

KSU highlights steps to keep atrazine on the field

MANHATTAN - Extension has released an updated publication, "Using Atrazine Wisely," which is available online. K-State weed scientist Sarah Lancaster said the new resource lays out practical strategies to reduce atrazine runoff, offering farmers clear steps to keep the herbicide where it belongs - on the field and working against weeds. The update comes at a time when the EPA is closely reviewing atrazine and may require more restrictive practices on future product labels. "Atrazine is critical for controlling tough weeds, but it's also one of the most closely watched herbicides because of its potential to move into streams and lakes," Lancaster said. "Farmers can take practical steps that not only protect water quality but also help ensure atrazine remains available as an option." Atrazine has been detected above safe levels in certain Kansas waters, particularly after heavy spring rains following herbicide applications. Because atrazine breaks down slowly in the soil and is moderately soluble in water, it often moves with runoff during the first major storm of the season. State monitoring shows that two-thirds of annual runoff losses typically happen in that single event. K-State specialists encourage producers to look at both application practices and conservation strategies to reduce losses. Following label directions, calibrating equipment, and avoiding over-application remain essential, but researchers also highlight the benefits of timing. Post-emergence applications, delayed until soils are drier, can help minimize runoff, while (See ATRAZINE on page 9)

Row crop producers are confronting falling prices

Earlier this week, USDA released its estimate for the national average farm case price for corn in the 2025-26 marketing year to be \$3.90. That update is down 30¢ from what USDA was saying in July. Farm CPA Paul Neiffer says in the short-term it means two things: a focus on government payments and tougher conversations with ag lenders. "Certainly on the credit side, it means these bankers are going to be having even more talks with their farmers when it comes to renewal," Neiffer said in reaction to the USDA report. With falling prices, there's a safety net in how the government payments are calculated. "The drop in prices is bad, but we also have to look at revenue per acre. If these farmers are going to get an extra 20, 30 or 40 bushels per acre, even at \$4, that still an extra \$70, \$80, or \$90 of actual cash receipts coming in after harvest," Neiffer said. (See ROW CROP on page 9)


Major commodity producers are big winners under GOP-led spending bill

Rachel Cramer  
Harvest Public Media


For some farmers, the Republican-backed spending bill could bring more security. But for others, it may do the opposite. The massive tax and spending law is expected to increase agricultural spending by nearly \$66 billion over the next decade. Over 80% of that slice will go toward programs that help farmers make up losses from natural disasters and when commodity prices and revenues dip below certain thresholds. Some agriculture groups have applauded the law. American Farm Bureau Federation president Zippy Duvall says the changes will bring certainty for many farmers and ranchers. (Legislation) also removes a "means test" for those who earn at least 75% of their income from agriculture and related activities. Before, farm businesses with almost a million dollar profit margin were not eligible for most subsidies. "Modernizing important farm safety net programs and making permanent critical tax provisions could be the difference between staying in business or shutting down the family farm," Duvall said. But some farmer groups have raised red flags. National Farmers Union president Rob Larew stated the gains for agriculture "are paired with harmful tradeoffs." Particularly, the bill slashes spending for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicaid. "Cuts to SNAP divide the farm bill coalition and reductions in Medicaid will have harmful effects on millions of Americans," Larew said "Farm policy should unite us. This approach undermines the foundation of the farm bill and puts its future at risk." Mike Lavender, policy director of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, described the law as "cannabilizing" the American food and farm system. The legislation carves out nearly \$186 billion from SNAP while subsidizing the largest, wealthiest farmers, he said. "There's a subset of folks who benefit from this bill," Lavender said. "It is not the majority of folks in the food and farm system." Specialty Farmers Lose Commodities like corn, wheat and rice tend to rely on direct payments from the government when times get tough, said Chad Hart, Iowa State University Extension economist. Whereas specialty crops, like tomatoes and cabbage, rely more on market access support. That includes Double Up Food Bucks, a SNAP program in over 25 states. It provides a one-to-one match for participants to buy more fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets and grocery stores, and through community-supported agriculture. "With food assistance basically under the chopping block here, that means less support for (specialty farmers) in the long run," said Hart. In 2023, over 40,000 Iowans redeemed nearly \$600,000 from the Double Up Food Bucks program. A third of that (See WINNERS on page 9)


Combine stranded due to tariff spat

U.S.-Canada Trade Spat Leaves Farmer's New Holland Combine Stranded Up North A new trade rule that went into effect Aug. 18 is already restricting the flow of steel-based farm equipment into the U.S. from manufacturers and dealers based north of the border. Here is one Oklahoma farmer's doozy of a tale. A farmer and custom harvesting business in Calumet, Okla., finds itself smack dab in the middle of the U.S. and Canada's ongoing border trade quarrel, and it's pretty ugly. Ryan Sorrels purchased a used 2008 New Holland CX8080 walker combine about a month ago from a dealer up in Saskatchewan, Canada. Sorrels says he needs the combine to finish up harvest for his customers, and he only uses walker combines because he doesn't have time to swap concaves between jobs. He cannot use a rotor-based combine, he emphatically states in his social media post. That much-needed New Holland walker combine never made it off the dealer lot where (See COMBINE on page nine)



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