

Drought may cause higher nitrate levels in soil

By Jim Garrett

Nebraska farmers may experience higher levels of nitrate concentrations in the upper soil layers this year and into next, a UNL agriculture extension specialist said.

Dr. Delno Knudsen said that because of the summer drought conditions across Nebraska and the Midwest, crops did not use up as much of the nitrogen fertilizers applied during the 1980 crop season.

He said it is not uncommon to find the higher levels of nitrates left in the soil when crops are subjected to drought stress of this degree.

Stress from the drought, Knudsen explained, restricts crop growth and increases the crops' susceptibility to damage from in-

sects and disease. He said the stress causes buildup of nitrogen fertilizers by the crop.

Another major factor associated with drought stress on crops is the accumulation of nitrates in the lower portions of crop fiber, Knudsen said. He said this factor becomes important when the fields are open for winter grazing of livestock.

To avoid nitrate poisoning in livestock grazing on nitrate concentrated fields, Knudsen said, the farmer should precondition the livestock with adequate pre-feeding techniques before turning the livestock out into the fields.

Knudsen said fear of contaminating underground water supplies by leaching of the high nitrate levels should be evaluated

with adequate knowledge of the contaminating process.

Since nitrate poisoning was first observed in Kansas livestock in the early 1930s, Knudsen said, the ability to manage and predict possible nitrate poisoning has improved greatly.

Knudsen said that for nitrate poisoning to occur in water precontaminated from bacteria must also be present.

The precontaminated water supplies, plus high nitrate levels, increase the possibility of nitrate poisoning occurring from intake of the mixed system.

Knudsen said that news of high nitrate levels often causes panic. But, he said, without the presence of bacterially-con-

taminated water, there probably will not be nitrate poisoning.

If nitrates are consumed in high proportions by themselves, poisoning could occur, Knudsen said. But for this to happen by indirect passage through underground water systems, nitrogen concentrations considerably higher than normally applied with fertilizers, must be present to contaminate the water supplies.

Knudsen said there is no danger of getting nitrate poisoning from eating meat or drinking milk of livestock grazed on crop fields with high nitrate concentrations. He said the high nitrate concentrations will reduce meat and milk production in the animal, but won't pass along with the product that is consumed.

