

Soybean harvest has begun in Clark County

Crops are looking good in Clark County heading into the end of September.

"I have seen harvesting taking place with early beans in Clark County," stated South Dakota State University Extension Agronomist David Karki of the Watertown Regional Center.

"Those who planted an early maturing soybean to help stretch out their harvest times are combining now, depending on the weather," said Karki. "They are ready to go with harvest."

Drought conditions have impacted many producers in South Dakota as well as the price of soybeans. "People who waited with the planting caught some good July rains and were probably the winners this summer," Karki said. Yield production will be all over the board this fall, he implied, as the three really hot, dry days this summer could hurt the bean crop, depending on location, he continued.

The SDSU agronomist stated that his focus was to see how the early planted beans were impacted by drought.

"The soybeans which were planted at the normal time last spring had a chance to take advantage of late season rains. The old adage, 'August rains make the soybean crop' came into play this year."

Hot weather, with adequate heat units throughout the summer, will



Soybean fields are getting close to being time to be harvested. Some soybean fields have started harvest and for the most part soybeans and corn look good.

have all bean maturity groups ready for harvest in the short term, if not already, Karki continued.

No frost is projected for the near future and Karki noted that when a freeze does occur in Clark County by the end of the month, it won't bother the row crops.

"With the soybean crop we did have more incidents of spider mites this year and that is weather related," said Karki. "At the same time that means white mold goes away because of the heat and dryness and that is a good thing." Grasshoppers have also been a problem this growing season, but Karki added that spraying got most of the insects and proved to be effective.

Once harvest starts, Karki guesses

that producers will combine beans and then go straight to corn. "The corn looks awesome, as the

Soybean harvest (continued on page 3)

WEATHER			
Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Sept. 14.....	61	51	.80
Sept. 15.....	72	52	0
Sept. 16.....	78	53	0
Sept. 17.....	86	51	.15
Sept. 18.....	72	48	0
Sept. 19.....	81	54	0
Sept. 20.....	86	56	.01
2021 precipitation to date	17.71		
2020 precipitation to date	16.73		



At the Clark Rotary Club meeting last Tuesday, Rapid City Rotarian Jennifer Rollins spoke on human trafficking. Rotary International is developing a Global Grant known as the End Human Trafficking Initiative.

Clark Rotary speaker talks 'End Human Trafficking'

Clark Rotary welcomed Jennifer Rollins, Global Grants Chair from Rotary District 5610 of Rapid City. Following a year of information gathering through community assessments, Jennifer is part of a committee to educate communities and help bring an end to human trafficking through Rotary efforts. She related that human trafficking is modern day slavery. Further, this slavery comes in many different forms with 19% being sex trafficking. Most of those are children. This small number is explained as

children are protected until age of 18 when they reach the age of consent. It is very difficult to determine consent after that age and traffickers are aware of this.

She described telltale signs of trafficking such as a child accompanied by an older adult other than a parent, the child acting out of their age group, dressing inappropriately, the older adult answering questions in place of the child, the child's identification info such as ID card

Clark Rotary (continued on page 3)

Clark Center Church hosts service on Preservation Sunday

On Sunday, Sept. 19, the 15th Annual Clark Center Lutheran Church Preservation Service was held. Clark Center is located five miles north and 2 1/2 miles west of Clark. No service was held last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Preservation of this rural church, which has now been closed for 27 years, is very important to former members and friends of the church. This annual service is a way to show continued upgrades and improvements to the property, which also includes the church's cemetery.

Clark Center Lutheran Church has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 2006. In order to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places the building must have a significant historical presence, be at least 50 years old and continue with preservation upgrades and upkeep of the property.

Clark Center Restoration Committee members include Marlin and Joyce Fjelland, Jean Obermeier, Chad Fjelland, Dennis Larson, Chris Stromsness, Sharon Larson and Janene Gehrke.

Volunteers have been working the past 16 years, painting, repairing windows, re-doing the basement and basement walls and the latest project has been painting/replace siding on the church steeple.

