

Is the old garden seed still good?

Well, 2007 is here, and the snow has brought us some much-needed moisture. After several years of warm, dry winters, maybe we are getting back to more normal moisture.

With the New Year comes new things, including seed catalogs. These seem to come earlier every year. You may already have several. It's enjoyable reviewing them, scanning information on plants and seeing what is new this year.

The seed cost of featured new plants can really add up. Recently, I was asked about using leftover seed, purchased in the past and not used.

It is true, garden seed can be expensive, and you may want to consider using seed from previous years. Seed stores best if kept in a cold, dark, dry location. We normally consider seed viable for about



dana belshe

• ag notebook

three years under these conditions, though there are exceptions.

For example, members of the carrot family (carrots, parsnips and parsley) are short-lived and are usually good for only one to two years. If you are unsure of viability and have plenty of seed, there is an easy method of determining how good your seed is.

Place 10 seeds on a moistened paper towel (use warm water) and cover with a second moistened towel. Roll up the towels and place inside a plastic bag with enough

holes for air exchange but not so many that the towels dry quickly. Place the bag in a warm place

such as the top of refrigerator. Re-moisten towels with warm water as needed. Check after the first week for germination. Remove the sprouted seed and check again after another week. Add these numbers together to determine the percent germination.

Dana Belshe is agricultural agent for Kansas State University Research and Extension and the Sunflower Extension District, covering Sherman and Wallace counties.

Blood drive planned at tech college

The Goodland Community Blood Drive will be from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 23, at the Northwest Kansas Technical College student union (west door).

Call (800) GIVE LIFE to schedule an appointment.

The American Red Cross has joined with the American Association of Blood Banks to stress the importance of donating

blood during a time of the year when the blood supply is dangerously low.

"If all who are eligible to donate would do so on a regular basis — three to four times per year — blood needs could be met and shortages could become a thing of the past," said Diane Elder, Red Cross South Central Division collections executive.

The Red Cross points out that January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month.

Donors must be in general good health, weigh 110 pounds or more and be at least 17, or 16 in Kansas with a parental consent form. Print the form and reading materials at www.bloodgiveslife.org. Most medications do not prevent you from donating.

Area students make Fort Hays deans' honor roll

More than 25 area undergraduates were named to the Fort Hays State University deans' honor roll for the fall 2006 semester.

To be eligible, full-time students must have a minimum grade average of 3.60 for the semester.

Goodland students on the list are Peggy S. Blake, Mark Alexander Collado, Nathan R. Elliott, Trista

D. Lalicker, Monica Rangel, Sondra S. Smith and Mallory J. Younger.

From Kanorado: Deborah M. Benisch.

Brewster: Jill Leeann Beiser.

St. Francis: Amber D. Feikert,

Andrew A. Feikert, Gina L.

Frohlich, Kari N. Gienger, Cale

David Rieger, Heidi J. Rohweder

and Michael A. Wolters.

Sharon Springs: Mandi Kay Bellamy, Danele M. Benisch, Deborah M. Benisch, Joanna M. Klinge, Colleen Annette Wagoner and Keli L. Wagoner.

Wallace: Kaler K. Bretz and Maranda Jean Bussen.

Weskan: Macy J. Sexson and Alisha M. Welsh.

Farmers choose wheat or corn

The University of Nebraska has developed a spreadsheet to help farmers weigh the benefits and the costs of destroying fall-planted wheat and replanting this spring to take advantage of high corn prices.

During this last year, high wheat prices encouraged some farmers to plant wheat on acres that have traditionally been in corn. With the recent upswing in the corn market, some now are trying to decide whether they should stick with wheat or tear it out. This is especially a concern on irrigated ground.

The worksheet allows farmers to use information on their resources and cropping practices to compare various scenarios.

This spreadsheet, along with a brief overview, can be found on the Internet at westcentral.unl.edu/agecon/ and clicking on "Wheat or Corn." To use the spreadsheet, you'll need Microsoft Excel on your computer.



jeanne falk

• agron notes

The spreadsheet considers two crop environments, irrigated and dryland. Deciding whether to change crops depends on many factors, including available equipment, cost of production, the farmer's ability to grow wheat versus corn and the prices anticipated for each crop this year. The program was used to make the following analysis, based on some simple assumptions.

Spraying and killing the wheat and planting corn is a good choice on irrigated land, the program shows, while leaving the planted wheat often is the best choice for dryland. Farmers are encouraged to use the spreadsheet themselves to determine the best options for

their situation.

The spreadsheet may be useful, but its results will be no better than the information entered and the assumptions used.

The value of crop residue was not included. Water costs were included, but no explicit value was included for any water savings. Irrigators who have limited water may want to put a value on the water saved by producing wheat.

The information is from Matt Stockton, ag economist, and Faith Colburn, communications, at the University of Nebraska.

Jeanne Falk is an area crop production and economics specialist for Sherman, Cheyenne and Wallace counties with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

Brewster still slow because of ice, snow

Brewster is still pretty slow on activities because of all the ice and snow. Basketball games have started up since vacation is over, but the senior center is still slow.

It sounds like another storm is coming in later this week. We probably won't see the ground until April. Guess that's okay because of the need for moisture.

Warren Reid's brother Jerry Reid passed away last week in Broomfield, Colo. Funeral was in Boulder last Monday. Our sympathy goes out to the Reid family.

Collette Carpenter went to Fort Morgan, Colo., over the weekend to visit family and friends.

Bucky Williams of Goodland passed away this week. He farmed north of Brewster. Our sympathy to his family.



betty jo baird

• brewster news

James and Muzette Baldwin of Brewster had a baby girl on Jan. 1. Her name is Regina. Regina has a brother at home.

Dear God: Teach me how to mind my own business. To take care of myself. To remember that there are just certain things that certain people have to go through.

Please remind me: That I can't fix anyone; nor can I change them, and when there is something that others cannot do for themselves, they need

to come to You, not me.

Give me the strength to: Hear with compassion; to watch with empathy; to pray and trust Your

merciful grace; and how to stay put and still until You tell me to move.

Allow me to be: A guide to the lost; a teacher to the willing; a blessing to the meek; a tool and not a doormat.

Inspire me to: Give and move on; share without controlling; expect the best for others no matter how bad it looks; and to know that when I don't do it, You will.

God is the ever present help we all need.

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The Goodland Star News Service Directory

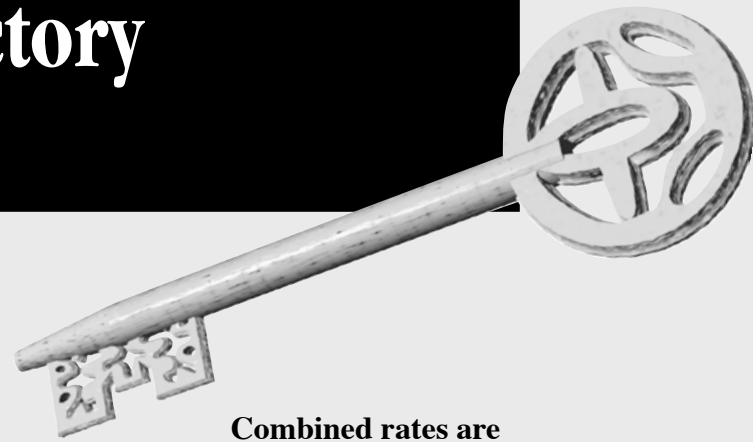
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