

4-H Youth Development

February 2026

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Closed on designated holidays

www.meadowlark.k-state.edu

4-H Club Day Past & Present

One of the largest and most important 4-H events is 4-H Day. 4-H Day started in 1925 as a model meeting contest at Round-up and developed through "Spring Festival" to 4-H Day as we know it today. As interest in model meetings increased, orchestra, band, and choruses were added to the 1928 Round-up. In 1930, the one-act play was another addition. The term "Spring Festival" appeared in 1937. Twelve sub-district spring festivals were held, four in each Extension district. Model meetings, choruses, bands, and orchestras were a part of the spring festival.

In the 1938 Spring Festival, 99 counties participated in 12 sub-district festivals, with one-act plays being added. Instrumental ensembles became a part of the Spring Festival in 1939, with six of them competing at Round-up. Another addition to the Spring Festival came in 1940 when vocal ensembles were added. That year, counties reported 103 vocal ensembles competed in spring festivals. Because of restrictions during World War II, only sub-district festivals were held in 1942. Gasoline was rationed in 1943 and no district festivals were held. District festivals were resumed in 1944 with 11 being held in the state. Project talks and demonstrations became a part of Spring Festivals that year.

Spring festivals were called "County Clubs Days" for the first time in 1945. Demonstrations and promotional talks became a part of the Club Day in 1949, and musical games were added in 1950. District Club Days were discontinued in 1952. Twelve regional club days were held with no competition beyond the regional event. Some of the more outstanding groups were invited to Round-up. Project and activity talks became a part of Club Day in 1958, and the number of Regional Club Days were increased to 15. In 1960, the state was divided into 16 regions.

4-H Club Day is now called County or District 4-H Day. As Extension Districts are formed across the state of Kansas, many have decided to combine 4-H Club Day into one event for all District 4-H members. Most counties/districts still have the opportunity to participate in a Regional 4-H Day although some regionals have been dropped in recent years. This is how Club Day began and how it developed into a major event in the 4-H program. This event has evolved over the years and will continue to do so into the future, but the importance of this event for development of communication/ presentation skills of the 4-H youth remains fundamental.

4-H Club Day activities are an important phase of local 4-H programming and should be something that every 4-H member tries. 4-H Day provides additional opportunities for 4-H members to further develop their skills, self-confidence, and personal developments as they learn and have fun with others in their club, county or district. 4-H Club Day objectives include the following:

1. To demonstrate the value of the 4-H Youth Development program through public presentation and evaluation of 4-H'ers showcasing:
 - a. Public Presentations
 - b. Parliamentary Procedures
 - c. Performing Arts
2. Give 4-H'ers an opportunity to learn skills and gain confidence in their abilities to exercise parliamentary procedures, speak effectively and give creative performances.
3. To provide opportunity for fellowship and wider acquaintance among 4-H'ers.
4. To exchange information regarding 4-H project work to others.
5. To present a favorable image to the public and to promote 4-H.



David Hallauer, Extension Agent

2026 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide

The *KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide* is now available at any District Office or online via the K-State Extension Bookstore at: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/item/2026-chemical-weed-control-for-field-crops-pastures-rangeland-and-noncropland_CHEMWEEDGUIDE. Updated annually to include new product information and ratings (example below) from KSU herbicide efficacy plots, the guide is a great herbicide information reference for all major Kansas field crops plus range and pasture. Pick up—or download—your copy today.

