

News Column  
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## GREEN PAINT

And the answer is.... because it already had yellow wheels and I had a leftover can of John Deere green paint at home.

So, what's the question?

The question is, "Greg, why would you pay \$2 for a broken down, pink tricycle (with three flat tires) at the 4-H garage sale, then spend \$42 fixing it up?"

And then there are more questions, like, "Isn't your youngest child already 6 ft. 2 inches tall? Do you realize you spent 20 times what you paid for that thing to fix it? And,... what are you going to do with it now?"

Give me a break! This was a high-dollar tricycle in its day. It's one of those sturdy, off-road tricycles like I used to see at the State Fair. They were priced at well over \$100 new when my oldest was little, but I couldn't convince myself to part with the money then.

For just \$2, this thing was a steal. Now – just \$42 later – it has a new front tire and tube, a new tube in a back tire, and air in all three. Add five shiny new bolts, tightened handle bars, and a fresh coat of John Deere green paint, and she's a beauty.

I stole this baby.

The way I do math, this thing was a great investment. With an initial cost of \$2, and \$42 more invested, that's a 2,100% return on investment, isn't it?

Well, isn't it?

## Farming for the Future – December 19

With today's challenging farm economy, it's probably good that my affinity for green paint is limited to tricycles. Until grain prices improve and the farm economy turns around, you can bet that I'll just be buying toys instead of tractors.

It will take a sharp pencil and a little luck for many farms to just break even over the next couple of years. We can't help with the luck, but you should mark December 19 on your calendar as a day to head to Salina to work on your pencil sharpening skills. Maybe we can help with that part of the equation.

"Farming for the Future" is the title of the December 19 workshop that will be held at the Webster Conference Center, 2601 N. Ohio Street, Salina, KS. Registration will start at 8:30 a.m. the day of the event, with the formal program commencing at 9:00 a.m. Adjournment will be at 3:30 p.m.

The program will kick off with an overview of the current farm financial situation and a look at land values and rental arrangements, presented by Mykel Taylor, KSU Ag Economist. Gregg Ibendahl, also a K-State Ag Economist, will be up next with a discussion about farm input cost.

Robert White will discuss Farm Service Agency programs, then K-State's Dan O'Brien will discuss the grain market outlook. After lunch, K-State's Glynn Tonser will present his view of the beef cattle market outlook, followed by Brian Briggeman with a macroeconomic and interest rate outlook.

The last presentation of the day will be by KSU Farm Management Association representatives and Kansas Farm Analysts, with a discussion titled, "Farm Financial Management During Challenging Times."

At the end of the day you can expect to be offered an opportunity to do in-depth analysis of your farm financial situation utilizing the FINPACK computer software program. There is normally a \$450 cost for FINPACK analysis and I believe you'll be offered that service for \$150.

There is a \$20 per person registration fee to attend the Farming for the Future workshop if reservations are made at least five days in advance. Call the Central Kansas Extension District office at 785/392-2147 to register.

I'll be there, and I hope you will too.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmcclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmcclure@ksu.edu).

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