



# Boulder County Small Acreage Management Newsletter

Fall 2014

<http://www.extension.colostate.edu/boulder/acreage.shtml>

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### **From the SAM Coordinator**

I'm not sure where the summer went. I was planning on getting a summer newsletter together but before I knew it, it was fall.

With the flood of last fall and the moisture the rest of the year, the weeds have been doing very well. If you haven't been actively managing your weeds, you can start planning your management for next year.

While it is tempting to allow livestock to be grazing this time of year, you need to allow your pasture grasses time to store energy for use over the winter.

Thank you,  
Sharon Bokan  
Small Acreage Coordinator  
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### **SAM Newsletters Online**

View previous newsletters via the SAM link above.

### **SAM Email Listserv**

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time and are not subscribed to the [boco\\_small\\_acreage@colostate.edu](mailto:boco_small_acreage@colostate.edu) listserv, you may request subscription on the SAM website (linked in header above). This quarterly e-newsletter and other timely info will be distributed via this email listserv.

Subscribers may use the listserv also as a SAM info gathering mechanism. For example, you may inquire about who is available in the area supply hay, to perform swathing/baling, etc. The listserv is not a marketplace, however. Because it is hosted on the CSU server, **NO COMMERCIAL EMAILS ARE ALLOWED. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SELL ANYTHING VIA THE LISTSERV – THANKS.** Use the newsletter ad section for these purposes.

Currently, there are 212 subscribers to the listserv



## Weather Outlook

The NOAA forecasts for the next 30 and 90 days are showing that the state has an equal chance of either being warmer and drier or cooler and wetter. The southern part of the state may see higher than normal precipitation.

<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/90day/>



## Coming events and workshops

Upcoming events that may be of interest.

The Longmont and Boulder Valley Conservation Districts are putting on a High Tunnel Workshop on Thursday November 6, 2014 from 1 to 4 pm.

<http://longmontcd.org/Workshops> Check out this website to register for the workshop.

Weld County is holding a Swine Seminar on Saturday, November 15, 2014. You must register for this event by Monday, November 10, 2014 at [www.weldextension.org](http://www.weldextension.org)

The National Western Stock Show will be held January 10 – 25, 2015 in Denver. If you are considering livestock for your property, this is a great opportunity to talk to producers. If you

have children or grandchildren, the NWSS has many educational exhibits.

<http://nationalwestern.com/>

Colorado Farm Show comes this week January 27 – 29, 2015, at Island Grove Park in Greeley. The show features vendors from all aspects of the farming industry as well as speakers on a number of related topics. Again this is a great opportunity to connect with vendors and is a great educational event for children and grandchildren. More information on the Farm Show can be found at

<http://www.coloradofarmshow.com>

I will be planning other workshops this winter and will advertise them in future newsletters. I hope that you will take advantage of these great events.

## Seedling Tree Sale



The Longmont and Boulder Valley Conservation Districts are offering seedling trees for windbreaks, snow fences, erosion control and wildlife habitat. The program is not meant to compete with local nurseries but was established to provide low cost seedlings for landowners for conservation practices. The Colorado State Forest Service Nursery grows the plants at their facility in Fort Collins and sets the rules for the sale of the plants. This year they

have removed the acreage limitation that has been on this program in the past.

The order form for the seedling tree program is available on our website at [www.longmontcd.org](http://www.longmontcd.org) under programs or you can contact the Conservation District office at (303) 776-4034 x101 to request a paper order form. Your check must accompany the order form to reserve your trees. We will be taking orders until March 26, 2015. You will be able to pick up your seedlings at the Exhibit Building on the Boulder County Fairgrounds on April 10 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm or on April 11 from 8:00 am to 11:00 am. We also do a planting workshop at 8:30 am and 1:30 pm on April 10 to provide instruction on how to plant the seedlings and the use of the planting supplies that we also offer for sale. If you need help with selection of the seedlings for your property, you can contact the office at (303) 776-4034 x101.

The available seedlings are sold in a variety of sizes and containers. The bare root seedlings are sold in lots of 25 for \$26.00. The deciduous seedlings are a minimum of 10" tall and the conifers have a 5" minimum. These species include chokecherry, native plum, cottonwood and a willow mix. We have a large selection of species but some of them have limited quantity so you need to get your order in soon.

The large tube species are sold in lots of 30 for \$76.00. These species include Colorado Blue Spruce, Ponderosa, Rocky Mountain Juniper and this year the Peachleaf Willow and Coyote Willow. Small tube trees come in lots of 30 for \$65 or trays of 50 for \$65. These seedlings have a minimum height of 3". Most of the same varieties are available in the small tubes—the difference is the size of the seedling.

The selection of extra large potted trees this year has increased. They are sold individually at a cost of \$9. The deciduous seedlings in this size are in a very limited quantity and include the native plum, chokecherry and lilac.