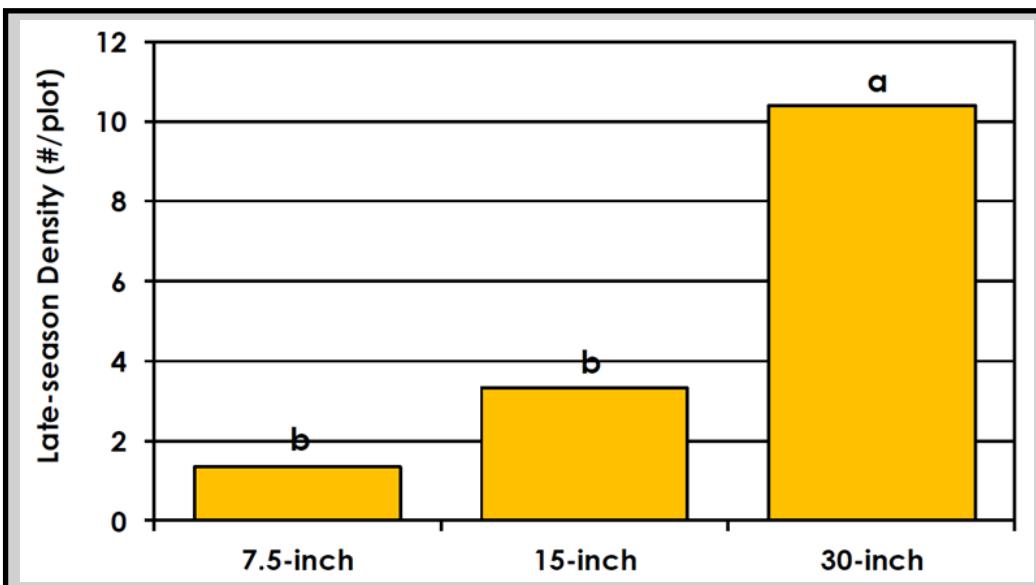
Integrated Weed Management

At the recent Midwest Crops Conference, Missouri Extension Weed Scientist, Dr. Kevin Bradley, finished his update with a focus on integrated weed management considerations. While weed control efforts often focus on either control products or adoption of technologies, integrated weed management might include practices already readily available to us.

For example, work by weed scientists from 11 states (19 site-years during the 2021 and 2022 growing seasons) showed the value of a cereal rye cover crop. Terminating cereal rye two weeks before planting resulted in a 16 percent reduction in pigweed density when compared with no-till. If cereal rye termination was delayed and soybeans were planted green, there was a 44 percent reduction in pigweed density as compared with no-till. If you are already implementing cover crops into your soybean system, it might have value as a weed control aid as well.

The benefits of row spacing have long been studied in soybeans as well with Bradley's team looking at the benefits of narrow row soybeans when it comes to weed seed production. As seen in the graph here, 49 percent less seed produced in 15-inch rows than 30-inch rows (seven and 15-inch rows were not significantly different).

Lots of factors above and beyond weed control go in to whether to use a cover crop ahead of soybeans or considering a change to row spacing, but if changes are in store, consider the weed management benefits as well. It might help strengthen your herbicide program as well.



*Results summarized across herbicide programs, tillage types, and planting populations.

**Means followed by the same letter are not different, $P \leq 0.05$

Schultz, J. and K.W. Bradley, 2015. *Weed Technol.* 29:169-176.

Southern Rust Myths

With the pressure we saw this year from Southern Rust, questions naturally arise as to why. UNL Extension Corn Pathologist, Dr. Tamra Jackson-Ziems, answered some of these at the recent Midwest Crops Conference, and one particular 'myth' caught my attention: super strains.

The idea of new 'super strains' of Southern Rust was posed as a reason for the outbreak, but it is indeed a myth. No super strains exist, and while 2025 levels might make us feel otherwise, it's more likely the pressure was the result of favorable weather conditions.

We always have a susceptible plant (corn). We often have a pathogen (Southern Rust). Even in Nebraska, UNL Pathologists have confirmed Southern Rust in 19 of the last 20 growing seasons – though none as early as this year.) That just leaves favorable conditions for our disease triangle to be complete.

Favorable conditions we certainly had. Average temperatures around 80 degrees F: check. While Gray Leaf spot might require as many as 12 hours of leaf wetness to maximize infection, Southern Rust may only require about half that, something we often can attain with dew overnight.

Added together it equals Southern Rust pressure like we don't often see – and thankfully not one caused by a super strain.



