

Bull breeding soundness

Have you ever wondered whether your bull is doing his job? Do you worry about your cows being bred? Having a breeding soundness exam performed by your veterinarian will ease your worries, and give you a clear picture of your bull's ability to do his job effectively. Breeding soundness exams involve inspection of overall health of the bull and assessment of the quality of his semen. Recommended vaccinations for your bulls are IBR, BVDV, BRSV, PI3, Vibrio and Leptospirosis. This will not only protect your bulls, but also the cows they expose. Other commonly used vaccinations for bulls are footrot and pinkeye. Fly tags and pour-on treatments are crucial to the health of your bulls.

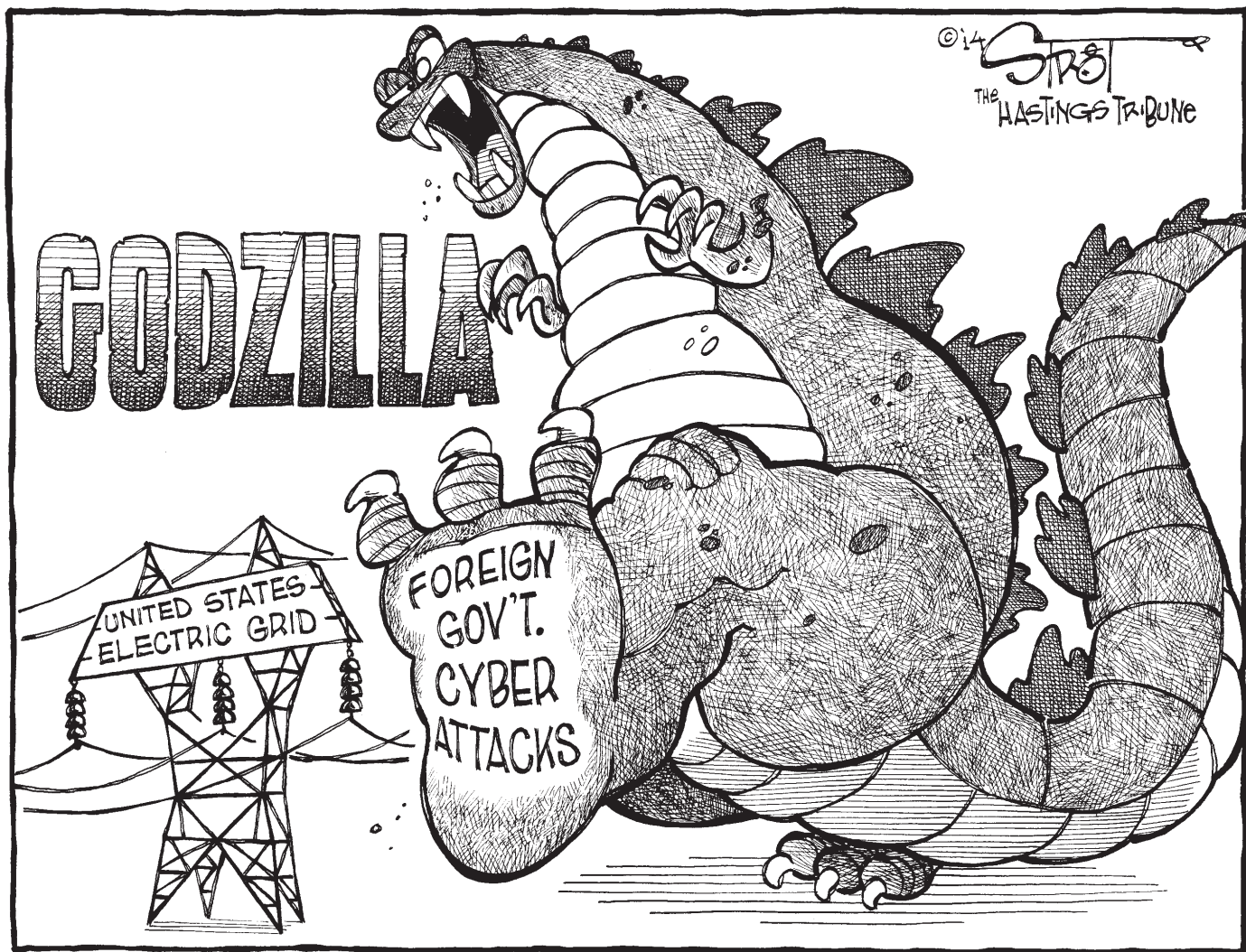
Vet tips
Dr. Aaron White



Testing for Trichomoniasis is becoming increasingly important, especially since it is required for shipping across state lines or for bull sales. Trichomoniasis is a disease of cattle that causes infertility, open cows, and occasional abortions in cows and heifers. It is commonly referred to as "Trich", and is a disease that can be economically devastating for infected herds. Economic losses primarily are due to open cows; repeat breeding and subsequently longer calving intervals. Consequently, affected herds have smaller and less uniform calf crops, increased culling rates, increased demands for replacement females and increased veterinary expense.

In herds infected with "Trich" you can expect a long, drawn-out calving season, with a disappointing total calf crop. In such herds, it is common to end up with a 50-70 percent calf crop, strung out over 3-8 months. Because "Trich" often gets into a herd via the introduction of one infected animal, especially an infected bull, another scenario is possible. In this case, after the first year, the percentage of pregnant cows may fall from 95 percent to 90 percent. In the second year, there may be a further fall to 75 percent or less, making a problem incredibly obvious. A qualified veterinarian can help detect problems in your herd.

Breeding soundness exams for all of your bulls can be a valuable tool in your well-managed herd. Breeding soundness exams are an economical way to protect your valuable investment. No more sleepless nights wondering whether your bulls are doing their job! Vaccination, fly and parasite control, and proper testing of your bulls will help ensure that your farm and ranch's cattle herd is performing to the best of their ability. Call your veterinarian to discuss your herd health issues.