A new addition this year is a variety pack for those of you who would rather not plant all of one species. They have been divided into seedlings that do well at different elevations and vary in cost depending on whether the selection includes small tube or large tube seedlings.

Because quantities are limited on most species, please call the Colorado State Forest Service Nursery sold out line at (970) 491-8278 or the Conservation District Office at (303) 776-4034 x101 before ordering to see if your choice of seedling is available.



### **2015 Small Acreage Management Volunteer Program**

We will be taking applications for the 2015 Small Acreage Management (SAM) Volunteer program starting later this year. Volunteers receive 24 hours of training in plant identification, weed and grazing management, pasture establishment and general program information. Training cost is \$100 which includes lunches and a copy of "Weeds of the West" book (price is \$65 if you already have a copy of the book). In return, first year volunteers are required to provide 24 hours of volunteer time. This time can be by answering small acreage questions, identifying "weeds" that are brought into the office and providing management techniques, writing articles for the quarterly newsletter, helping with the crop show at the county fair and other activities. Application deadline is February 13, 2015 with training to be held March 2, 9, 16, 23, 2015 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. More information will be posted at

<http://www.extension.colostate.edu/boulder/acreage.shtml>

Please feel free to call me with questions.



## 2015 Wildlife Master

### Volunteer Program

What is a Wildlife Master? They are volunteers that are trained to help the public with human/wildlife conflicts. They provide current information from Colorado State University, other land grant universities and state and federal wildlife agencies.

So if you have a skunk living under a deck, raccoon eating your corn, mice in the house or flickers pecking holes in your house, we can provide you with some solutions. To leave a message in the Wildlife Master voice mailbox, please call our main office number 303-678-6238.

Volunteers receive training from Wildlife Managers with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Boulder County Parks and Open Space Wildlife Specialists, local rehabilitators and experienced Wildlife Masters. If you are interested in becoming a Wildlife Master, please contact me. Applications for the program will be available on the website in early 2015 with training in April or May.

### Winter Weed Management

#### Sharon Bokan

While this may not seem to be the time of year for weed control, it is a good time to at least start planning your management plan for next year.

Due to the extended warm weather we have been having, you can still get out and mow weeds. Be sure to collect your cuttings to limit seed distribution. All weeds have produced seed at this point.

Biennials and winter annual weeds are already growing so you can be working on them right now. Depending on how many you have, you can be out when the weather is good and

the soil is not frozen undercutting the rosettes or young seedlings. The biennial thistles, knapweeds and other biennials are easily controlled by removing the rosette before it has a chance to flower and produce seed next year. Prickly and blue lettuce, cheatgrass along with the mustards and other winter annual weeds can easily (of course when the soil is not frozen) be hoed or pulled. Even if you don't do any mechanical control, you can at least be noting what weeds you have, where these weeds are, how many there are and what methods you have to manage them (mechanical, biological or chemical).

For perennial weeds, there is limited work that you can do on them in the late fall and winter. About all you can do is plan your strategy and perhaps line up a contractor for help. Most are not actively growing at this point so there's not much you can do outside.

If you need help with identifying what weeds you have or what management methods are available, please contact the Extension Office. While dead plant identification is tough, it can be done on some weeds/plants. The more you know now the better management you can do on your property.



### Winter Grazing

#### Sharon Bokan

There is a lot of information about grazing during the growing season but what are the considerations for winter grazing. Good grazing

management techniques do not end when the grass is dormant but is a year round practice. If you are practicing good pasture management techniques, you will not allow your livestock access to your pastures starting in September until the grass is dormant. Keep them in your dry lot. This allows the grass time to prepare for winter by storing energy in the lower stems and roots and forming buds for next year's growth. Starting around mid-November, once the pasture grasses are dormant, you can graze the dry material. Before allowing livestock to graze, make sure that the grass is dormant and that there is no green growth evident.

Most grasses lose protein levels as the material dries out but they do retain some level of protein. Grazing pastures in the winter provides some level of nutrition and fiber. When calculating your rations, factor in the protein in the dry material. Livestock do require more feed in the winter to maintain health and weight. Some grasses retain their nutritional values better than others. If you are renovating or planting a pasture, you might consider planting some higher protein species if you plan on doing a lot of winter grazing. Here are some grasses and their protein content in the winter.

Orchardgrass – 3 to 4% protein

Crested wheatgrass – 2 to 2.9% protein

Tall, Intermediate wheatgrass – 1.8 to 2.4% protein

Kentucky bluegrass – 3 to 3.9% protein

Meadow brome – 2.5 to 2.9% protein

Smooth brome – 2.5 to 2.9% protein

Blue Grama – approx. 5% protein

Tall fescue – 2.5 to 2.9% protein

Grazing may begin in the fall as soon as the grass is dormant. Be just as careful in the winter to not over graze the grass as you are during the growing season. Always leave a minimum of 4" stubble to protect your grasses and soil no matter what time of year you are grazing. If your pasture has been over grazed during the growing season or you have not allowed the grass time in the fall to get ready for winter and to store energy, don't graze during the winter.