Cindy Williams, Extension Agent

Applesauce Muffins: Make Now-Bake Later

Ingredients:

½ cup margarine
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
1 1/4 cups applesauce



Instructions: (Remember to wash your hands!)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line muffin tins with paper baking cups or grease bottom of muffin tin with margarine or cooking spray.
2. Cream margarine and sugar with an electric mixer. Add egg, mixing well. Blend in the remaining ingredients.
3. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full and bake for 15 to 18 minutes. (Optional—Add ½ cup of diced apple or raisins to batter.)

Helpful Hints: While an electric mixer makes mixing these muffins a quick task, they will turn out best if mixed by hand. Either way—by hand, or by mixer, it is important to remember that muffins are a “quick bread” and that means muffins or coffeecakes will come out best if not overmixed. Just lightly stir the ingredients together—so dry ingredients are barely moistened. The batter will still be slightly lumpy, and that’s fine. Over stirring or mixing a quick bread will make the muffins tough. Sometimes kids who help in the kitchen really like to stir big and long—and there are good recipes for that—but when it comes to mixing muffins, less is more!

Remember, this recipe and most batters contain raw egg. Don’t lick the spoon or bowl, because the raw egg can make us sick—especially young children. Wait until the batter is baked; it’s then safe to go ahead and enjoy.

Nutrition Facts—Serving size-1 muffin; servings per recipe-18; calories-130; calories from fat-25; total fat-3g; cholesterol-10mg; sodium-13-mg and total charohdrates-24g.

Source: K-State Kids a Cook'n

Kids Need Physical Activity

Some alarming statistics reveal what is happening to our young children. Two to five-year-olds watch more than 25 hours of television per week. Forty percent of children ages five to eight show at least one risk factor for heart disease, and early signs of arteriosclerosis are now appearing as young as age five. Up to half of American children are not getting enough exercise.

What has changed to explain these trends? While there is no single cause, several factors contribute. Television, along with video and computer games, provides easy entertainment that keeps children sedentary for long periods of time. Food often becomes part of the equation as well, with frequent snacking on high-calorie, low-nutrient foods.

Safety concerns have also reduced the amount of time children spend outdoors, as many communities lack safe places to play. Increased emphasis on school achievement further limits free play, with some schools reducing or eliminating recess and parents delaying playtime until homework is finished.

Research shows that physical activity supports academic achievement by improving focus and reducing stress. Children stay on task longer when given opportunities for movement. Outdoor play also provides sunlight, which helps produce vitamin D, supports immune health, and improves overall well-being.

For parents, this may mean setting limits on screen time and encouraging more outdoor play. Helping children learn simple games, providing basic equipment, and participating in physical activity together can build healthy habits, strengthen family connections, and improve everyone’s health.

Got Pain/Inflammation? Eat a Banana

Playing sports or general exercising can cause pain and inflammation. Many reach for a sports drink or an over-the-counter drug for relief. But, what if there was a food that could help both issues?

Initial research conducted at the North Carolina Research Campus has found that bananas can relieve pain and inflammation just as well. Bananas eaten during exercise are qual to sports drinks and they contain metabolites that function like ibuprofen. Dopamine is one primary molecule that acts like a COX-2 inhibitor, but there are other compounds that are adding to this effect. They also found that banana peels contain 50 times more dopamine and could be incorporated into food products. More research is needed to verify these results.

Livestock and Natural Resources



Ross Mosteller, Extension Agent

Lice in Winter

As we enter the heart of winter it is not uncommon for cattle to begin exhibiting hair loss, an unthrifty appearance and rubbing on objects. All this, combined with the presence of hair on fences, may indicate that livestock are dealing with an unwanted visitor – lice! Lice thrive in cold conditions, with populations increasing in December and January, peaking in February. Lice are spread primarily through direct contact between animals.

It is always best to confirm if lice are the problem by inspecting along the topline, withers, and face of the animal. If one to five lice per square inch is found, that is observed, treatment should be considered and anything over ten is a heavy population that requires treatment.