Showing appreciation and gratitude

Oreos and coffee. Not the most well-balanced breakfast, but it was the first thing I saw Tuesday morning. It was ready-to-eat. No recipe needed. Nothing to mix up. Nothing to heat, if you don't count the coffee, which I put together the night before and set to "auto." Basically, it was just there. Which was what I needed after the weekend.

Memorial Day is one of my favorite holidays. But next year I may have to hire help. It is absolutely the busiest weekend of the year. If we weren't at a potluck, I was cooking for a potluck. I made 10 pounds of potato salad, a gallon of cucumber-pasta salad, three dozen deviled eggs, a Texas sheet cake, taco salad and Jell-o salad, plus an impromptu breakfast for some neighbors and friends.

I told some friends that I didn't seem able to keep "all the balls in the air" like I used to. My friend, Karla said, "You have to do this," as she took my head in her hands and turned it from side to side, "just learn to say, 'No.'"

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We had an opportunity to share the

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



traditions of this community with someone who had never witnessed a Memorial Day service like is held in every town, village and country cemetery in this part of the country.

Our new neighbor grew up in west Texas, but had spent the last several years in southwest Kansas. He has relocated to our little town and we invited him to attend Memorial Day services with us. As we approached the cemetery and he saw the Avenue of Flags that seemed to stretch on and on, he was duly impressed. All he could say was, "Wow!" That was enough. That's how I feel each time I see it, too.

Later, he shared, "I never knew what Memorial Day was all about. It used to be just another day off and a reason to party."

The entire Kelley family is the beneficiary of a random act of kindness. One that caught me totally unaware.

Following the Memorial Day services a nice man I've known for years approached me and asked about the military flag that was presented to the family following our brother, Bob's, funeral.

When I told him Bob's children had it, he told me, "Well, just know that one will be flying here, next year, with his name on it." And he was gone. He wasn't bragging. He wasn't expecting recognition. He was just paying tribute to a man who had served his country.