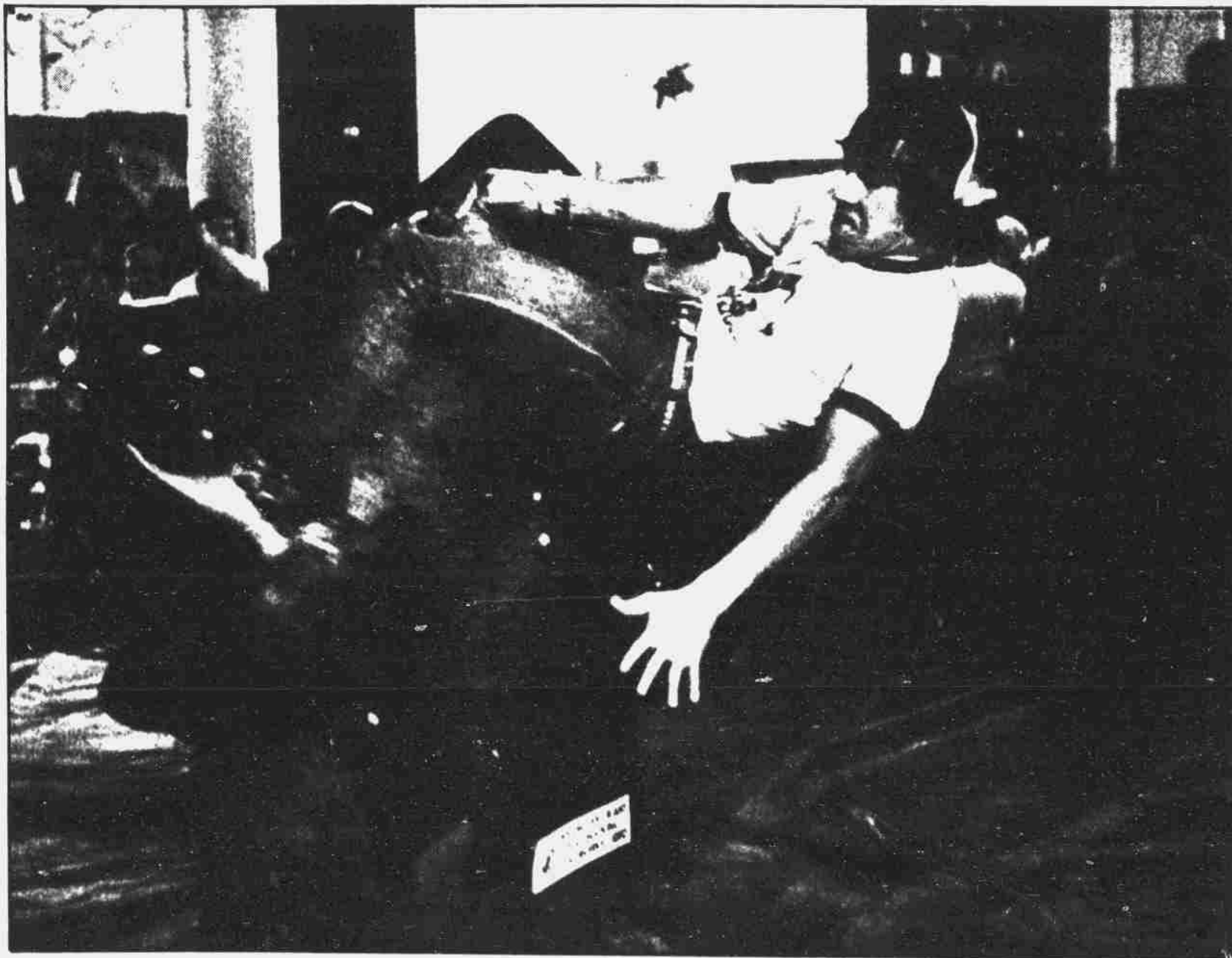


Photo by Mark Billingsley

Roger Schmidt gives the bucking bull a try at the Expo America at the Lincoln Hilton Nov. 17-19. The popularity of the bulls was enhanced by the recent movie *Urban Cowboy*, but lately their popularity has waned.

As 'riding' popularity declines, two Lincoln bars remove bulls

By Bob Glissmann

Those mechanical bulls, recently popularized by the movie *Urban Cowboy*, have lost their wide appeal shortly after their introduction into the American bars, according to managers of area establishments providing the rides.

This decline in popularity has caused two Lincoln bars to get rid of the bulls only two months after they started offering the rides.

But two other bars, one in Lincoln and one in Omaha, have kept the bulls, even though they aren't as popular. Rick Madsen, assistant manager of the Electric Cowboy in Omaha, said business is going well although the lines aren't as long as they used to be for its bull, "El Toro."

Armadillo's and Starship Enterprise, have both gotten rid of their bulls. Randy Grieser, manager at Starship Enterprise, said, "It was successful for a short period of time and it dropped off." Grieser said the popularity of country music, also propelled by *Urban Cowboy*, has waned.

"I thought it would last at least a couple of years, but it has died," he said.

The bull and music haven't died completely, according to the manager of Little Bo West.

Dave Genzmer said that his bar has had their bull, "Big Red," for about one month and they have been "fairly busy with it." He said the bar has run contests

with the bull, once offering a \$200 top prize. No one has been hurt while riding the bull, Genzmer said, except "a few pants have been ripped."

"It's one of the safest bulls around," Genzmer said. "We're the only ones that have the air bag that's probably 15 feet by 15 feet and 2 feet deep. The bull itself is wrapped around with foam and Styrofoam, and there's a sheep wool blanket on the bull to protect your legs," he said.

Madsen of the Electric Cowboy said the only injury he knew of at his bar was "a girl who fell forward on it and cut her lip."

He said the operator of the bull, controls the direction of the spin, but he can't control the up and down motion or the speed of the spin.

"We usually run it at half speed, though," Madsen said, "and if the rider looks like he's had too much we slow it down or don't let him ride." He said that the other Electric Cowboy in Augusta, Ga., runs the bull at full speed all of the time.

"People are flying off all over the place down there," Madsen said.

Evaluation planned on visitation policy

In order that some students will not be "disfranchised," UNL housing officials and students are going to re-evaluate the plan to modify procedures for changing visitation hours on residence hall floors.

UNL Director of Housing Douglas Zatechka said the visiting hours plan may be changed somewhat before it is submitted to the NU Board of Regents for approval.

Zatechka said the current plan may be harsh on students who don't want a floor hours change.

The new policy, which was passed by the Residence Hall Association on Oct. 30, provides that 90 percent of floor members must consent to a change in hours.

To change floor hours now in residence halls from eight-hour floors to 14-hour floors, there must be unanimous consent by all people living on the floor. Parents of minors living on the floor also must express their consent to the change.

In the new plan, all students opposed to the change can move to other floors with eight-hour visitation hours when spots are available.

At the Oct. 30 RHA meeting, John Folda, a Harper resident who proposed the new hours policy, said although parents of floor members will be sent notices by UNL housing officials that hours have been changed, replies from the parents will not be necessary. Folda said, however, if more than four negative responses are received from parents, the hours change process would be stopped.

Zatechka said Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Richard Armstrong reviewed the new proposal and had questions about it.

The problem may be that the new rule would not give those residents who voted against an hours change adequate opportunity to find another place to live, according to Zatechka.

Zatechka said he was concerned that the minority of students would be "disfranchised" and placed in a bind to find new living space on another floor.

Student representatives and housing personnel will meet before the Christmas break and try to revamp the plan, Zatechka said.

He said he had no idea when the proposal would go before the regents, but hoped it would be before the end of the academic year.

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