Lice species fall into two main categories of biting/chewing and sucking lice species. Biting or Chewing lice feed on hair, skin exudates, and surface debris, usually found on the shoulders, topline, and back. Sucking lice feed on blood and can cause irritation, anemia, weight loss, and even death in severe cases. They can be found all over the animal, but neck, dewlap, back, rump, tail and around the muzzle or eyes are all places to inspect.

Cattle louse control products fall into the basic categories of sprays, non-systemic or contact pour-ons and systemic pour-ons or injectables. Some non-systemic pour-ons require two applications for optimum lice control, at a 14-day interval. Systemic injectables are most effective against sucking lice, while systemic pour-ons control both chewing and sucking lice.

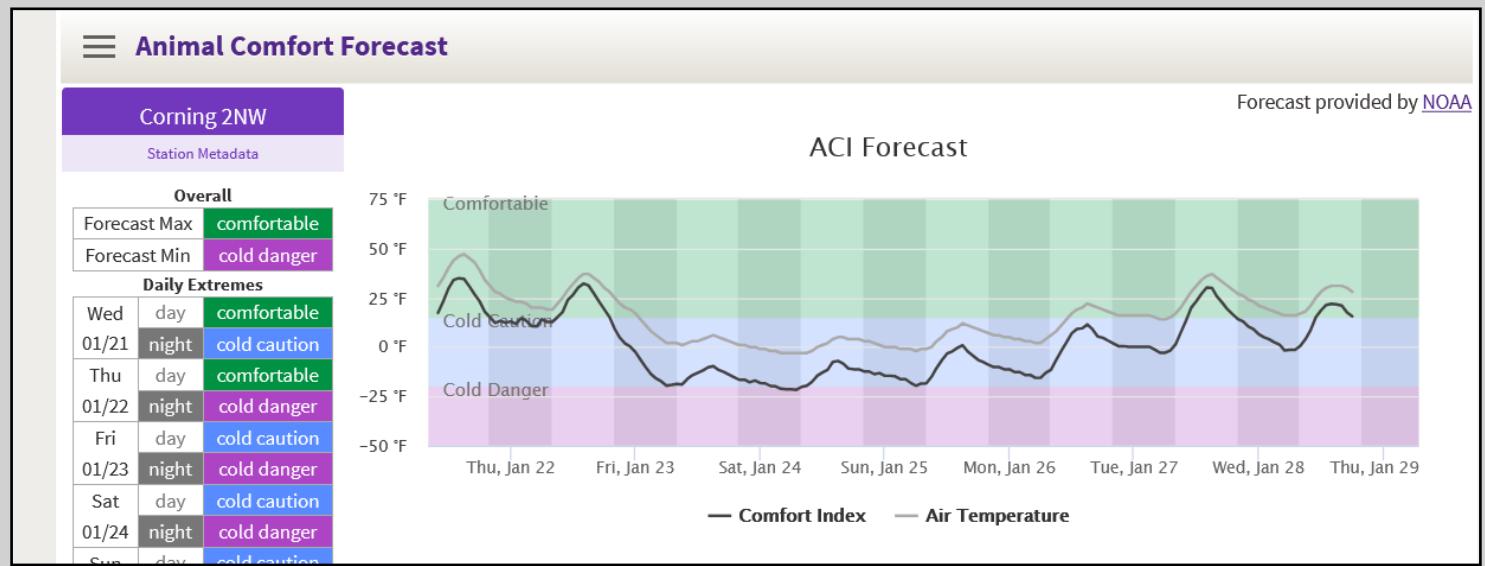
If a systemic product was used at fall weaning to control parasites these applications may reduce lice populations, but they often do not eliminate them - especially during an extended warm fall. Visit with your herd health veterinarian to establish a protocol for your operation. For additional information and current insecticide recommendations, visit: www.veterinaryentomology.org The Beef Cattle Handbook has a good article on lice at <https://www.iowabeefcenter.org/bch/Lice.pdf> to learn more.

