COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Curry County Ag Updates

Cooperative Extension Service • Curry County • June – July 2026

Notes from Extension

Happy Summer, Curry County! As we move into the heart of the season, I wanted to take a moment to share a little about how I can help serve our community through Curry County Extension Services.

Whether you have questions about trees, lawns, gardens, or other landscape and agricultural concerns, Curry County Extension is here to provide research-based information and support. I am available for phone calls and site visits to help identify possible issues such as unusual plant symptoms, insect or pest damage, irrigation concerns, and overall plant health problems.

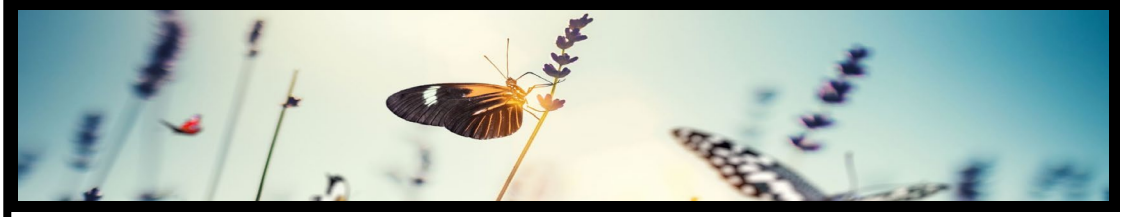
Sometimes it can be difficult to know exactly what is causing an issue, but with the support of New Mexico State University Extension specialists and experts, we can work together to help determine what may be going on and provide recommendations that fit our local conditions.

If you have questions or would like to schedule a visit, please contact the Curry County Extension Office via phone or email! We are always happy to help support our community!

Contact Information:
curry@nmsu.edu
575-763-6505
Morgan Latimore
latimor5@nmsu.edu

Coming Up!

On behalf of the Agriculture Science Center: There will be an **AG Day on August 6th, 2026!** This event **starts in the morning and concludes with Lunch!** Feel free to contact them for more info at (575)985-2292.



Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Squash Bug for Home Gardens and Small-scale Growers

Squash bug are a common pest found in many gardens, especially during the summer months. These insects are very resilient and can reproduce rapidly, allowing populations to build quickly and overwhelm garden plants. In warmer regions, squash bugs may produce up to 2–3 generations in a single growing season, making early detection and management especially important.

Squash bug can damage plants through both feeding injury and disease transmission. These insects feed on the leaves, stems, and sometimes the fruit of cucurbit plants, weakening the plant and causing stress. Their feeding activity may also trigger plant stress responses that can attract additional pests. Squash bugs are also known to spread plant diseases, including cucurbit yellow vine disease (CYVD), which is associated with the bacterium Cucurbit yellow vine disease. When squash bugs feed on infected plants, they can carry the bacterium in their digestive system for long periods of time, including through overwintering. The pathogen may then be transmitted to healthy plants when the insects feed again the following growing season.

Prevention: Sanitation is key for preventing squash bugs from overwintering and impacting early spring plantings. Cleaning up old plant mate rial from the garden or field (through removal or tillage) reduces overwintering habitat. Plant material should be bagged, burned, or composted. If composted, whole plants and large leaves should be cut up to prevent pock ets where pests can survive. Plant selection also helps in deterring squash bugs. Some species of cucurbits are more susceptible to squash bugs, especially squashes and pumpkins. Squash bugs are less attracted to cantaloupe, cucumbers, and watermelons, but can be problematic in these crops in years with high squash bug pressure.

Cultural Control: Adjusting the timing of planting, crop rotation, and sanitation are some strategies that can be used to manage squash bugs. Plant fast maturing summer squashes early but delay planting winter squashes by a couple of weeks until later in the growing season (mid-July) to help avoid infestations of squash bugs. Rotating your planting to a new field/garden bed, as far away as possible from the one used in the previous year, can reduce how quickly squash bugs migrate into the new field.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Squash Bug for Home Gardens and Small-scale Growers Cont.