If your grasses are already grazed to the crown, you don't have sufficient plant material to allow grazing.

Care must be taken so as to not damage the plant's crown and buds which will produce the next year's growth. This damage can occur by over grazing, hoof damage or erosion. Livestock must be kept off the pastures when they are wet or snowy and icy. Livestock can slip on wet, muddy or ice damaging the crowns and buds or injuring themselves. Since this is where the grass will begin its growth in the spring, the grass will have to produce new buds to replace the damaged ones. Also over grazing with little to no stubble or snow cover exposes the buds to possible subzero temperatures and erosion or desiccation damage due to high winds. Maintaining a 4" stubble will help trap snow and protect the buds.

Depending on the year and the species of grass you have in your pasture, starting in February walk your pasture looking for the first indication of growth. Cool season grasses (which comprise most of our pastures) do most of their growth during cool temperatures (spring and fall). They may begin to grow when we get warmer spells in the winter. Look carefully through any remaining previous year's growth to spot the new green growth. Once you start seeing the new growth, you need to remove your livestock and keep them in the dry lot until the grass is 6 to 8" tall. After a winter of dry forage, livestock will seek out the new growth. Grazing this new growth will force the grass to send up a second round of buds which will use more stored root energy weakening the plant. Continuing to use up the stored energy without allowing the grass to restore energy will eventually weaken the grass sufficiently so that it will die out.

There are other things to consider when winter grazing such as water and protection. You need to make sure that you provide ice free water at all times. The water does not need to be heated really warm but enough to keep it from freezing. There are in tank heaters that can be used but periodically inspect the wiring for damage to

prevent fires and shock hazards. We have plenty of days in the winter without snow or ice on the ground but the wind is blowing. You need to provide some kind of shelter for the livestock. A simple 2 sided structure on the north and west sides with a roof is sufficient. This allows the livestock a place to get out of the wind.

So let your livestock enjoy the exercise this winter but just is careful to not undo all your great pasture management during the rest of the year.

References:

Website – United State Department of Agriculture, Forest Service,  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/graminoid/index.html>

Living on the Land curriculum, Module 5 Plants, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Western Region of Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE)



## Winter Livestock Care

Sharon Bokan, Small Acreage Coordinator

Unlike humans, livestock do not have the option to go into a heated house and fix a cup of hot chocolate or coffee to warm up next to a crackling fire when temperatures drop below freezing. What can you do to make your livestock more comfortable in the winter?

Livestock species are designed to be able to live outside and survive most weather conditions. The Lowest Critical Environmental Temperature (LCT) is the temperature at which animals can maintain their main core body temperature without supplemental energy (feed). For most livestock if they are dry, the LCT is 20 to 32° F. However, if they get wet, it goes up to 60° F. Both of these temperatures are without a wind chill factor. Another way to think about this is for every 2° F drop in wind chill temperature, livestock energy (feed) requirements go up 1%. To help your livestock maintain good body condition in adverse weather, you need to do several things.

Monitor your livestock for excessive shivering, lethargy and weakness. As animals begin to experience hypothermia, they increase their metabolism to generate more heat. Blood flow to the extremities is reduced. Ears and teats may experience frostbite. Rapid warming of the teats is needed to minimize damage and monitoring for mastitis is required after calving. Some frostbit damage may not be reversible.

Be sure to provide them plenty of forage to meet their added calorie requirement. For horses, you can provide them a warm bran mash, moistened beet pulp or soaked pelleted feed to add water and provide some warm “comfort” food. You may need to not only increase the feed amount but also the “nutrient density” of it. The more nutritionally dense (packed with nutrients) grains may need to be added to the diet. Have your hay tested. Providing good to top quality hay is essential during the winter months.

Water is critical to all living beings. Livestock daily water requirements range from 3 gal/day for sheep to 14 gal/day or more for cattle. They cannot meet their requirements from either forage or consuming snow or ice. Consuming snow or ice can lower the body temperature making them more vulnerable to problems.

They need fresh, unfrozen and if you can slightly warmed water. They tend to drink less when it is cold so they can become dehydrated. You can use tank heaters to help keep stock tanks clear of ice. However, you need to check the heaters to prevent fire and electrocution problems.

The young and the older animals are especially vulnerable during the cold. Providing them some extra bedding, protection and warm food and water is important. If you are lambing or calving during the cold, make sure that the mothers are in a well-protected building with plenty of bedding for warmth. Make sure that the young get dried off quickly.