Animal Comfort Index

We are all familiar with the “wind chill” discussed by meteorologist. For livestock production, lower critical temperature (LCT), or the threshold at which point animals need to start using energy to maintain body heat, is the terminology used. A body condition score 5 cow with a dry coat will have a lower critical temperature of 19°F. Going beyond that point requires the need for feed intake to increase to maintain a suitable body temperature and prevent a drop in body condition in the long run.

Moisture has a more dramatic impact on LCT versus actual air temperature. A cow with a wet coat will have a lower critical temperature of 53°F, instead of 19°F. Providing animals shelter in bad weather can help keep coats dry and limit wind chill effects, both of which will work to minimize the impact of the cold. When these weather events happen, grass hay typically doesn’t have enough energy to meet the increased energy demand. A general rule of thumb is that for every degree of cold stress a cow faces, they increase their energy requirements by 1%.

The Kansas Mesonet has a very useful tool called the Animal Comfort Index that helps predict when critical cold is on the way. It can be found at <https://mesonet.k-state.edu/agriculture/animal/forecast/>.



Family and Community Wellness



Teresa Hatfield, Extension Agent

Dining with Diabetes: Self-Management Education Program Offered by K-State Research and Extension – Meadowlark Extension District

Take Steps to Manage Your Diabetes

In Kansas, approximately **1 in 9 adults** has been diagnosed with diabetes—a chronic disease that can lead to serious complications such as stroke, blindness, and kidney failure. Another **1 in 15 adults** is diagnosed with prediabetes, and many more are at risk without knowing it.

Diabetes occurs when the body has elevated blood glucose (blood sugar), often due to inadequate insulin production or resistance to insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas. Fortunately, research continues to show that healthy lifestyle changes can make a meaningful difference.

This February, the Meadowlark Extension District will offer the **Dining with Diabetes** program, a national Extension-led course designed to support individuals with **Type 2 diabetes, prediabetes, their family members, caregivers, and anyone who wants to learn practical strategies for healthier living.**

What the Program Offers

Dining with Diabetes provides simple, effective approaches for managing blood sugar through nutrition and physical activity. Participants will learn:

- How to make healthier food choices
- Ways to incorporate physical activity into daily routines
- Diabetes-friendly cooking techniques
- Practical tips for improving overall wellness

Each weekly session includes a cooking demonstration and the opportunity to taste diabetes-smart recipes that put these lessons into action.

Class Schedule

Dates: February 17, February 24, March 3, and March 10

Time: 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: Evangel Church, 227 Pennsylvania Ave, Holton, KS

Cost: \$25 for all four sessions

Registration: Registration is required. To sign up, call the Meadowlark Extension District office at **785-364-4125** or scan the QR code provided.



Beef and Barley Soup

From: Illinois Extension Diabetes Recipes



Ingredients:

| | |
|--|---|
| 2 tsp. canola oil | 48 oz. reduced sodium beef broth |
| 1 lb. boneless beef round steak, cubed | 14 oz. petite cut diced tomatoes, no added salt |
| 2 carrots, sliced | 1 cup water |
| ½ cup onion, chopped | 2 bay leaves |
| 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced | 1/2 cup uncooked barley |
| 1 cup celery, chopped | 1 cup frozen peas |

Directions:

1. Cook beef on medium heat in a Dutch over for 5 minutes or until browned, stirring frequently.
2. Remove beef and set aside. Sauté onions, celery, mushrooms, and carrots until tender but crisp, about 5 minutes
3. Add beef broth, bay leaves, and tomatoes and bring them to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to simmer.
4. Continue simmering for 1 hour. Add barley and frozen peas and bring back to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and continue cooking for 30 minutes or until barley is tender.