Mechanical Control: Early season row covers, such as thin cloth or screens, can reduce squash bug access to plants. This is a common and important practice within organic production. Row covers can be a productive way to protect young plants for the first 4 to 6 weeks of the growing season. They should be installed at the time of planting and sealed along the ground with dirt or rock bags.

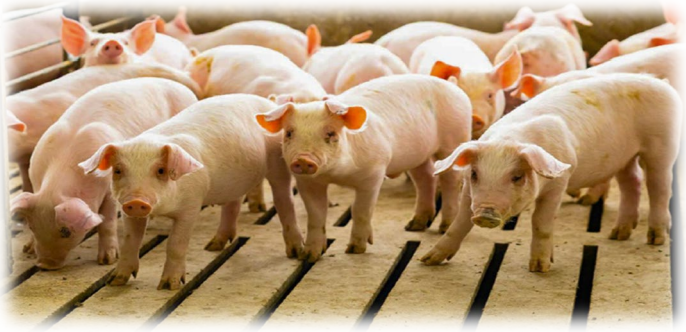
Biological Control: Biological controls can help reduce populations of squash bugs and other pests, but they should not be relied upon solely for squash bug control. Several arthropod species, such as spiders, ground beetles, robber flies, and lady beetles, prey on squash bugs throughout their life cycle. Adult squash bugs have a hardened exoskeleton, making them more difficult for arthropod predators to kill than nymphs. There are two parasitoids of squash bugs. A small parasitoid wasp (Gryon pennsylvanicum) is the main parasitoid of the squash bug. It lays its eggs inside of squash bug eggs, eventually killing the developing squash bug.

Chemical Control: Chemical management is difficult with this specific pest. Pesticide applications should only be made when nymphs can be targeted early in the season, and only when all other control methods have been tried first. If spraying must occur, target nymphs on young plants before flowering occurs and before plants start vining. Pesticides are most effective when temperatures are cooler. Applications should be made in the early or late hours of the day. When squash bugs mature into adults, they become difficult to control, partly because they hide in the lower canopy near the soil, making sprays less effective. They also become armored with a thick exoskeleton.

Amanda Skidmore, Melissa Schreiner, and Miranda L. Kersten. (2023). Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Squash Bug for Home Gardens and Small-scale Growers. New Mexico University. https://pubs.nmsu.edu/_h/H183.pdf

If you are interested in having the articles from these summaries, call our office at (575)763-6505 or email us at curry@nmsu.edu.

Pseudorabies found in swine herds in Iowa and Texas



DES MOINES - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has as of April 30 confirmed cases of the pseudorabies virus in swine herds in Iowa and Texas.

A commercial swine facility with fewer than 100 head in central Iowa received five boars from the Texas herd in recent months, and the virus was detected through routine testing. Only the five boars from Texas tested positive.

"No spread in the facility is a strong indication there was no spread outside the facility," said Mike Naig, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture.

The Texas herd was housed outdoors with potential contact to feral swine. Though pseudorabies was eliminated in 2004 from U.S. commercial swine herds, pseudorabies is still found in wild or feral swine populations. They remain a potential threat of exposure for domestic pigs.

The positive site in Iowa will be depopulated and all animals disposed of on-site through incineration. All farms within a 5-mile radius have been notified and are being tested. All farms within a 2-mile radius will test again 30 days after the clean up of the infected site.

Iowa State Veterinarian Dr. Jeff Kaisand said pseudorabies

– unrelated to rabies –

Is a herpes virus like chickenpox in humans. Symptoms in swine can include reproductive issues and pneumonia. When pigs are exposed, they become sick, shed the virus and then recover. But the virus can remain in the body and if the animal is stressed later, it can shed that virus again.

"The pigs were not showing any clinical signs, and it appears they were in the latent period where they weren't shedding virus," Kaisand said.

He said he was first notified late April 24 of positive tests from routine screening. They tested all the facility's pigs April 26, performed necropsies April 27 and coordinated with Texas for the herd of origin. Final confirmation of the tests were made April 30.

