

## Douglas County Conservation District



Healthy Soil • Clean Water  
Bright Future

If you have an event or webinar that you would like included in our newsletter please email the information to: [douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:douglasccd1@gmail.com).

January 25 [Livestock Workshop](#) 10am-2:pm Details on Pg. 5

January 25-26 [No Till on the Plains](#), Wichita, KS

January 31– February 4 - [Farmers Market Regional Workshops](#)—virtual.

February 3 [Winter Water Technology Expo](#)—Garden City, KS

February 9-11 [Woman Managing the Farm Conference](#). Featuring Keynote Speaker "Fancy Lady Cowgirl" Courtenay DeHoff

February 11 [Tuttle Creek Watershed Soil Health Workshop](#), Seneca, KS

February 17 [Douglas County Conservation District Annual Meeting](#)— Douglas County Fair Grounds 12:00pm. Details on pg.2

February 17 [Beef Health Night](#)— Anderson County Community Building

February 24-25 [The 98th Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum](#) This virtual event is the USDA's largest and premiere annual gathering! See pg. 9 for details.

March 17 [Conservation Conversation](#)—Noxious Weeds or Obnoxious Plants Douglas County Fair Grounds. 6-8pm. Details on pg. 3

Newsletter Quarter 1

VOL. 35 ISSUE 1

## Protecting the Natural Resources of Douglas County Since 1945

*Our Mission: To provide leadership and assistance in promoting individual responsibility for the conservation of Douglas County natural resources*



# Douglas County Conservation District Annual Meeting

February 17th 12:00pm  
Douglas County Fair Grounds,  
Flory Building

To RSVP: Call our office at 785-843-4260 ext. 3 or e-mail [douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:douglasccd1@gmail.com) to make your reservation **by February 11th**. Seating is limited.

Please watch our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/douglasccd/> for updates.



# Please Join Us

## Douglas County Conservation District

### 76th Annual Meeting

Thursday, February 17th, 2022, 12:00 p.m.

Douglas County Fair Grounds

Flory Building

[www.douglasccd.com](http://www.douglasccd.com)

Please join us for our 76th Annual Meeting. The District will make a full report of our activities and financial affairs. Voting for one Board Supervisor position will take place either at the meeting, or you may request a ballot by mail. Anyone wishing to receive a ballot should contact the District office via email at [douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:douglasccd1@gmail.com).

### AGENDA

- Boxed Lunch
- Report of district activities and financial affairs for the prior year.
- Election of Board Supervisor to serve for a term of three years.

To RSVP: Call our office at 785-843-4260 ext. 3 or e-mail [douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:douglasccd1@gmail.com) to make your reservation **by February 11th**. To register on our website please visit [REGISTRATION](#).

**Seating is limited and registration prior to the meeting is required for in person attendance.** The meeting will also be streamed live on Facebook.

Contact our office at 785-843-4260 ext. 3

or e-mail [douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:douglasccd1@gmail.com) should you have any questions.

# Conservation Conversations



## Noxious Weeds or Obnoxious Plants

Come and join us as we discuss what a noxious weed is, how to tell the difference between noxious weeds and other plants, and what to do if you have noxious weeds on your property. Guest speaker: Alan Hollinger, Director Noxious Weeds, Douglas County

### Details:

March 17th at 6:00pm

Douglas County Fairgrounds, Flory Building.

Seating is limited—registration is required.

RSVP at [Douglasccd1@gmail.com](mailto:Douglasccd1@gmail.com) or by calling 785.843.4260 ext. 3





## Herbicide-resistant weeds? K-State researcher hopes to crush them

MANHATTAN, Kan. – A Kansas State University researcher in western Kansas says he may have an innovative way to kill weeds commonly found in farmer’s fields: simply put, he wants to crush ‘em.

That’s right, says Vipin Kumar, a weed scientist at the Agricultural Research Center in Hays: He’s studying a method known as Harvest Weed Seed Control (HWSC) in

which weed seed is literally pulverized by a rolling cage mill that is fitted to the back of a combine during harvest.

“This system,” Kumar said, “is designed to destroy weed seed so that it becomes non-viable for the next year.”

HWSC is a method first advanced in western Australia, known as a region where weeds have developed widespread resistance to common herbicides. A version of the rolling cage mill was actually developed by an Australian grower who had become frustrated with other weed control methods.