Nutrition Facts: Serves 7—1 cup servings; Calories: 228; Calories from fat: 33; Total fat: 3; Cholesterol: 61 mg; Sodium: 533 mg; Carbohydrate: 22 g; Dietary Fiber: 5 g; Protein: 5 g

Community Vitality/Economic Development



David Key, Extension Agent/Director

Making the Most of Winter: Productive Projects for Community Groups

Winter is often a slower season for community organizations in Kansas, making it an ideal time to focus on planning, organization, and preparation. Taking time now to work *on* the organization—not just *in* it—can make the busy months ahead run more smoothly and reduce volunteer stress. Here are some **practical winter projects** that community groups, boards, and committees can tackle to strengthen their work for the year ahead.

Productive Winter Planning Ideas

- **Review bylaws and policies** to ensure they are current and clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- **Evaluate last year's events and activities** to identify what worked well and what could be improved.
- **Review budgets and financial records**, comparing planned versus actual expenses and identifying funding needs.
- **Set clear goals for the coming year**, focusing on a few realistic priorities rather than too many projects.
- **Update contact lists** for board members, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners.
- **Review marketing and social media efforts**, deciding what platforms are most effective and manageable.
- **Map out the year's calendar**, including key events, meetings, deadlines, and promotions.
- **Identify board or volunteer training needs**, such as orientation, leadership skills, or fundraising basics.
- **Strengthen volunteer recruitment and retention plans** to reduce burnout and share the workload.
- **Complete back-burner tasks** like organizing files, updating forms, or creating event checklists.

Why This Matters

Investing time during the winter months helps organizations enter the spring and summer seasons better prepared, more organized, and less rushed. Even a few focused planning meetings now can lead to smoother events, stronger volunteer engagement, and greater long-term success.

Kansas Micro-Internship Program Worth a Look

The Kansas Micro-Internship Program helps Kansas businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations hire college students for short-term, paid project work—ideal for summer or special projects.

HOW TO USE MICRO-INTERNSHIPS FOR CAMPUS RECRUITING

Program Highlights

- Short-term, paid projects (20–25 hours)
- Focused on specific business or organizational needs
- Funded at no cost to employers while funds last
- Students are paid (generally up to ~\$500 per project)

ACCESS
Recruit from a nationwide college talent pool.

ENGAGE
Build your employer brand through student experiences.

ASSESS
Collaborate with hiring managers to assess candidate skills.

CONVERT
Improve relationships through authentic engagement.

YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
Micro-Internships enable your organization to identify, engage, and assess high-potential candidates, building relationships and insights to make the right hires.

IMPROVE HIRING EFFECTIVENESS
Micro-Internships improve retention in first year hires by over 50% by serving as auditions that allow mutually assessment in a risk-free way.

ENHANCE DEI INITIATIVES
Over 80% of Career Launchers selected on Parker Dewey come from underrepresented populations.

GET WORK DONE
33% of companies extensively use gig workers. Micro-Internships provide the immediate support you need for the tasks that are not the best use of time.

AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND
Unlike traditional internship programs, Micro-Internships give you access to connect with and audition candidates year-round.

BETTER CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE
100% of students feel more confident in the workplace after completing Micro-Internships.

STAY IN CONTACT WITH POTENTIAL HIRES
Micro-Internships complement existing internship and campus recruiting programs by providing engaging opportunities year-round.

PARKER DEWEY WWW.PARKERDEWEY.COM

Student Registration Information

Students can complete an Agile Work Profile and apply to projects at this link: <https://info.parkerdewey.com/kansasmicrointerns>

Employers Registration Information

<https://info.parkerdewey.com/kansasemployers>

A General Program Overview can be found here:

https://www.kansasregents.gov/workforce_development/kansas-micro-internships



Laura Phillips, Extension Agent

These free webinars take place on the first Wednesday of each month from 12 noon to 1 PM (CST), including a 45 minute presentation and 10-15 minutes for viewer questions.

The K-State Garden Hour began in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic as a way for K-State Extension horticulture experts to share research-based information to gardeners of all abilities and experience.

