



Meadowlark District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

meadowlark.ksu.edu

Spring 2022

**Our offices are closed
May 30 in observance
of Memorial Day.**



Holton Office

114 W 5th St.
Holton, KS 66436-1778
785-364-4125

Oskaloosa Office

P.O. Box 326
100 E Washington
Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326
785-863-2212

Seneca Office

1500 Community Drive
Seneca, KS 66538-1921
785-336-2184

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Extension Agents Recently Hired to Fill Vacant Positions

The Meadowlark Extension District Governing Body and K-State Research and Extension spent late winter and early spring advertising and promoting our vacant agent positions and following recent interviews the following new agent staff have been hired and will start work here in mid-June!

Clayton Roland will be our new District 4-H and Youth Agent. He currently is residing in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Clayton received his Bachelors Degree in Animal Science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2017 and his Master's Degree from the University of Florida shortly after. He is currently employed at the Laramie County Community College as their Ag Instructor and Judging Coach. He enjoys working with 4-H and FFA Youth members and their families. While at the University of Florida he helped organize numerous 4-H learning activities and stated in his interview that there is no better program than 4-H to raise and develop future leaders. He wants to bring his passion for youth education to the District and develop an increase in community inclusion across the District for 4-H. Clayton will be housed in the Oskaloosa Office and will work closely with the 4-H Program Managers across the District to operate and manage the District 4-H program.

Teresa Hatfield will be our District Family and Community Wellness Agent. Teresa received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1999 from Wichita State University and her Masters of Arts in Gerontology also from Wichita State University in 2005. Teresa comes to us from the Sedgwick County Extension Office where she has been employed as their Family and Consumer Sciences Agent for the past 9 years. Her current focus is on Adult Development and Aging and she has provided programing for the Senior Health Insurance and Counseling for Kansas program (SHICK), Stay Strong Stay Healthy, Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Advanced Directives to name a view. Prior to working for K-State Research and Extension she was a Program Manager for the Sedgwick County Department of Aging from 2006 thru 2012. Teresa's home office will be in Holton and she is excited about coming to work in our District.

Meadowlark Extension District Staff

Holton Office

David Hallauer, Crops & Soils/Horticulture
Cara Robinson, 4-H Program Manager
Carol McManigal, Office Professional

Oskaloosa Office

Cynthia Williams, Food & Nutrition/Financial Management
Linda Gantz, 4-H Program Manager
Melanie Bostwick, Office Professional

Seneca Office

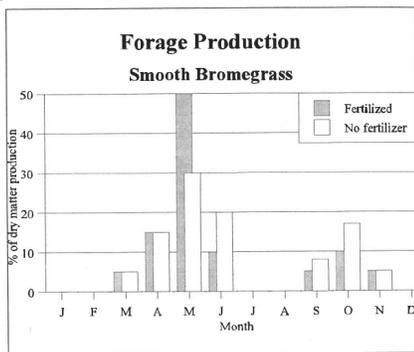
David Key, District Extension Director/Community Economic Development
Ross Mosteller, Livestock, Natural Resources
Debra Henry, 4-H Program Manager
Amy Haverkamp, Office Professional



David Hallauer, District Extension Agent

Look Ahead - Summer Grazing

Cool season forages: very productive in spring/early summer, a break in mid-summer, then fall recovery. This graph from our Kansas Grazingland Management Handbook shows this cycle from the standpoint of dry matter production for brome.



These are only averages, but it does exhibit the degree to which many of our systems are ‘front loaded’. In fact, in a fertilized system, we’ve already produced close to 70% of our yearly dry matter by June 1. The tall fescue graph is only slightly less dramatic, because we can see almost 30% of our forage production from fescue in the fall. This rapid early season growth followed by summer time production declines works is great for haying, but less so for a full season grazing system.

One of the reasons production declines is because temperatures are increasing. Once cool season forages reach 75 degrees F, growth slows. A number of things are affected in the grazing system at that point, including a reduction in the ability of the grass to recover from grazing pressure. If we’re not careful in late June until at least some regrowth (typically) occurs in September, overgrazing can occur.

In many years, late summer rains plus cooler temperatures give stands a chance to recover. The fall of 2021, however, showed us what can happen when recovery is hampered by hot/dry conditions. Many stands went most of last fall with little moisture, resulting in stands being prone to overgrazing and more susceptible to potential damage from fall armyworm feeding, with some dramatic results.