School enrollment numbers continue to show growth

In the three area schools, Clark, Willow Lake and Henry, there are 942 students combined, the largest total in many years.

The reasons for this are several; it's an up-cycle trend, with mainly new move-ins and some open enrollees. Larger preschool and kindergarten classes continue to replace smaller 2020/2021 graduated classes.

Enrollment for the three area schools is at 942 compared to 928 a year ago, 899 two years ago and 858 three years ago. These numbers always fluctuate throughout the school year, but these are the school numbers starting the 2021-2022 school term.

Coronavirus is still with us, still very much a factor, but because the Clark County area is a rural area, in-class instruction is being held at Clark, Willow Lake and Henry and masks are not mandated at this time.

Currently within South Dakota K-12 schools there are 653 active infections. There are no cases in 665 school, one or two cases in 151 schools and more than three cases in 83 school. (These are S.D. Department of Health numbers.)

All three area school have received significant COVID-19 ESSER funds and will have until 2024 to dispense these funds, with State of South Dakota Department of Education permission.

Clark	21	20	19	18
Pre-school	22	21	20	19
Kindergarten	33	21	30	37
Grade 1	20	27	30	22
Grade 2	30	33	24	18
Grade 3	31	27	20	19
Grade 4	27	19	19	34
Grade 5	21	24	34	18
Grade 6	22	40	19	29
Grade 7	37	20	30	19
Grade 8	22	32	19	21
Grade 9	33	21	23	20
Grade 10	25	22	25	26
Grade 11	27	24	29	20
Grade 12	25	28	19	11
Hillcrest	28	21	15	20
Fordham	30	29	29	27
Silverlake	38	36	34	31
TOTAL	32	34	38	41
Willow Lake	481	458	437	413
Pre-school	21	20	19	18
Kindergarten	22	21	20	19
Grade 1	25	16	20	16
Grade 2	18	20	22	13
Grade 3	18	18	15	15
Grade 4	19	15	18	17

Grade 5	14	17	16	22
Grade 6	18	16	22	12
Grade 7	17	22	12	16
Grade 8	24	13	18	15
Grade 9	13	17	16	11
Grade 10	17	14	12	13
Grade 11	14	14	16	15
Grade 12	15	15	16	23
Shamrock	12	18	23	9
Mayfield	17	23	9	16
Collins	20	16	14	12
TOTAL	29	25	22	19
Henry	17	16	15	19
Pre-school	21	20	19	18
Kindergarten	22	21	20	19
Grade 1	6	11	16	8
Grade 2	19	11	8	15
Grade 3	11	8	14	16
Grade 4	8	13	15	12
Grade 5	14	14	12	11
Grade 6	15	9	12	14
Grade 7	10	16	13	6
Grade 8	16	14	8	16
Grade 9	15	10	16	11
Grade 10	11	19	12	15
Grade 11	18	13	15	13
Grade 12	12	16	12	14
TOTAL	19	11	13	15
TOTAL	13	10	10	16
TOTAL	187	175	176	182



The Clark Center Lutheran Church Restoration Committee consists of, left to right, Joyce Fjelland, Dennis Larson, Sharon Larson, Marlin Fjelland, Jean Obermeier, Chad Fjelland, Janene Gehrke, Chris Stromsness and Dennis Larson.

Church history

The Clark Center congregation was established on July 11, 1883. The first church services were held in people's homes and the McLean and Wallen Schools in Garfield

Township. When funds were raised the Clark Center Church, the first church in Clark County, was built in 1898. The first services were held that fall. Because of the decrease in rural population, the church was

closed in May 1994. Charter members of Clark Center Church, incorporated in 1883, include: Nils Wika, Hans Lien, Pe-

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Is the Nest Predator Bounty Program the answer to protecting pheasants?

Danielle Ferguson South Dakota News Watch

A former South Dakota Game, Fish and Park leader with vast experience in wildlife management has expressed strong disagreement with current GFP leadership on whether a state predator bounty program protects young pheasants or is the right way to get youths involved in outdoor activities.