Current versions are also now being manufactured in Canada. Kumar is cooperating with weed scientists at Iowa State University and the University of Arkansas to find out just how effective a system that crushes weed seeds will work in Midwest and High Plains crop fields.

“We don’t know much yet; not much data exists in the United States,” Kumar said. “We conducted a preliminary test this fall in a grower’s field, and the seed crusher did a decent job of crushing Palmer amaranth seeds in a milo field that was heavily infested with pigweed.

“I’m hoping that this will be a good fit for wheat and soybean folks, as well, and that they can make good use of it in terms of integrated weed management.”

Kansas farmers routinely face such nemeses as Palmer amaranth and other pigweeds, feral ryegrass and ko-chia, which have developed varying degrees of resistance to herbicides. Because of that – plus the rising cost of chemicals and other inputs – farmers will need options for managing weeds.

“Longer term from a weed science standpoint, HWSC is one type of technique farmers need to bring into their management system if they want to mitigate the resistant weeds on the farm,” Kumar said. “There is no silver bullet; you won’t resolve all your problems with this method, but it can play a critical role in integrated weed management if you combine it with other methods of weed control, and you are making weed management plans for the next 4-5 years rather than an annual basis.”

To date, the roller cage system is likely cost-prohibitive for farmers – manufacturers currently are producing

the system for about \$75,000 – and using the system will require a combine to pull at 80-100 horsepower. But Kumar anticipates the price for the system will come down over time as the technology is perfected and use becomes more widespread.

“As a researcher, we can show growers if it’s going to work or not,” Kumar said. “Over the next couple of years, we will create data from Kansas fields; we already have data from Iowa where we found that this system destroys more than 90% of waterhemp seed, using the same unit from the same manufacturer that we are using.”

He anticipates that K-State’s research also will dig deeper into the economics, factoring in the cost of equipment, potential yield increases and decreased use of herbicides.

Kumar, who is part of a national core of scientists that go by the acronym GROW (Getting Rid Of Weeds), has also studied the benefits of another HWSC known as chaff lining, in which crop chaff and weeds are funneled into narrow rows behind a combine. The residue is left to over-winter, causing the weed seed to decay, or the thin row can be destroyed with fire.

He has teamed with weed scientists from Colorado, Oklahoma, Iowa and Arkansas on two, multi-state grants funded by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The researchers will explore the effectiveness and relevance of chaff lining and the seed crusher as part of integrated weed management in the High Plains’ no-till dryland crop production systems.

More information on weed management is available from the [Western Kansas Agricultural Research Center](#)

## Livestock Wintering Workshop



January 25, 2022

10:00 am-2:00 pm

Grace Community Church—310 E 8th St, Overbrook KS

66524

Welcome to attend all or part of the workshop.

**No Cost**

**Lunch Provided!**



[RSVP](#) to your WRAPS Coordinator or call 913.204.0165



## Prescribed Burning. Controlled burning in Kansas.

Fire is a natural process that is essential to the health of forests and prairies alike, and has long been used by property owners and land managers to prevent unwanted stands of brush and cedar trees. Used properly, it can be a valuable tool. Used incorrectly, it contributes too many escaped fires in Kansas that cause property damage to neighbors, and expense to already under-funded fire departments all over the state. There is also a push in some other areas, where smoke from spring burning in Kansas causes air quality issues (as far away as the Tennessee valley on some days) to restrict any open burning. Politically, this seems unlikely to happen in the near future, but with current hot button issues of global warming and greenhouse gasses, it is only common sense for landowners to police themselves so that outside regulations will not limit our use of this valuable tool in the future.

One of the first steps in burning is to **develop a plan for proper burning** and to assemble the **needed equipment**. Proper preparation is essential to conducting a safe burn. Also contact local fire or law enforcement authorities to see what permits or notifications are required to burn legally. Once the plan is developed, the site prepared, and the equipment and needed help available, the final step is to actually select a time to burn. The critical factor for this is to study weather forecasts carefully. Many of the escaped burns on private land in Kansas occur because someone begins burning on an ideal morning, without being aware of weather changes that are coming – either because a weather system is changing later in the day, or the normal daily changes that occur as a spring day gets hotter, drier, and windier over the course of the day, which dramatically changes the fire behavior.