It has blossomed into a program that, in 2022, was watched by viewers in 40 states, eight countries and four continents. Since its beginning in 2020, the K-State Garden Hour has drawn more than 80,000 online viewers.

To register, view previous recordings, or see our schedule, go online to www.hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour. One registration will give you access to all the webinars for the year. If you have any questions about the K-State Garden Hour or how to join, be sure to reach out to our office for additional guidance.

K-State Garden Hour Continues in 2026

Over the last four years, gardeners from across Kansas have tuned in each month to watch K-State horticulture agents cover highly requested lawn and garden information. These free, hour-long webinars have steadily grown in popularity, and we are excited to offer the program again in 2026 with a new set of topics.

We kicked off the 2026 season on January 7th with Shannon Blocker, Pottawatomie County Extension Agent, who gave a presentation on smart soil practices. On February 4th we will reconvene to for a presentation from Ryan Engel, Golden Prairie District Extension Agent, focused on managing honey bees.



#KSTATEGARDENHOUR

K-STATE GARDEN HOUR

Join K-State Research and Extension every first Wednesday of the month from 12:00 - 1:00 pm CST

January 7th Soil Smarts: Best Practices to Improve Soil Health

February 4th Honey Bee Colony Management & Key Floral Resources In Kansas

March 4th Naturalistic Landscape Design Style: Kansas Perspectives & Flexible Approaches for Every Garden

April 1st April Showers, Rain Garden Flowers

May 6th Natives vs. Cultivars: Making Informed Choices for Your Landscape

June 3rd Maximizing Garden Success with Extension Resources

July 1st Addressing Food Insecurity Through Extension

August 5th Local Food Gardening Projects In Kansas

September 2nd Garden Renewal: How To Divide & Transplant Like A Pro

October 7th Groundcovers for Kansas: Covering Your Bases

November 4th Houseplant Propagation & Care

December 2nd Spiff, Sharpen, & Stow – Wintering Garden Tools



Register Here!

2026

Please register for this free Zoom Webinar at:
ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer

KANSAS STATE
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Meadowlark Extension District

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Address Service Requested

<https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/>



<https://www.facebook.com/Meadowlarkextensiondistrict>

Publications & Resources For Sale

Caregiver Helpbook

Family Account Book

Farm Account Book

Radon Kits

Predator Calls

IMR Calving Books (Red)

Pesticide Manuals

Geo Textile Fabric (12 1/2' wide-sold per linear ft.)

Neutroleum Alpha®

Mosquito Briquets

Soil Tests - Crop, Pasture, Lawn & Garden

Water Test Kits (pay SDK Labs, not us)

Forage Tests

Grazing Sticks

911 Signs

Pesticide Application Field Record Book (free)

Cow/Calf Record Book (free)

Body Condition Record Book (free)

K-State Publications (free)

Items to Check Out

Soil & Hay Probes

Freeze Branding Irons

Pesticide Manuals

Buzzers

Mole Trap

Upcoming Events

K-State Dairy Day—February 17—10:00-3:30 PM—Seneca

**Dining with Diabetes—February 17-March 10 (Tues.)—10:30-12:30 PM
—Holton**

Local Food Producer Workshop—February 20—9:00-3:30 PM—Holton

**Jefferson County 4-H Council Carnival—February 21—6:00-8:00 PM
—Oskaloosa**

Bonding Thru Board Games—March 5—4:30-6:30 PM—Oskaloosa

Walk with Ease—March 12-April 21—1:00-2:00 PM—Seneca

Statewide Agritourism Workshop—March 23—9:00-3:00 PM—Holton

Some of the Programs That We Offer

- A Matter of Balance
- Bonding Thru Board Games
- Dining With Diabetes
- Gray for a Day
- Master of Memory
- Stay Strong, Stay Healthy
- Walk With Ease
- School Enrichment
 - Butterflies
 - Chick Embryology
 - Glo-Germ Hand Washing
 - Wheat Science