Pseudorabies is a reportable disease, not a foreign animal disease. The USDA has notified trading partners, but Naig said he anticipated minimal if any trade disruptions.

"This is exactly what we prepare for … to maintain our trading status when it comes to pseudorabies," Naig said.

They are also not anticipating imposing any extra import restrictions from U.S. herds at this time, Kaisand said, and they have no plans to cancel exhibitions.

Iowa was the last state to eradicate pseudorabies from commercial herds in 2004.Two key pieces were testing and mandatory vaccination in the state of Iowa, Kaisand said.

"We do have a good vaccine for the disease, but it's not appropriate for this situation," he said, because there is no indication the virus spread here. "A vaccine raises trade issues."

No additional biosecurity is needed, Naig said, but biosecurity is important every single day.

"Biosecurity is protection from the unknowns, not the knowns," Kaisand said.

Pseudorabies, also known as Aujeszky's disease virus, does not present a food-safety concern and is not considered a risk to the general public.

Zoe Martin Iowa Farmer. (2026). Pseudorabies found in swine herd. aphis.usda.gov.
https://agupdate.com/agriview/news/livestock/article_4432f20d-423c-42e8-a0a2-63e2f69f75bb.html

9 Ways you can help pollinators

1. Plant native flowering plants
2. Avoid Pesticides. Try eco-friendly products.
3. Choose sustainable produced foods and support pollinator-friendly farms.
4. Be a community scientist! Use nature apps!
5. Don't fear pollinators. Leave them alone and give them the space they need to pollinate plants.
6. Leave your leaves! Keep decaying vegetation around your home to give pollinators a home, too!
7. Mow your lawns less frequently to give them food and shelter
8. Give native bees a cozy home in which to live in by placing a pollinator box in your garden.
9. Spread the word about the importance of pollinators and how we can help them!

https://www.cec.org/people-for-pollinators/nine-steps/

Using Insectary Plants to Attract and Sustain Beneficial Insects for Biological Pest Control

There are many naturally occurring predatory and parasitic insects (and related species) that can help reduce pest populations on farms and in gardens. These biological control agents include various parasitic wasps and flies, minute pirate bugs, hoverflies, green lacewings, ambush bugs, ladybird beetles, crab spiders, and predatory mites. To maximize the impact of beneficial species, they should be protected from exposure to pesticides by practicing integrated pest management (IPM). In addition, beneficial insect populations can be encouraged by growing flowering plants that provide nectar and pollen. Floral resources are essential to supporting beneficial insects because some predators and parasitoids are only predaceous in one life stage, meaning life stages that are not predaceous feed on pollen and nectar.

Species	Seeding rate (lb per acre)	Twice normal seeding rate (lb per acre)	Fractional seeding rate for six-species mix (lb per acre)
California bluebell (*Phacelia campanularia*)	3	6	1
Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*)	70	140	23.3
Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)	8	16	2.7
Plains coreopsis (*Coreopsis tinctoria*)	2	4	0.7
Garden cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*)	30	60	10
Sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*)	2	4	0.7

Plant a diversity of flowers that include flowers that bloom in different seasons. Butterflies and moths need host plants for their larval (caterpillar) stage; however, some caterpillars may also be considered pests. Consider planting extra plants to allow for some feeding by caterpillars and consider your own threshold for feeding damage. On small farms, areas with flowering non-crop plants or cover crops can help to increase ecosystem services provided by beneficial insects (Carrié et al., 2012).

Pollinators also need a place to call home. This can include bare ground for ground-nesting bees, dried stems or logs for stem-nesting bees, and protected places for butterfly chrysalides. Pollinators have evolved with native plants, which are best adapted to the local growing season, climate, and soils. Planting native plants can invite native beneficial insects to the garden or farm, such as pollinators, seed dispersers, and decomposers (Figure 1). Many native plants are perennial and will come back year after year to provide floral resources. Habitat in home gardens and small farms can greatly assist beneficial insects; however, land and pest management decisions can adversely impact beneficial insect populations (Mata et al., 2017). For example, management practices that frequently disrupt the soil, such as tilling, may discourage ground-nesting bees from nesting in an area, or may impact existing populations in addition to disturbing other beneficial soil fauna (Sivakoff et al., 2018).

