

News Column

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RAISING CROPS, KIDS AND LIVESTOCK

At this rate, we'll be done in about 40 days.

Over the years, I have said many times that there wasn't enough work on our small acreage to keep the kids busy, and I wasn't sure that was fair to my kids. Sure, there are always things to do around the house. But we don't have enough outside chores to really give the kids a chance to learn to work.

Not enough work! Did I really say that?

A wonderful opportunity has presented itself and now I am forcing myself to follow through and teach my kids to work. You can stop and help if you want. No experience necessary. I think I can teach you to pull weeds in about 30 seconds. And in another 30 seconds I can teach you to not pull the soybean plants.

The double-crop soybean field south of our house measures 40.7 acres. The beans were planted on July 5 and they look great,.... but they are weedy. The field has been sprayed with glyphosate, killing the volunteer wheat and other weeds, but leaving a bunch of glyphosate-tolerant pigweeds.

Technically, I should probably say we have Palmer amaranth, smooth pigweed, and common waterhemp. Those would be the correct names, I believe. But most folks lump them all together and just call them pigweeds. Whatever you want to call them is fine. The bottom line is we're pulling them by hand.

At the time of this writing, we haven't gotten very far. We covered just over one acre in an hour and 15 minutes the first night with a crew of four. At that rate, we're looking at finishing this job about September 20. We either need to work faster, work more hours per day, or find more workers.

I'd like to finish this job because I think it will do all of us good to see the job through to the end. But, removing every weed isn't the ultimate goal. We're not going to hire more help just to get the job done because weed control isn't really what this is about.

Don't tell my kids, but this project is more about them than about the crop. If the crop turns out better, that will be fine. If the kids turn out better, then we've really accomplished something!

RCLA Summer Tour – August 30

I'm going use the Riley County Livestock Association Summer Tour date as our deadline to finish pulling weeds all of those weeds. There's no real reason for choosing that date other than just needing a goal that won't have me pulling weeds every night for the next 40 days.

The RCLA Summer Tour will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 30 at Alcove Cattle Company, near Blue Rapids. Yes, that is in Marshall County. And, yes, it will be well worth the drive.

Alcove Cattle Company is owned by Ken and Zita Duensing and is located just south of Blue Rapids, in a beautiful setting near Alcove Springs. The best way to get there is to take highway 77 north to Waterville, travel east to Blue Rapids, then straight south on Main Street through Blue Rapids to the Alcove Cattle Company headquarters. Signs will guide you once you get south of Blue Rapids.

Alcove Cattle Company is a registered Angus operation with aggressive A.I. and embryo

transfer programs. All livestock producers are invited to attend to view good cattle, experience the beautiful setting, and enjoy the fellowship of other cattlemen.

Supper is free of charge, but reservations are needed by August 26. Sign up online at www.riley.ksu.edu, or dial 785/537-6350 if you prefer the phone. Bring your own lawn chair if you'd like a place to sit.

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 gmclure@ksu.edu.

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