

from our viewpoint...

Corn for ethanol might hurt cowmen

A growing divide between corn growers and cattlemen could strain relationships just as Congress takes up the new Farm Bill – and face the farmer-stockman with some interesting decisions.

Livestock interests, backed by food manufacturers and retailers, worry increasing government emphasis on ethanol fuel may drive corn prices so high, ranchers will be forced to liquidate their herds.

With many cattlemen already under pressure from drought in the Southwest, the possibility portends even higher retail food prices – and lower profits from a shrinking cow herd.

What has stockmen worried is a compromise that traded relief on a requirement to produce 7.5 billion gallons of alcohol-based motor fuel by 2007 for a gradual buildup to 36 billion gallons by 2022. That was coupled with a \$5 billion-a-year federal subsidy for ethanol production that expires this year, but the production target remains.

Others who use corn, from food processors to the beef, poultry and hog industries, fear what might happen as higher and higher fuel targets kick in, especially if bad weather cuts corn production one year.

Corn prices are already nearly double what they were a couple of years ago, and most people in farm country are not complaining. Stockmen who need to feed cattle might not be so happy, however, if the price doubles again.

Our beef production system today is based on feeding grain. It produces efficiencies that grazing cannot match. But if the cost of feed gets too high, it could well force growers to cull and reduce their cow herds, even with relatively strong meat prices.

It's one of those situations where the market ought to be allowed to operate. If people want alcohol-based fuels, they can buy them. But when government steps in and commands people to do the "right" thing, the consequences are hard to predict.

Ethanol production has been good to corn farmers, no doubt. It's created jobs out in farm country that did not exist. But it's harder and harder to justify on environmental or economic grounds, and with the votes shifting to the cities, it may be harder to keep in the Farm Bill, too.

The question for the farmer-stockman may be, "Feed the corn or sell it on the market?"

For the rest of us, it might be to ask whether we're better off with a strong corn market held up only by the good will of an unpredictable Congress, or with a solvent beef industry? Which means more to us in the long run?

Talk of possible corn rationing is just plain scary. Having the government decide who gets corn and who doesn't, and how much, who wants to depend on that?

Some days we'd be a lot better off if the government just stepped aside and let the market work. – Steve Haynes



Got the last crop out of our garden

Before the snow hit and the ground froze solid, I went out and picked my last root crop.

I had already brought in the cabbages. They weren't very big, but one makes a nice slaw for the two of us. A store-bought cabbage will make three to four slaws each but they aren't as flavorful as mine.

Besides cabbage, though, I like to have a carrot or two in my slaw, so I picked some. Then I picked some more, and finally, I just pulled every one from the ground. I ended up with almost four pounds of carrots and one scraggly turnip in a paper grocery bag.

It was quite a harvest, and I could have made mud pies in the sink after washing and de-topping them.

Then I took the crop to the office and gave about three-fourths of them away. Six or seven carrots is all that Steve and I can eat in the next few weeks. Besides, I didn't get that many cabbages this year.



cynthia haynes

• open season

Still, with the tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, radishes, peas, beans and cabbages all picked and eaten or given away, and the garden mostly bedded down for the winter, the carrots (and turnip) are about the end of the line.

Well, there was still some fall lettuce growing out there, but with this really cold weather, it's probably gone, too.

It was a great growing season, and I'm already planning for next year. But, for now, the garden is covered with grass clippings and chopped-up leaves and seems to be preparing for its long winter's nap.

I think I have about two weeks before the

first spring seed catalogue hits the mailbox. Meanwhile, down in Georgia, my girls are still picking things.

Lindsay went outside this week and got a green pepper off her vines to put into a recipe, and Felicia has strings of chili peppers decorating her door and more decorating her back fence. She takes fishing line and a large needle and just picks them and strings them.

I'm both awed and impressed. It makes me want to grow chili, but since the only thing I put chili in is chili, it really would be just for decoration, and I don't have enough garden space to give it over to decorative plants.

In my yard, even the irises have to share space with the garlic and other flowers live with the asparagus.

Well, it would be nice to have an all-year garden, but I'd probably get tired of it. And just think of the weeding!

Letter Policy

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What happened to the sod house?

To the Editor:

Just received the Nov. 15 issue of the newspaper. Yes, what did happen to all of exhibits that were removed from the High Plains Museum.

My family just moved to Goodland this year and my daughter kept telling me how unique your town was. I finally went for a visit the last week of June and the first week of July.

The first thing we did was go to the High Plains Museum. Going through it not only showed me what your pioneer's faced and how they survived the harsh environment but if necessary how you can survive it again. This is the lesson the school children need to learn. The sod house was one of the exhibits that made an impression on me.

