

It Was a Long Winter!

**Finally, the cows and the bulls are out to grass! What a relief, for all involved. Anxiety levels rise as the hay pile gets shorter!**

Each year many cattlemen are negotiating pasture leases. I read an article about the cheapest and most expensive states to rent pasture. Fortunately, Kansas is not in the top 10 most expensive, and we're not in the bottom 10, cheapest places. I guess it's our nature to be in the middle. This information is gathered by the USDA's National Ag statistics. The 2017 rate for Jackson county was \$28/acre, Jefferson county was \$25.50 an acre and Nemaha county was 0. Probably not enough surveys were returned to give a good enough picture of what rent in in Nemaha county OR most of it is privately owned.

Whatever the rate you are paying, is your lease in writing? I'm a big advocate for having it in writing. When you put it in black and white, then both parties of the lease understand the terms. If something should happen to one of the parties of the lease, their heir, also can see the terms of the lease.

For landowners, when you rent out your property, you give up the right to that property. Written leases can spell out that you still want to go mushroom hunting, fishing, camping or whatever on your property during the lease.

Written leases can also address what happens in unusual circumstances, like a drought, or the pond dries up. Is the full lease amount required, if the grazing time was cut in half by drought?

We do have some farm lease materials, and even some sample leases that you can use as a starting point. These leases can be of your own making, or you can go through your lawyer, just make sure that both parties sign and date them.

If you want to check out the map of pasture rental rates, go to:

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=31de53634d214d328c98f1ce839b14ae&extent=-117.0183,28.0358,-76.4568,48.4457>