In an online panel discussion hosted by South Dakota News Watch on Sept. 15, former GFP secretary and commissioner John Cooper said the Nest Predator Bounty Program enacted by Gov. Kristi Noem in 2019 and continued since then does not belong in South Dakota. The South Dakota's Nest Predator Bounty Program was created for political purposes rather than with the health of the state's habitat and wildlife in mind, Cooper said during the discussion. The program, which has cost \$2.4 million so far, gives \$10 for each animal tail submitted by adults and children who trap

and kill raccoons and other animals that eat the eggs and hatchlings of pheasants and ducks.

Some state wildlife officials, including GFP Sec. Kevin Robling, say the program that has resulted in 134,000 animals killed so far is working to protect pheasants and has shown a steady increase in youths involved in trapping. They acknowledge there is no scientific evidence or research in place to track whether removal of predator animals is actually leading to higher pheasant populations, though they say anecdotal evidence indicates the program is working.

Cooper said the program was "foisted" onto South Dakota by Noem without input from longtime trappers or hunters, members of the GFP Commission or the Legislature. Cooper said he and many other sports persons in the state are "mad" at the handling of the program. He pointed to recent studies that suggest wide-scale, long-term, lightly monitored bounty programs,

such as South Dakota's, often don't protect the intended species. "It's a bad program," Cooper said. "It costs us money and it's not doing anything at all for pheasant management or habitat." Robling defended the program during the panel discussion, saying it is key for creating future generations of hunters and trappers and keeping predators out of pheasant and other bird nests. "We are the pheasant capital of the world," said Robling. "Things have changed in the last 20 years. Our vision is to enhance the quality of life for future generations. It's time to think outside the box ... time to engage people in outdoor activities. The Nest Predator Bounty Program is absolutely doing that." Robling said the program is a creative solution to new problems facing the state's \$280 million annual pheasant hunting industry and is needed to protect nests of pheasants and young and adult birds. Low fur prices and a weak market for animal pelts have reduced inter-

est in trapping in South Dakota in recent years, and fewer people are incentivized to trap nest predators, allowing raccoons, skunks, red foxes, possums and badgers to flourish, Robling said.

Climate change has also played a role, destroying some land and increasing standing water, both of which impact the habitat for pheasants, said GFP Commission member Robert Whitmyre. Whitmyre said the number of predators removed in the first three years of the program has undoubtedly reduced predation on pheasants and pheasant nests whether there is scientific documentation of it or not. Fewer raccoons and skunks roaming the landscape will surely lead to fewer interactions with nests, he said. "We've got a lot of places where predators can be for a year without anybody coming in and disturbing them at all," Whitmyre said during the panel discussion. "We've got a lot of issues that didn't used to exist."

When asked about a lack of scientific evidence that the program is working, Robling and Whitmyre pointed to personal anecdotal evidence of seeing more birds and fewer raccoons, and referenced a 2001 study that found bounty programs "have the potential" to increase pheasant survival, but also that the "parameters decrease once predator control ceases." Robling also said youth participation in the program was up about 29% in 2021 compared to 2020. If the program prompts just 500 people to get involved in hunting or trapping, hundreds of millions of dollars could be generated in state revenue, he added.

Longtime hunter and trapper Robin Hagen, who was also part of Wednesday's panel, said habitat is the most important aspect to a healthy pheasant population, rather than the number of predators in the area. Hagen suggested money spent on the bounty program could be put to better use by preserving

habitat for the pheasants.

Robling said the state spent about \$22 million in maintaining and developing habitat last year. The ethics surrounding the program also came into question by panelists. Animals that are killed have their tails removed and are then typically left to rot or buried as there is little use for pelts taken from animals trapped in the springtime. Trapping is usually done in the fall when animal furs are thick and offspring of adults are old enough to survive.

Cooper and Hagen said the bounty program does not promote ethical trapping habits, because animals with newborns could be killed, leaving the newborns helpless. "How do you explain outdoor activities when you have the ethics issue of leaving young ones after killing one animal for a tail?" Cooper said.

Questions were also raised about whether children who are incentiv-

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