasture productivity potential is optimized, it then becomes a question of getting animals to consume the forage. The end game of grazing livestock, be it for weight gain, milk, or fiber, is a function of dry matter feed intake, and it needs to be high-quality feed.

Those brave and persistent souls who make their living by studying the interactions of pasture forage and livestock performance will often assess forage intake by observing grazing animals and measuring the amount of forage consumed per bite taken, how many bites are taken per unit of time, and how much time is spent grazing. These three fundamental factors are then multiplied together to yield total forage intake, and the answer will have a lot to do with how livestock perform or, conversely, don't perform.

Dennis Hancock, University of Georgia Extension forage specialist, often discusses how certain situations will impact bite size, the amount taken per bite, and grazing (eating) time. His assessment goes something like this:

Pastures are very short:
When pastures are short or overgrazed, there is less forage mass per bite, more bites per minute, and the minutes spent grazing probably will go up for a period of time. Hancock notes, however, that at some point the animals will "wear down" as they try to graze short pastures. There's always a limit as to how long an animal will graze.

Pastures are tall:
Under grazed or tall pastures result in the amount of forage per bite going up, but the number of bites per minute declines. The time spent grazing will stay the same or slightly drop as gut fill occurs more quickly.

Small mouth size:
Logically, the amount of forage eaten per bite declines if the mouth (muzzle) size is small. This has the overall effect of less than optimum forage intake.

The animal is ill or uncomfortable:
When an animal is stressed, such as by heat, its grazing time is drastically reduced. Most of its time is spent lying down or standing under a shade tree.

Limit grazing:
Though grazing minutes are purposely restricted, mass per bite and bites per minute may actually go up, especially if they enter the pasture after not eating for a period of time.

Animal feels full:
Grazing time is reduced, and the animal may not bite at the same rate.

Poor forage quality (high fiber):
The animal stays full longer as forage stays in the rumen for an extended period. The animal becomes a less aggressive grazer and both the number of bites and the minutes spent grazing decline.

Rapid forage passage rate:
When pasture forage quality is exceptionally high, both the number of bites and the minutes spent grazing are enhanced.

Livestock species:
There are significant differences in the grazing habits of different livestock species. Cattle will spend up to eight hours per day grazing, most of which occurs at dawn, late afternoon, and at dusk. Their bite rate is relatively constant at 48 to 54 bites per minute but can range from 30 to 90. The grazing time for cattle is also genetically influenced. In one grazing study, identical twins grazed almost exactly the same amount of time, but the differences between twin pairs differed by up to 40 percent. Hancock notes that the findings of such a study implies that good grazers can be selected.

Though a bite of pasture forage may seem insignificant at first glance, for the livestock producer who grazes cattle, it is actually the foundational animal activity.

Women in Agriculture Conference

The West Virginia Women in Agriculture Conference will be held again this fall, at Stonewall Resort in Roanoke, West Virginia on November 15-16, 2019. This annual conference rotates around the state each year, and aims to strengthen a woman's role on the farm through education and networking. Cost for the conference is $95 if you register before October 1.Registration includes a tour of local farms on Friday afternoon, a day of educational sessions Saturday, and all meals. Lodging is reserved separately. For the complete conference agenda, or to register, visit our webpage:

https://extension.wvu.edu/conferences/wia

Maryland Small Ruminant Conference

University of Maryland Extension is hosting the first Maryland Small Ruminant Pasture Grazing and Browsing Conference on Saturday, October 19 from 9 AM to 4 PM at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center located at 18330 Keedysville Road in Keedysville, MD.

Cost is $35 per person and registrations are due by October 10. For more information on how to register, and for the complete agenda, visit the below webpage:

http://2019grazingconference.eventbrite.com

WestVirginiaUniversity.
EXTENSION SERVICE
JEFFERSON COUNTY

Emily Morrow
Agriculture & Natural Resources Extension Agent
1948 Wiltshire Road, Suite 3
Kearneysville, WV 25430
Emily.Wells@mail.wvu.edu
304-728-7413, ext 2

Visit our site

extension.wvu.edu/jefferson

Crop Condition, as of Tuesday, September 3

Source: USDA

CORN

- The overall condition of the corn crop is rated at 58% good to excellent in the top 18 corn producing states, above 57% a week ago and 67% a year ago.
- The USDA pegged 81% of the corn crop was in the dough stage, compared with a 93% five-year average.
- Also, 41% of the corn has entered the dent stage vs. a 63% five -year average.
- USDA rated the crop in the mature stage at 6% vs. 13% five-year average.

SOYBEANS

- The nation's crop is rated 55% good/excellent compared with 55% a week ago and 66% a year ago.
- Also, 96% of the soybean crop is blooming vs. a 100% five-year average.
- The USDA pegged the amount of soybeans setting pods at 86%, well below a five-year average of 96%.

WHEAT

- Spring wheat harvest is 55% complete, vs. a 78% five-year average.