



# Field Notes

## Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture E-Newsletter

*E-Field Notes*  
May 2021

It's May, and there are signs that things might start looking more normal again soon - such as the potential **return of in-person workshops at the Kerr Center!**

There's been lots of talk about getting used to the "new normal" in relation to the pandemic, but it turns out the phrase has an older and more specific meaning related to weather. **NOAA has just published the latest "new normal," good for the next decade.**

If rotational grazing is your new normal, there's a **new free e-book on Grazing 101** to set you straight on the basics.

If you're a farmer or rancher trying to get *back* to normal after the pandemic, **it's not too late to sign up for USDA pandemic relief programs.**

Normally, we count on your [donations](#) to help us do the work we do - and we hope that that's one normal that won't be changing! [Thank you!](#)

### *In this issue:*

- **President's Note: 2021 Workshops**
- **The New Normal – Weather-Wise**
- **Free Grazing 101 E-Book**
- **USDA Signup Deadline Extended for Pandemic Assistance**
- **Spring/Summer Events: Small-Scale No-Till, Native Plant Sale, Monarch Monitoring, Agroforestry....**

## President's Note: 2021 Workshops



To say last year was unusual would be an understatement. Due to the pandemic the Kerr Center was forced to stop any workshops in 2020.

Now everything seems to be opening back up. **The Kerr Center is looking at setting up some workshops beginning in early summer.**

Make sure you check the [website](#) and [calendar](#). We will send emails out to those on the [newsletter list](#).

Thank you for your interest and [support](#) for the Kerr Center during this difficult time. I hope to see you soon as we move forward to provide education on sustainable agriculture.

*[Click here for a sampling of different workshop topics we've covered over the years.](#)*

## The New Normal (Weather-Wise)

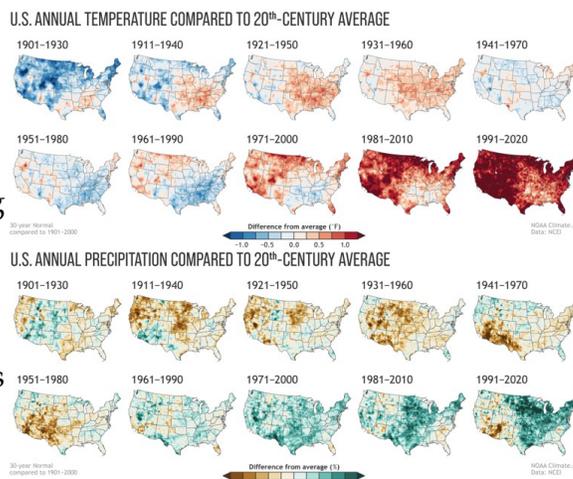
Over the past year or so, we've all been hearing the phrase "the new normal" a good deal more often than, well... normal. Now NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is getting in on the action, with its own set of "new normals." Actually, **for NOAA**, it turns out that there's nothing new about new normals: the agency **publishes a new normal every ten years!**

Naturally, though, the agency has a more precise definition of "normal": the **U.S. Climate Normals**, as they're called, are **30-year averages of weather conditions** in the United States, compiled from weather stations all around the country. According to NOAA, the Climate Normals are "the basis for judging **how daily, monthly and annual climate conditions compare to what's normal for a specific location in today's climate.**"

The Climate Normals are 30-year averages, but they're *updated* every *ten* years. The series extends back to the 1901-1930 Normal. The reason the Climate Normals are in the news now is that [the newest one – for 1990-2020 – has just been released.](#)

Along with the latest Normal, NOAA has released a **series of maps comparing both the temperature and rainfall in each 30-year Normal to the overall average for the entire 20th century.** The maps reveal not only the widely known warming trend over the past hundred years, but also a less-mentioned increase in rainfall over much of the country - including most of Oklahoma - during the most recent four Normals.