My Granddaughters, Savannah and Vivian showed me the "grouchy man" with the spooky eyes.

Some of the exhibits brought back pleasant memories of my Grandparents and Great Grandparents – hard working, tough, God fearing, family loving, adventurous, independent, freedom seeking people who made us what we are today.

Goodland is a closely knit family and that is a good thing.

On the 4th of July we went down to the fairgrounds to enjoy the food, rides and fireworks. Everything was clean, neat, cared for.

You can tell the community takes pride in the town. That is why I understood Glenda's comment about "why do we hire people from out of State." It's not that they are from out of State, it's not what is on the resume, it's the attitude and beliefs they bring with them.

I don't know why the new curator wanted to eliminate your heritage, but what happened to your exhibits? Were they sold (where did the money go), dumped in the trash, sent to another museum, stashed in an attic, burnt? Wouldn't the city be responsible for the contents, Where did the cars go?

In one of the newspapers this year the city listed in detail where every penny of the city budget was spent – now that's being responsible!

Everyday I was there my Daughter, Mary, took me down a different street to see the houses. We took the "Historic Tour" of Goodland. It was fascinating – loved it. Just as the brochure stated "Goodland is a living history that includes over 100 years." I enjoyed my stay so much I subscribed to the newspaper so I could keep in touch.

Will be back to visit.

Linda M Willard

Lowell, Ark.

Editor's Note: The exhibits were not trashed or burnt. They have been packed away so other

from our readers

• to the editor



exhibits could be brought forth. No cars were removed and much of the community history remains. During a recent visit someone saw a mammoth tusk and said they wondered when the museum had gotten that specimen. We do now know exactly when it was given to the museum, but it has been in display for more than 14 years. It was moved from up front where it had become one of those forgotten things we see and forget they are there.

Most good museums do a make over from time to time to keep the exhibits fresh and bring in other things to keep people coming back to see what has changed. Museums from the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. to the smallest change their layout and exhibits, but that does not mean they lose any of the historic material.

To the Editor:

Have you ever had a massage? If not you are missing out on a wide range of benefits, and more people are recognizing it as an important element in their overall health and wellness.

Massage has been proven to lower cortisol levels, a stress hormone, thus lowering your heart rate, and blood pressure. Reducing stress allows you to sleep better, helps you to better cope with depression, anxiety and emotional situations, and reduces muscle tension.

Research is supporting the belief massage reduces pain, particularly with folks who have muscle strain from repetitive use injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome and low back pain. For information and interviews with back pain sufferers who found relief using massage go to npr.org.

Massage helps with recovery from injuries and surgery, by increasing blood flow to the area, thus bringing in fresh oxygen and nutrients and removing carbon dioxide and metabolic waste. All while helping to reduce pain levels better than prescription or over the counter pain medications. It increases your immune system function, which will help keep you well and help get you better more quickly if you do become ill.

In cancer patients the research is showing great improvement in the areas of pain relief, anxiety and depression reduction, improved sleep, and reduced nausea. The results were so positive the consortium of lung cancer doctors last year officially recommended massage.

Massage can improve joint range of motion, reduce spasms, relieve headaches, and improve posture by releasing muscle restrictions. For more information about the benefits of massage, go to amtamassage.org.

Now mind you all of this rarely happens in one visit. If you have been in pain for awhile, or have had very intense pain your nerves are now sensitized and it will take time and effort to desensitize them. If you are planning on continuing the activity that led to your injury and pain, then you should plan on continuing massage to counter act your activities.

These activities are often things you do "daily" so you might have to relearn how you do some things, or learn stretches and strengthening activities to retrain your muscles to tolerate these actions. You and your therapist should work together to find a frequency of treatment that keeps you active and with tolerable pain, if not pain free.

For some this is once a month, for others it is once a week. Do not underestimate the time it will take for you to reeducate your muscles and nerves, or to recover from an injury, it is often longer than the 6-8 weeks you and your doctors hope for. A good rule is double the time of treatment, for the time it took you to get in the shape you are in. For example, if you have been hurting from an injury for 6 weeks expect 12 weeks to repair it, if you participate in your recovery, with enthusiasm and commitment. If you do not participate in your own recovery it may well take longer, if at all.

National Massage Therapy Awareness Week was in October. To find a qualified therapist visit amta.org, then click on the therapist finder.

Kansas does not have licensure for massage at this time, so it is important to look for a therapist who is associated with a national organization. This insures a minimum standard of education and continued education. Or look for a therapist who is nationally certified, and has been tested and has proven the minimum standards of excellence, and maintains that standard.

Paige Harper
Healthful Solutions
Goodland