Early indications for 2022 aren’t positive, either. Current maps from the Climate Prediction Center (<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?KS>) show drought creeping in to the northwest reaches of the District. While both Kansas Mesonet sites in the District (Corning/Oskaloosa) show adequate moisture levels, both also show surface moisture levels quickly returning to levels seen during our relatively dry winter. Declining moisture levels during our typically ‘rainy’ season (we’re close to an inch behind normal at most sites across NEK) combined with an unfavorable outlook, suggest a look ahead is in order.

While there’s no need to panic yet, the start of the grazing season is a great time to think about forage monitoring. Moisture plus moderate temperatures right *now* help us maximize cool season grass production *later*. That window will be closing soon. If we don’t make up some ground in short order, it may be time to think about stocking rate reductions to compensate for reduced forage availability.

It may also be a good time to at least *start* exploring alternative forage supplies. Whether that be hay sources, a summer annual forage, crop residue, or a fall seeded complementary forage, it’s a good idea to start looking at possible options – including seed availability and cost, and fertility requirements.

With any luck, writing this will result in perfect moisture for the rest of the season. If it doesn’t, start giving some thought to what you can do to shore up your forage inventory.

Fruit Thinning Thoughts

Some years we get very little fruit production. Some years we get excess. What will 2022 give us? With any luck, last fall’s dry weather plus spring frost events haven’t damaged fruit set and production will be in abundance. Unfortunately, we *can* get too much of a good thing.

Excess fruit in the current season may be more than the tree can handle all the way to maturity resulting in smaller fruit size and poorer quality. If heavy enough, structural damage can occur as well, as the weight of maturing fruit causes limb damage.

For next year’s crop, it’s also important to note that this year’s heavy fruit crop may hurt bud development for *next* year’s crop, resulting in reduced production. This is why apple trees often follow a great production year with a less than stellar one.

How much should we thin? It depends on the year, but these are some guidelines to use on ‘average’ from KSU Horticulture Specialist Dr. Ward Upham:

- Apples/pears: 6-8 inches apart.
- Apples often produce in clusters of five. We typically remove all fruit in a cluster but one (even removing seemingly perfect fruit). Leave the largest, nicest fruit in the cluster.
- Peaches: 6-8 inches apart (they also tend to cluster. Shoot for an average spacing of 7 inches.
- Plums and prunes: 4-5 inches.
- Apricots: 2-4 inches.
- Cherries: no need to thin

Thin by snapping fruit off by hand (support the fruit stem with a thumb and forefinger while snapping with other fingers) or cutting with a sharp pruning tool.

Russia-Ukraine Resources

Want a primer on the effects on ag of the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine? The K-State Ag Econ team has you covered. Check it out at: <https://agmanager.info/2022-risk-and-profit-online-mini-conference-presentations>.



David Key, District Extension Director

Why People Volunteer

An effective leader knows that volunteers are people who have chosen to participate in a project, and that they can at any time choose other options. And they probably will if their experience is not a positive one.

Generally, volunteers can be categorized based on whether they want to make a long-term or short-term commitment. One type of volunteer is not better than another. However, their interests and motivations are somewhat different, leading to different levels and kinds of involvement. The same individual can be a short-term volunteer with one project and a long-term volunteer with another. Both are important to the success of any project.

What motivates others in your community to give of their time, energy and expertise? And how do the tasks you give them match up with what motivates them? Following are some typical reasons and their implications for you as a community leader to consider.

- **To make a difference**
Many people volunteer because they want to make things better, to fix a problem, to produce something for others in the community. Wanting to make a difference means wanting to see results.
- **To be with people**
Volunteering can help new people in the community to meet others. It can be a way to develop networks that help people professionally. And it can provide an opportunity for family members to be together by volunteering together.
- **To gain experience**
Volunteering for a project can help people learn more about important community issues or opportunities. This activity assists people to develop skills that transfer to the work world and provide experience that looks good on a resume.
- **To respond to a sense of duty**
Sometimes people volunteer because for them, it is simply the “right thing to do.” Their effort may come from a desire to give something back to the community. It may be based on religious convictions or other values. Many community volunteers come from families with a tradition of volunteering and assume that it is a normal part of life.
- **To have fun**
Volunteering is work. But work does not have to be oppressive. Remember volunteers are not doing this for a paycheck. If their experience is unpleasant, they can always do something else.
- **To do something different**
For some people, one of the rewards in volunteering is the chance to escape a routine. It may be a chance to get out of the house. It may be an opportunity to use skills that are underused at work. Volunteering can be a time to step off the treadmill for a while.
- **Keep volunteers on the job**
A volunteer’s experience with a project should add to the community’s pool of volunteers, not drain it. Several factors contribute to keeping volunteers once you have recruited them, such as providing good orientation,

adequate training, support and recognition.