Miranda L. Kersten, Melissa A. Schreiner, and Amanda Skidmore. (2022). Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Pollinator Conservation in Home Gardens and Small Farms. New Mexico State University.
https://pubs.nmsu.edu/_h/H181.pdf

USDA Reports Corn and Soybean Planting Surges While Winter Wheat Faces Ongoing Stress

The sixth USDA Crop Progress Report of the spring showed that U.S. farmers in the top 18 states continued to make rapid planting progress during the week ending May 10. Corn and soybean advanced ahead of historical averages across much of the Midwest. Favorable weather conditions helped accelerate fieldwork in several key production states, while early emergence figures suggested strong initial crop development for both corn and soybeans.

Corn: 59% planted (52% five-year average), 26% emerged (19% five-year average)

Soybeans: 45% planted (36% five-year average), 16% emerged (12% five-year average)

At the same time, winter wheat conditions remained a concern across parts of the Great Plains, where drought stress and volatile spring temperatures continued to pressure crop health. Winter wheat conditions as of May 10 were rated as:

Good/excellent: 28% (54% the same time last year)
Fair: 32%
Poor/very poor: 40%
While row crop planting momentum has provided some optimism, ongoing moisture deficits and uneven crop conditions are likely to remain central themes in grain markets and farm management decisions in the weeks ahead.

Pasture and Range Condition – Selected States: Week Ending May 10, 2026

[National pasture and range conditions for selected States are weighted based on pasture acreage and/or livestock inventories]

State	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alabama	2	14	45	34	5
Arizona	38	36	15	10	1
Arkansas	11	12	37	31	9
California	-	-	5	85	10
Colorado	27	33	25	14	1
Connecticut	-	6	20	66	8
Delaware	13	26	40	21	-
Florida	8	38	41	13	-
Georgia	22	26	35	15	2
Idaho	1	4	23	62	10
Illinois	2	6	26	49	17
Indiana	1	4	32	56	7
Iowa	-	2	20	62	16
Kansas	12	18	31	34	5
Kentucky	3	13	42	40	2
Louisiana	7	9	34	45	5
Maine	1	9	46	44	-
Maryland	2	8	21	62	7
Massachusetts	-	7	18	65	10
Michigan	-	1	18	63	18
Minnesota	2	11	44	36	7
Mississippi	4	14	39	37	6
Missouri	-	1	19	73	7
Montana	32	20	27	20	1
Nebraska	41	38	16	5	-
Nevada	5	-	70	15	10
New Hampshire	-	14	19	31	36
New Jersey	1	5	49	44	1
New Mexico	20	27	31	19	3
New York	-	3	18	70	9

Topsoil Moisture Condition - Selected States: Week Ending May 10, 2026

[National topsoil moisture conditions for selected States are weighted based on cropland acreage]

State	Very short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alabama	9	37	51	3
Arizona	31	21	48	-
Arkansas	5	25	60	10
California	-	5	90	5
Colorado	50	43	6	1
Connecticut	-	30	70	-
Delaware	27	41	32	-
Florida	22	35	39	4
Georgia	63	16	15	6
Idaho	3	20	76	1
Illinois	3	13	67	17
Indiana	3	10	62	25
Iowa	3	23	68	6
Kansas	27	38	34	1
Kentucky	12	39	48	1
Louisiana	4	19	49	28
Maine	-	8	87	5
Maryland	27	40	32	1
Massachusetts	-	20	80	-
Michigan	-	4	78	18
Minnesota	4	34	57	5
Mississippi	2	15	63	20
Missouri	1	6	77	16
Montana	41	44	15	-
Nebraska	49	35	16	-
Nevada	10	20	60	10
New Hampshire	-	67	33	-
New Jersey	16	12	72	-
New Mexico	46	38	14	2