They don't need a fully insulated, state of the art, heated barn. In many cases, a three sided structure, hill, clumps of trees or a solid fence provides enough protection from cold winter winds. Reducing exposure to wind is a must in the winter. During a snowstorm or cold spring rains, a structure that provides not only wind protection but a roof to keep them dry is needed. Remember that the LCT jumps drastically as they get wet. Protection desired will vary by species. Sheep don't mind getting wet but goats do so they will tend to seek shelter rather than graze in the open. Some species have thinner hides and hair and therefore get colder more easily. Dairy cattle will chill quicker than beef cattle since they tend to have less hair to insulate them. The coat condition is critical to providing insulation. The more hair the better as it allows for air space between the hairs to act as insulation. You need

to be checking all of your livestock going into the fall not only for general health and body condition but also for skin and hair health. When their hair is wet or muddy, the hair is matted down limiting the insulating air spaces available. Imagine if you had a nice down coat but you lost half of the down in it or it got wet. You'd cut the warmth of the jacket. If you provide bedding, it needs to be kept clean and dry. Wet bedding provides no insulation and is no better than lying on the ground.

References:

<https://www.southernstates.com/sscinfo/news/2010/01/livestockcoldstress.aspx>

[http://anr.ext.wvu.edu/livestock/cattle/cold\\_stress](http://anr.ext.wvu.edu/livestock/cattle/cold_stress)

[http://www.clemson.edu/extension/ep/cold\\_livestock.html](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/ep/cold_livestock.html)

### **Fall Reseeding (timing, soil prep, methods)**

By Kim Wolinski, former SAM Volunteer

Looking over the county, our beautiful countryside makes one feel lucky to live here. Seeing horses, cattle, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas and bison is fun and a great hobby or business. What we are looking at are lots of acres of pastures that take time and thought to keep healthy and vibrant for the livestock to feed, hang out! and create a longtime joy for the small acreage owner.

Good, healthy pastures are important for your livestock, they also provide other benefits, including

- Conservation Needs
- Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat
- Establishment and Management of Plants Important to Our Land/Cultures
- Wildfire and Drought

- Air Quality

So, being a good steward of your land and taking care of pastures all year long is a big responsibility, and revegetating a pasture in Colorado can be challenging; with our drastic changes in temperatures, precipitation and weather along with the varying topography and soils.

Drought and grazing recovery does not happen overnight on even the most carefully tended properties. Staying on top of reseeding pastures throughout the year; while using managed grazing will make for a great pasture for years to come.

Simply tossing seed upon the ground will not produce a good pasture. For success, the seed must be planted properly, and at the right time of year. The following are items to consider when planting and reestablishing vegetative cover on your property. Grass establishment is a process – not a single act – and may take multiple years for the final desired results.

### Fall, Dormant Reseeding

Late fall, prior to the ground freezing is a good time to consider reseeding for our high plains and high mountain climate. This is commonly known as dormant seeding. Seed the grass from November to April depending on the elevation.

**The key is to make sure the soil won't warm up and cause the seeds to germinate right before winter hits.** Dormant seeding will allow the seeds to sit in the soil while collecting winter snow moisture and spring rain. When the soil warms in the spring the seeds are there with moisture and ready to grow.

Planting Window based on Elevation

**General Seeding Date Recommendations from the Natural Resources Conservation Service,**  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

### SEEDING Dates

Non-irrigated plantings	COOL SEASON PLANTS	WARM SEASON PLANTS
Elevation (in feet)	Dormant to Spring	Dormant to Spring
3,900 - 6,200 -	Nov. 1 to Apr. 30	Nov. 1 to May

PLAINS		15
5,500 - 7,200 -	Oct. 15 to May	Oct. 15 to May
FOOTHILLS	15	31
7,000 - 14,433 -	Oct. 15 to Apr.	
MOUNTAINS	30	Oct. 1 to Apr. 30

### References:

Five Keys to Successful Grass Seeding

[http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_PLANT\\_MATERIALS/publications/ndpmcbr04959.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_PLANT_MATERIALS/publications/ndpmcbr04959.pdf)

Michigan State University

[http://nativeplants.msu.edu/getting\\_started/how\\_to\\_plant/six\\_steps\\_to\\_a\\_successful\\_seeding](http://nativeplants.msu.edu/getting_started/how_to_plant/six_steps_to_a_successful_seeding)

### Vesicular stomatitis Update

From the State Veterinarian's Office as of 9/24/2014, there were still 126 locations under quarantine for Vesicular stomatitis (VS). At its peak there were 303 quarantined locations. Most of the remaining locations are located in Boulder, Larimer and Weld Counties. While it looks like the peak has been reached, new cases still need to be reported.

For more information on VS, please visit the CSU Veterinary Extension website at <http://veterinaryextension.colostate.edu/index.shtml>



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**Email Sharon Bokan for more details**

**[sbokan@bouldercounty.org](mailto:sbokan@bouldercounty.org)**