

AG NOTES
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FARMERS MARKET

I haven't heard from all of the vendors, but I will complete my contacts with them in the next couple of days. Opening the market is always weather dependent, and it's just been a struggle for our vendors. I'll make an announcement for sure on our Facebook page, our market website, and in my email newsletter. I'll post in this article next week.

Just be patient.

WHAT IS THIS?



I always get calls and pictures or specimens this time of year about big wasp, and these calls are wanting to know if they are the Asian hornet, sometimes referred to as the 'murder wasp'. First, let me say they do not murder anyone or anything. Second, they are not here, they are in Washington State, and they have been contained as far as anyone knows. There is a special team focused on surveillance out there, and they are doing a great job.

What we do have here is a European wasp. It is also called a European hornet. It is a big one, and looks worse than it is. These critters are black with yellow stripes, and they do look ferocious. But the reality is they do sting, but usually they have been provoked.

Here is an excerpt from a publication from Penn State University entitled "European Paper Wasp" by Steve Jacobs, PSU Extension associate, found at <https://extension.psu.edu/european-paper-wasp>

Before 1981, the European paper wasp was not recorded in North America. In its native region, *P. dominula* is the most abundant paper wasp in those countries around the Mediterranean. It is also found in southern Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East, and eastward into China. A highly successful colonizer, this wasp has rapidly increased its distribution in the United States during the past 20 years.

It is frequently mistaken for a yellowjacket. Smaller than the native northern paper wasp, the European paper wasp is yellow and black, resembling the pattern (especially on the abdomen) of the yellowjackets in the genus *Vespula*.

As in all paper wasps, the "waist" is very thin. During flight, the hind pair of legs trail below in an extended fashion. The nest is the characteristic upside-down umbrella shape, and the open cells can be seen from below. Cream-colored larvae are legless and remain within their cells until they emerge as adult wasps.

I've attached a photo to help identify it.

WHAT'S THE MARKET?

Drs. Andrew Griffith and Aaron Smith, UT livestock and crop economists, shared these comments.

Fed cattle traded \$1 to \$2 lower compared to last week on a live basis. Prices on a live basis primarily ranged from \$135 to \$138 while dressed prices were mainly \$221 to \$222. The 5-area weighted average prices thru Thursday were \$137.84 live, down \$1.09 compared to last week and \$221.73 dressed, down \$2.26 from a week ago. A year ago, prices were \$119.89 live and \$190.73 dressed.

Based on Tennessee weekly auction market reports, steer prices this week were steady to \$2 higher compared to a week ago while heifer prices were \$3 higher compared to last week. Harvest cow prices were steady while bull prices were also steady compared to the previous week.

Milk production in the 24 major states during April totaled 18.3 billion pounds, down 0.9% from April 2021. Production per cow for April averaged 2,054 pounds. The number of milk cows was 8.91 million head, unchanged from March 2022. March production was revised up 0.1% from preliminary estimates.

Crop comments were not available this week.

WISDOM

The April issue of Progressive Farmer's Cornerstones quotes had some good comments about horses. Since horses are so important in our county, I'll share some of these.

Winston Churchill said "No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle." Herman Melville said "No philosophers so thoroughly comprehend us as dogs and horses." Abraham Lincoln said "I can make a General in five minutes, but a good horse is hard to replace." John Wayne said "Courage is being scared to death by saddling up anyway." Will Rogers said "There is something about riding a horse down the street on a prancing horse that make you feel like something, even when you ain't a thing."

The one I like is from W. C. Fields. He said "Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people." Think about it!

THE KIDS

We got to watch some really good baseball last week. Hank's team is now the only undefeated team in the league. He has played at second, center and right field, pitched, and finished a game as catcher. He loves it all, and I think he's good at it. If I didn't, what kind of a Grandee would I be?

Ford finished school last week, and he had a get-together of his friends. There were seventeen boys in one place at the same time. Talk about chaos, it was loud to say the least. But there was not one single issue, which says a lot about Ford and his friends. Good kids.

Piper had dance recital last week, and it was so much fun to watch her expressions and her wiggles and giggles! She made faces with the music. I love to watch these little ones grow! And she showed her pony this weekend, and was reserve. She loved it every bit, but the most fun she had was playing with her little friends after the class. I love it when little ones are so good with each other and true friends.