USDA Reports Corn and Soybean Planting Surges While Winter Wheat Faces Ongoing Stress Cont.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork - Selected States

[Days suitable for fieldwork are weighted based on cropland acreage]

State	Week ending		
	May 10, 2025	May 3, 2026	May 10, 2026
	(Days)	(Days)	(Days)
Alabama	3.7	4.6	4.5
Arizona	6.0	6.5	6.5
Arkansas	4.1	4.2	4.3
California	7.0	7.0	7.0
Colorado	6.2	6.3	5.0
Connecticut	5.0	7.0	6.0
Delaware	4.5	6.5	6.5
Florida	5.4	6.7	6.6
Georgia	5.4	5.6	5.1
Idaho	6.7	6.7	7.0
Illinois	4.8	2.7	3.2
Indiana	4.0	2.8	2.5
Iowa	6.4	4.2	6.5
Kansas	5.0	5.4	5.9
Kentucky	3.8	5.5	5.5
Louisiana	2.0	3.5	3.7
Maine	4.0	4.0	5.0
Maryland	5.5	6.5	6.5
Massachusetts	3.0	6.0	5.0
Michigan	3.7	1.8	4.8
Minnesota	6.6	3.1	6.3
Mississippi	2.4	2.7	3.9
Missouri	4.9	3.3	4.6
Montana	6.2	6.9	6.4
Nebraska	6.6	5.2	6.5
Nevada	7.0	7.0	6.3
New Hampshire	2.5	2.0	5.5
New Jersey	7.0	6.0	6.5
New Mexico	5.5	6.4	6.2

Subsoil Moisture Condition - Selected States: Week Ending May 10, 2026

[National subsoil moisture conditions for selected States are weighted based on cropland acreage]

State	Very short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alabama	12	42	45	1
Arizona	26	26	48	-
Arkansas	8	27	55	10
California	-	5	95	-
Colorado	43	41	15	1
Connecticut	-	41	59	-
Delaware	25	39	36	-
Florida	18	48	34	-
Georgia	59	26	13	2
Idaho	3	15	81	1
Illinois	5	18	64	13
Indiana	5	13	67	15
Iowa	3	18	74	5
Kansas	27	37	35	1
Kentucky	14	40	45	1
Louisiana	5	28	44	23
Maine	12	15	72	1
Maryland	24	45	31	-
Massachusetts	10	30	60	-
Michigan	-	3	76	21
Minnesota	4	29	64	3
Mississippi	4	25	54	17
Missouri	2	11	78	9
Montana	26	49	24	1
Nebraska	45	36	19	-
Nevada	5	15	75	5
New Hampshire	-	69	31	-
New Jersey	16	40	44	-
New Mexico	38	45	17	-

PRO AG: Top AG News. https://www.proag.com/news/usda-reports-corn-and-soybean-planting-surges-while-winter-wheat-faces-ongoing-stress/

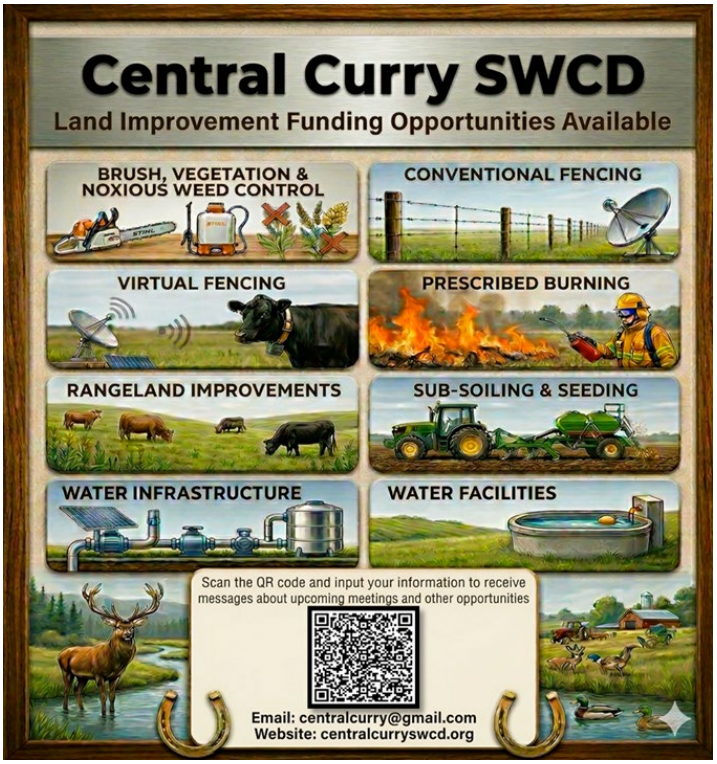
6 ways to Protect Plants During a Heat Wave