[Learn more....](#)



## Free Grazing 101 E-Book

The National Grazing Lands Coalition has teamed up with On Pasture and Yvette Gibson, an online learning specialist in grazing science, to share the information needed to be a successful grazer. The [free Grazing 101 e-book](#) introduces the principles needed to:

- Manage for [soil and pasture health](#),
- Choose the right [fencing](#), [watering](#) systems, handling facilities and [livestock](#), and
- Work smarter, not harder, and actually make a profit.

Don Ashford introduces the basics, and shares his philosophies, developed over sixty years of working with livestock. Other experts add how-tos that demonstrate principles in practice.

A 43-lesson online course on Grazing 101 and a 24-lesson course on Recordkeeping are also available free.

These resources are free, thanks in part to funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and donations from the editors and authors. They're part of a larger outreach and collaboration effort to provide assistance to those stewarding the nation's grazing lands.

[Learn more....](#)



## USDA Signup Deadline Extended for Pandemic Assistance

Last week, **the number of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. hit its lowest level in 14 months**, with new cases and hospitalizations continuing to decline. Hopefully, the pandemic will soon be in the nation's rearview mirror.

However, since the pandemic's economic fallout will likely be with us a while longer, **USDA is extending its programs intended to help ag producers pick up the pieces.**

Specifically, **USDA has extended the deadline for signups for the CFAP-2 program.** The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program provides financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and producers impacted by COVID-19 market disruptions.

[Learn more....](#)



# Spring/Summer Events: Small-Scale No-Till, Native Plant Sale, Monarch Monitoring, Agroforestry....

As spring turns to summer, you can catch up on the latest research on **small-scale, no-till** ecological farming (June 1, online), go **shopping for native plants** (Ardmore, June 5), learn to **monitor monarch larvae** as a citizen scientist (June 12, online), and attend the **North American Agroforestry Conference** (June 28 - July 2, online).

The Kerr Center's [tour](#) season is also open, by appointment only. [Come visit us!](#)

Full details on these and other sustainable agriculture learning opportunities, as always, can be found on the Kerr Center's online [events calendar](#).

The screenshot shows a calendar for the month of June 2021. Each event is listed with its date, day of the week, title, location, and time. Some events have a 'Tickets' button and a plus sign for more options.

Date	Day	Event Title	Location	Time	Additional Info
Jun 1	Tue	Digging into the Research of Small-Scale No-Till Farming Systems (Webinar)	online	10:00 am - 11:30 am	Tickets
Jun 4	Fri	Deadline: Southern SARE Research & Education Grants	n/a	all-day	
Jun 5	Sat	Southern Oklahoma Wildflower & Milkweed Plant Sale	Ardmore (Downtown Farmers Market)	7:30 am - 12:00 pm	Edit
Jun 5	Sat	Goats for Vegetation Management	online	10:00 am	Tickets
Jun 8	Tue	BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Tour the Kerr Center	Kerr Center	9:00 am	
Jun 12	Sat	Monarch Larva Monitoring Project Training	online	10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Tickets
Jun 21	Mon	Pressure Canning	Oklahoma City (OSU Extension Conference Center)	4:30 pm - 8:00 pm	
Jun 28	Mon	North American Agroforestry Conference 2021	online	Jun 28 - Jul 2	all-day, Tickets

Don't forget that you can also use our online calendar to **keep yourself and your friends up to date** on these and other upcoming events, including our tours:

- **Subscribe to our feed** and receive **updates to your personal calendar** as they are made.
- **Share events on the calendar** via a number of **different social media sites**, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.

## Donate Now

Your donation helps  
support the Kerr Center!



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## Support the Kerr Center

Since 1965 the Kerr Center has been reaching out to folks in Oklahoma and beyond. Today, the Friends of the Kerr Center help us continue this vital work! If you enjoy reading this newsletter or visiting our website, please consider [making a gift to the Kerr Center](#) today!

## Quick Links...

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