Four key things can help you get the best return on the time and effort you put into supporting volunteers:

1. **Stay in touch**
Make sure all volunteers get the same information about the project and its progress in a timely way. Make sure they have the resources they need to do their job. Be able to work with volunteers to find a mutually acceptable solution to disputes or problems.
2. **Ask for and give feedback**
Show respect for your volunteers and take them seriously. Ask them for feedback about their project and its progress. Consider developing a job description for volunteers and ask for feedback about it as they carry it out.
3. **Create a recognition plan**
The surest way to lose volunteers is to take them for granted. Be intentional about recognizing what volunteers accomplish. Plan to recognize volunteers in formal and informal ways.
4. **Understand the volunteer “life cycle”**
When volunteers turn down an invitation to work or choose to step back, make sure your organization maintains a positive relationship with them. Remember an old saying: “Our ability to work together tomorrow depends to a large degree on how we treat each other today.”

Adapted from the “The Community Leadership Handbook” Framing Ideas, Building Relationships and Mobilizing Resources By James F. Krile





Ross Mosteller, District Extension Agent

Protect your Flocks from Avian Influenza

(taken from March ASI Poultry Newsletter)

A potentially harmful virus called avian influenza has been detected in many states this spring, including Kansas and surrounding states. The virus has been confirmed in wild birds in Kansas, four backyard poultry flocks and one commercial flock in mid-April. The virus has been isolated in waterfowl, wild birds, small farms, and commercial operations across the Midwest. Data indicates that the virus is probably moving with the aid of the spring migration of waterfowl as the weather begins to warm. To protect your birds, now is the time to keep as much distance as possible from migrating ducks and geese.

This current outbreak is in a form that is more concerning than many. It is being referred to as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). This term means it is highly contagious and can infect chickens, turkeys, gamebirds, and other birds and can cause severe illness and/or sudden death. As widespread as it now is across the nation, poultry owners should assume the virus is likely present all around and begin an immediate biosecurity program. Backyard flocks are susceptible to this virus as well. There is no licensed and approved vaccine for use against avian influenzas in poultry in the US. The best way to protect your birds is to practice good biosecurity.

Monitor your birds for symptoms including sneezing or wheezing, coughing, nasal discharge, facial swellings, and other signs of respiratory struggle, like gasping for air. Look for a lack of energy, movement, and reduced appetite. Infected layers may suddenly lay fewer eggs that are misshapen. The

birds may appear to have incoordination and diarrhea. Be on the lookout for sudden death in birds even if they aren't showing other symptoms.

If you are able, while birds are migrating through, keep your flock indoors or undercover. The biggest risk to a small farm is waterfowl and wild birds that stop by to steal feed or water and mix with your birds while feeding. You must keep waterfowl far from your birds. The virus can also spread from passing waterfowl to local birds that do not migrate.

If you have a pond that is attracting the migrating birds, then stay away, and keep your pets away as well. Expect the pressure to seek water from your property to be stronger in the Midwest and West this year as moisture levels have been low. Eliminate roosting birds like starlings and pigeons if you have them. Now is the time to stop attracting wild birds with feeders. There is data that suggests that the well-intended feeding of wild birds could lead to a concentration of birds that allows rapid spread of diseases during an outbreak. Wild birds are starting to build spring nests, and these should be removed from coops and barns. Wear gloves and a mask to reduce your exposure to mites and other diseases these nests may harbor. Never place a bird house near your poultry. Light anti-bird netting can be used to keep the birds from building nests, and nets over pens can keep wild birds from metering your coop.

Many small flocks leave feeders full of grain all day and night in the coop. This is never a good idea because many rodents and small mammals visit at night to steal a meal and spread droppings that may contain diseases. A good way to feed birds is to determine how much they will clean up during the day, and feed only this amount every morning. By roosting time, the feeders should be empty. It is even better to pull up the feeder and store it in a rodent proof tub overnight.

Good biosecurity includes other important prevention strategies. You can make an emergency footbath by using a half cup of bleach in a gallon

of water, then placing this in a shallow container to step in when entering your bird coop. Don't visit other flocks. Auctions, shows and swaps will be at risk during this time. Purchase chicks from only a tested source. Though most mail order hatcheries are monitored, there is still a small risk of infection.

Stop purchase of hatching eggs and chicks from small internet sellers of stock that are not monitored. Some offers will say that their birds are tested, but this likely refers to *Salmonella pullorum* because most small flocks are not required to be tested for avian influenzas like commercial poultry.