***If there is a Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning issued, no burning should occur.***

Check the [Fire Weather Information](#) section of your local National Weather Service office website to learn of any watches or warnings. The other valuable information to review in the fire weather forecasts include wind changes, lowest relative humidity (if it will likely drop below 20%, burning will be very difficult to control), and other such factors that influence fire behavior. Items that are not fire safety related, but could impact future regulations, include transport winds and smoke dispersal. These help to identify where your smoke is going and who it will impact. If smoke dispersal is poor, wait to burn. If it is good, see where transport winds will take it.

If those wishing to burn will ensure that weather conditions will be safe, and that smoke dispersal will be good, without unduly impacting urban areas, prescribed fire will likely remain a useful resource in the land manager's tool box for years to come. If not, we may eventually find it regulated to the point of being unusable.

## Douglas County Conservation District Has tools to help you with your controlled burn.

*The Douglas County Conservation District has the following equipment for residents to use:*

- *Drip Torch*
- *Backpack Sprayer*
- *Flapper*

These Items are available for residents of Douglas county to check out free of charge. Contact the Douglas County Conservation Office at 785.843.4260 ext. 3 for more information or go to the link below.



*Drip Torch*



<http://www.douglascdd.com/>



*Backpack Sprayer*



*Flapper*

## **Oklahoma University offers a free online course in Prescribed fire training.**

This free-to-the-public online course is designed to teach people how to prescribe burn safely. “The course is set up to walk people through the process of conducting a prescribed burn, as well as the effects of fire on various plant communities,” said John Weir, research associate in OSU’s Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management. The course is designed for both the first time burner to the experienced. The training includes reading, videos and Power point presentations. There is a quiz at the end. A score of 90% is required in order to get your certificate. To access the training, go to the website ([campus.extension.org](http://campus.extension.org)), click on the “Energy & Environment” button, choose “Rangelands,” select “Basic Prescribed Fire Training,” set up a new account and begin the Introduction to Prescribed Fire section.

Other sections include fire prescriptions, fire effects, firebreaks, ignition techniques, smoke management, fire law for Oklahoma and Kansas, and the best time of year to burn. The course was created through funding from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Oklahoma Natural Resource Conservation Service, with assistance provided by the Oklahoma Prescribed Burn Association. Information provided by Oklahoma State University.

## **The Common Ground community garden and urban agriculture program is looking for a Program Manager**

The Common Ground community garden and urban agriculture program provides 9.5 acres of public land to aspiring farmers and gardeners in Douglas County, KS. It encompasses 9 community gardens and an incubator farm serving over 225 gardeners and 9 farmers.

The Program Manager will work within the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office to manage day-to-day program needs, provide program-wide technical assistance and education in conservation agriculture practices, and work with diverse partners to develop a vision and strategy for program growth and enhancement.

This is a full-time, non-exempt, granted-funded position with benefits. It is supported through September 2024 by a Conservation Collaboration Grant awarded to Douglas County by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Join us on February 24-25, 2022 at USDA's largest and premiere annual gathering!

With the theme **“New Paths to Sustainability Growth,”** the Forum will explore new ways to achieve environmental sustainability while increasing agricultural productivity.

More than 30 sessions and 100 agriculture leaders and subject matter experts will discuss key issues impacting the sector:

- USDA’s initial forecast for the agricultural economy, commodity markets, and trade in 2022 and discuss U.S. farm income situation
- Food prices outlook and farm income
- Supply chain disruptions and impacts of transportation
- Innovations in climate mitigation and adaptation

**Registration is free but required to attend the Forum.**

<https://www.usda.gov/oce/ag-outlook-forum>



## Douglas County Conservation District

4920 Bob Billings Parkway, Suite A

Lawrence, KS 66049

Return Service Requested

## DOUGLAS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

*Funding provided by the State Conservation Commission through appropriation from the Kansas Water Plan Fund. All programs and services of the Conservation District are available to anyone without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or handicap.*

**Douglas County Conservation District      785.843.4260, ext. 3**

**Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday**

Board of Supervisors:

David Brown, Chair  
Luke Ulrich, Vice Chair  
Lowell Neitzel, Treasurer  
John Bradley, Member  
Jordan Olsen, Member

District Personnel:

Randy Winchester, District Manager  
Suzy Mooney, Education & Outreach  
Jeremy Gaines, Soil Technician

Farm Service Agency

785.843.4260, ext. 2  
David Sweany, County Executive Director  
Debbie Chappelle, Program Tech  
Jessica Siedschlag, Program Tech  
Lee Ann Robertson, Program Tech

Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Tim Miller, Supervisory District Conservationist  
Suzy Mooney, NRCS Clerk