Instant tears came to my eyes and a lump in my throat. I was overwhelmed. I don't know if I even said, "Thank you," or not.

But I'm saying it now. And I'm encouraging everyone to somehow, somehow, show their appreciation and gratitude to those who have served. Show the world that patriotism is not dead in our country.

God bless America!

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- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. roberts.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-4774
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002. moran.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-6521
- ★ **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 300 SW 10th St., Room 136-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us (785) 296-7399
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The relentlessness of the Kansas winds

Most Kansas farmers and ranchers have seen about everything. Still the sight of the white combine headed for a wheat crop or soil leaving the home is enough to make their blood run cold.

That's just what April and May have ushered into the Sunflower State - day after day of winds 20, 30 and 40 miles per hour with gusts more than 60 miles per hour.

These winds never quit. They're relentless.

Traditionally, Kansas winds slow when the sun goes down. Not the last couple months. All across the state winds continue to howl long into the night and strengthen when the sun rises the next day.

"I've never seen this kind of wind in my lifetime," says Joe Newland, Wilson County farmer. "A couple weeks ago, the day turned dark and you couldn't see to drive in a few areas."

Newland grows corn, soybeans, wheat and some hay while running approximately 350 head of momma cows in southeastern Kansas. He's farmed nearly 50 years.

Winds in his region of the state sometimes blow for a day or two in a small field or section of a field. Never for too long or too strong, but that's not the case this spring.

It's blown for days on end throughout the entire county, Newland says. In fact, it's blown across the entire southeastern part of Kansas.

"You see plenty during a lifetime," the 60-year-old farmer/stockman says. "But when you see the soil blow off your farm, it's like getting hit in the

Insight John Schlageck



gut. It's a harsh feeling when you can't do anything about it.

During previous years when the winds kicked up and started to blow, Newland would hook a rotary hoe behind his tractor and run strips across the blowing land breaking the soil into clods that would stop the dirt from blowing.

Wind-control measures haven't worked as well this year but farmers keep trying. Plain and simple, there just hasn't been enough moisture.

Spring rains in April totaled one inch and 50 hundreds across his fields this spring. Little precipitation has fallen so far in May. Typically, southeastern Kansas receives the most rain in the state during this time frame.

"Most years, we receive several rains of two and three inches in March, April and May," the veteran farmer/stockman says.

These abundant rains fill farm ponds and pave the way for plenty of pasture growth and healthy corn, bean and milo crops. This year, unfortunately, a few pond levels have dropped nearly 50 percent.

While his cow herd still has enough grass, due to the lack of rain his fescue

isn't the lush green color it typically is.

"Some of it's turning that off-green color," Newland says. "Our grass needs rain."

While this region of the state looks great compared to western Kansas, the grass in Wilson and Neosho counties is about half the height it typically grows to in mid-May. Grass six inches tall is the norm so far this spring rather than eight, 10 or 12 inches.

Cropping conditions continue to suffer as well. Corn is below average in maturity and doesn't look as lush and healthy as it should.

"We're getting a taste of what farmers and ranchers in central and western Kansas have coped with for many years," Newland says. "It's a taste we don't much care for."

Oftentimes fall crops in southeastern Kansas receive too much moisture with spring rains. Then flooding can occur and wash away corn and bean crops.

Not so this year. While Newland hasn't planted his soybeans yet, it's drier than it typically is this time of year. He would sure like to see a couple of two-inch rains before he pulls his planter into the fields.

Having farmed for four decades, Newland is far from throwing in the towel. He knows the weather can change in a heartbeat. He hopes and prays his farm and that of his friends and neighbors across Kansas will be blessed with rain and soon.

And those wicked winds?
Shhh. Listen. Are they dying down?

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Thumbs up to Sharon Schultz and Karen Glenn for being my graduation angels and for helping out at the graduation after party. Called in.