

Today is Thomas County
Fair Entry Day



The Thomas County Fair is underway! The 4-H Horse Show was held Tuesday, July 25, and the 4-H Livestock and Shooting Sports were conducted Wednesday, July 26.

4-H entries will be taken today, Thursday, July 27, at 9:00 a.m. and open class entries will be taken from noon until 2:00 p.m. The exhibit building will be open from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Be sure to check out the open art and photo show for viewing at the Thedford Art Gallery. The gallery will be open Thursday, July 27; Friday, July 28; and Saturday, July 29, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. for your enjoyment. The Thomas County Historical Society Museum will be open Friday, July 28 and Saturday, July 29 during the fair. Check last week's fair schedule for museum open times.

Other Friday events:

- FFA Alumni concession stand open from 9:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.
- Steer roping at 9:00 a.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds
- Thomas County Fair rodeo slack at 1:00 p.m.
- Kid's Pedal Tractor Pull at 4:30 p.m., Thomas County Fairgrounds pavilion.

Community barbecue at Thedford Golf Course with night golf at dusk.

Thomas County Fair rodeo, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday's line-up includes:

- Breakfast at the Thedford Life Center, 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
- Youth fishing tournament, 7:00 a.m., meet at L & L Gravel
- Eastern Star garage sale at Masonic Hall, 8:00 a.m. - ?
- Thomas County Historical Society lunch stand, 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Thomas County Fairgrounds.
- Tractor pull, Thomas County Fairgrounds, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Parade, 11:00 a.m. - Nebraska Through My Eyes.

Events after the parade at the Thomas County Fairgrounds include turtle races, fun jump water slide, kid's games, horseshoes, mud volleyball, and Bingo by Security 1st Bank.

"Men on the Mountain" will be entertaining from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. and the barbecue will be served from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

Enjoy the Masonic watermelon feed and 4-H livestock auction after the barbecue. Exhibits will be released after the barbecue.

An evening tractor pull is set for 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds and the Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association event will get underway at 7:00 p.m.

A beer garden and dance to "Victory Underground," will run from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds pavilion.

Sunday, July 30 events:

- American Legion pancake breakfast, 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
- Community church service, courthouse lawn, 10:00 a.m.
- Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association event at Thomas County Fairgrounds, 10:00 a.m.

See last week's issue of the Herald for a complete fair schedule. Support the advertisers who support the Thomas County Fair!

Blaine County Fair gets
underway August 2

Entry day for the Blaine County Fair is Wednesday, August 2. Entries will be taken from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. The livestock show will get underway Thursday, August 3, at 9:00 a.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds with Shooting sports at 1:00 p.m. at the Community Building.

Friday, August 4 activities include the horse show at 9:00 a.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds, with the small animal show to follow at 1:00 p.m. Exhibits will be released from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 5.

A silent auction of 4-H plates and the barbecue at the Community Building will be held at 5:00 p.m.

State fair exhibits are due into the extension office or the Halsey Elementary School by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 22.

Planting a Forest in
the Sandhills

Nebraska used to be known as the "Tree Planter's State," and the most audacious attempt at tree planting was the project to plant an entire forest in the Sandhills.

Dr. Charles E. Bessey of the University of Nebraska proposed the idea in 1890. He believed forestation would provide a source of fuel and fence posts, help control erosion, and provide sanctuary for wildlife.

In 1891 the Federal Division of Forestry established a small, experimental plantation of pines on the Bruner Brothers' ranch in Holt County. This success led to the creation of two forest reserves on the Dismal and Niobrara rivers by proclamation of President Theodore Roosevelt in April 1902. In 1908 the reserves became the Nebraska National Forest.

The Dismal River reserve near Halsey was later renamed for Charles Bessey, and the Niobrara reserve became the McKelvie National Forest in 1971. Samuel McKelvie was governor of Nebraska from 1919 to 1923, and owned a ranch in Cherry County.

Since 1903 about 25,000 acres of trees have been planted in the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey, and about 3,000 acres of trees have been planted in the McKelvie National Forest. In 1960, by presidential proclamation, a natural forested area in Dawes County's Pine Ridge was incorporated into the Nebraska National Forest. A nursery at Halsey has provided most of the trees for planting in the forest, as



Workers plant trees in furrows near Halsey, Nebraska, circa 1931.

well as making millions of seedlings available to farmers and ranchers at little or no cost under the Clark-McNary Act of 1924. The nursery also grew trees for the Prairie States Forestry Project, a New Deal program to encourage planting of shelterbelts on about one million acres in the Great Plains.

Permanent forest management called for a combination of fire control and grazing. Since the forest is in the midst of grasslands, there is danger from a prairie fire set miles away. For example, in 1910 a fire originating sixty-five miles to the west raced across the interven-

ing space and burned several acres. To lessen this danger, "fire lanes" were introduced. These are broad strips about a mile wide where no trees are planted. Ranchers are allowed to graze their cattle on these strip pastures just enough to keep the grass down, but not close enough to start the sand blowing and make a blowhole. This requires effective management but affords grazing for the ranchers and an income to the government from the grazing fees. The forest has proved to be an excellent resort for cattle, and the trees provide protection for the animals.

Programs available for Nebraska
Farmers and Ranchers
suffering from drought conditions

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) is providing information to Nebraska's farmers and ranchers in need of assistance due to prolonged dry conditions in the state.

"The U.S. Drought Monitor has updated its drought status. In Nebraska, abnormally dry conditions in parts of the state have intensified. The Department is receiving reports of rapidly deteriorating pasture and field conditions," said NDA Director Greg Ibach.

"In response to the worsening conditions, we are outlining several tools that are available for farmers and ranchers to utilize."

Emergency Haying and Grazing of CRP

Several counties in Nebraska are authorized for emergency haying or grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres. This is a result of U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue making the authorization available for counties in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota in D2 or greater stages of drought on the U.S. Drought Monitor. Any county in Nebraska

with a border that falls within 150 miles of those D2 or greater designated drought areas in those three states are eligible for the emergency haying or grazing. A map of those counties can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/ne

Landowners interested in emergency haying or grazing of CRP acres must contact their local FSA office for details on eligibility requirements and prior to taking any action on CRP acres. To find a local FSA office, go to offices.usda.gov.

Haying of Roadside Right-of-Ways

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) authorizes permitted haying of roadside right-of-ways. Permitted haying is allowed by abutting land owners until July 31st, and open to the public for permitted haying beginning August 1st. For details on haying roadside right-of-ways and to obtain permits contact the NDOT Maintenance Office in your district.

NDA Hay Hotline

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture offers a resource for farmers and ranchers looking to buy or sell hay. The Hay & Forage Hotline can be found on the NDA website. Sellers can post their information on the site themselves or contact NDA at 800-422-6692. The

list of sellers is posted on the website and is updated on a regular basis.

Fire Suppression Efforts

On July 18th, Governor Ricketts authorized the issuance of an Emergency Proclamation relating to fire retardant materials. This proclamation will allow the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency to replenish fire retardant materials which have been partially depleted by fire suppression efforts in Nebraska and by assisting other states with wildfires which have been aided by drought conditions. The proclamation will allow the Adjutant General greater flexibility for wildfire suppression efforts.

The NDA Drought Central Website contains information on all these programs and will be continually updated with valuable resources. It can be found at droughtcentral.nebraska.gov

"My agency and I appreciate the proactive response by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, Governor Ricketts and the resources being made available through various agencies of the State of Nebraska," said Ibach. "NDA will continue to monitor the states drought conditions closely and provide further assistance when appropriate."

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