1. Provide Shade
    1. Shade helps the soil stay cooler, retain better moisture, prevent sun scalding/sunburning of fruit, and protects plants from heat stress.
2. Water Deeply (all season long)
    1. The goal is to water slowly and deep in order reach the root zone of the plants.
3. Water before Heat (but resist the urge to overwater)
    1. Plan to water plants with the evening or morning before a heat wave is due to hit.
4. Don't Skip the Mulch!
    1. Mulch provides a protective layer for the soil and roots of your plants against heat waves
5. Avoid Wetting Plant Leaves
    1. Avoid overhead watering and wetting your plant leaves during hot sunny conditions. Moisture on plant leaves acts like a magnifying glass!
6. Promote Overall Plant Health
    1. Use organic inputs such as worm castings, mycorrhizae, well-aged compost and/or homemade compost tea.

https://homesteadandchill.com/protect-garden-heat-wave/

On Behalf of Tomorrow's Water:

On Behalf of the Central Curry Soil and Water Conservation District:



How to Control Flies in Cattle Naturally: 15 Proven Effective Strategies

1. Using predatory Insects to Manage Fly Populations Naturally
    1. Predatory insects like parasitic wasps can help control fly populations. The parasitic wasp preys on the fly larvae by laying eggs inside the pupae of the fly and preventing the adult fly from emerging.
2. Creating Fly Traps with Household Ingredients for Cattle Farms
    1. Combine apple cider vinegar, sugar, and dish soap in jar or bottle where they can lodge themselves and become trapped.
3. Implementing Proper Manure Management Techniques
    1. Managing manure piles helps reduce the number of places for flies to lay eggs.
4. Growing Plants That Repel Flies Around Livestock Areas
    1. Plants such as lavender, mint, basil, and marigolds have a strong scent that flies avoid.
5. Utilizing Natural Oils for Fly Deterrence Among Cattle
    1. Oils such as eucalyptus, citronella, and tea tree oil can confuse and repel fly senses. Make sure to dilute in water before spraying on cattle.
6. Encouraging Biodiversity Through Rotational Grazing Practices
7. Providing Adequate Shade and Shelter to Minimize Fly Attraction
8. Regularly Cleaning Water Troughs and Feeding Stations
9. Employing Diatomaceous Earth for Fly Control in Cattle Pens
    1. Diatomaceous earth is safe for cattle to encounter and helps control flies by dehydrating all age stages of flies.
10. Adjusting Stocking Density to Reduce Fly Hotspots
    1. Fewer animals per acre leads to less accumulation of dung and improved airflow which helps reduce fly populations.
11. Introducing Biological Larvicides for Sustainable Fly Control
    1. Targets fly larvae specifically, and is safe for human, animals, and beneficial insects.
12. Harnessing Fans and Air Circulation to Keep Flies Away
13. Building Physical Barriers Like Screens and Mesh Covers
14. Training Cattle to Use Dust Baths for Self- Grooming
15. Monitoring Weather Patterns to Predict Fly Activity Levels

https://www.agrifarming.in/how-to-control-flies-in-cattle-naturally