Gamebird operations should be alert as well. Netted flight pens are subject to pressure from wild birds and waterfowl the same as small poultry farms. Commercial gamebird farms should not be located near water sources where waterfowl stop. Any method of keeping the waterfowl away from the flight pens should be implemented immediately. If an ATV is used on the farm, it should be decontaminated by washing and applying disinfectant before getting it close to the pens.

Now is the time to be neighbor friendly and stay away from other poultry farms. Commercial poultry farms are highly invested in poultry production so being a good neighbor by staying off their premises during this time is helpful. Many producers enjoy giving educational tours of their farm, but all tours should stop until this threat subsides. Most commercial farms never welcome visitors because this is part of their biosecurity programs. Even the best prevention plan will not prevent all cases of avian influenza. The Kansas Department of Agriculture is a good source of current testing results and contacts for potential problems. If your birds have symptoms of HPAI, contact your veterinarian or call KDA toll-free at 833-765-2006, or contact them via email at KDA.HPAI@ks.gov. Their website has a wealth of resources as well: <https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/division-of-animal-health/animal-diseases/avian-influenza>



Ross Mosteller, District Extension Agent

Calling All Adventurers - 4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch

The 4-H Camp model has shifted its business model from locally planned, organized and managed to a state-run system, by Rock Springs Ranch. 4-H Camp is open to all youth ages 8-17 and historically “non-4-Hers” have attended 4-H camp from our area. For those of you who are new to 4-H Camp or might have forgotten what is happening with 4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch, here are the highlights. If this looks to be something you’d like for your young person to try, registration is due **MAY 15!**

“County Camps” will no longer be happening and Rock Springs Ranch will be organizing and coordinating all aspects of the 4-H overnight camping experience. This means that those of you who are used to “Pioneer Trails”

4-H camp, will not see that as an option and we will not be collecting camp registration as in the past. However, for those who would like to target the same camp date regionally, the Extension units involved in the old Pioneer Trails group suggest “session 4” which is when the Pioneer Trails Camp slot would have been in the rotation for 2022 - **June 19-22.**

Youth/Families can now select the timeframe to attend 4-H Camp at the time that works best for you. You must register and pay for 4-H Camp directly at: <https://www.rockspringsranch4hcamp.org/> Three- and six-night options are available. Other options for camp outside of the “traditional” camper ages follow.

- **Teen Camp:** Rising High Schoolers, ages 14-17, will have their own teen camp opportunities. There won’t be “gap years,” and now older 4-H youth who don’t want to be a counselor but do want to have a camp experience will have options as well.
- **L.I.T Camp:** This is a teen leadership camp experience for 15 and 16-year old’s, rising 11th Graders. L.I.T. stands for Leaders In Training. LIT’s will have the opportunity to enjoy many parts of the RSR experience. Time will be split between leadership, community development programming and an introduction to camp staff positions.
- **C.I.T. Camp:** This Camp will be an age appropriate enhancement to the 4-H traditional teen Counselor experience. Teens, 16 to 17-year old’s, especially rising 12th Graders, may still come to camp as part of our new Counselor in Training (CIT) Camp. The main change here being that instead of being the 24/7 caregiver for a session of camp, they will just do it from breakfast to bedtime. These youth will be able to provide leadership to younger campers while also having their own community and camp experiences, all with the mentorship and supervision of 18 to 25-year-old youth development staff. L.I.T and C.I.T are the replacement experiences for our “traditional” 4-H camp teen counselors.

Two sessions of Family Camp (early June and early August) offer a chance for the entire family to attend camp at Rock Springs Ranch. This can be a perfect opportunity for the whole family to visit Rock Springs and check out what 4-H Camp has to offer!

Transportation is now being provided by Rock Springs at pick-up points across the state. The closest point for youth within Meadowlark District will be Topeka.

The 4-H camp model has shifted, but the same quality overnight camping experience will be available to all youth across Kansas. The major changes are how campers register for camp, shift to adult staff counselors for campers, removal of local Extension staff from program delivery at camp and the added opportunities for all youth ages 8-17. Again, check out the Rock Springs Ranch website for additional information and to register for this popular, summertime, overnight event!
<https://rockspringsranch.org/get-to-know-us/4h-camp/>



Benefits of Camp are Lifelong Summer camp takes kids out of the traditional learning environment and allows them to explore what it means to be connected to humanity, to develop a sense of wonder and grace. Campers return home more confident, independent, compassionate and resilient. They have greater respect for the natural environment, more enthusiasm for learning and problem-solving and are more community-minded. Summer camp has been shown to accelerate learning not just for campers but for staff-in-training and even paid staff. The benefits are immersive and lifelong.



Cindy Williams, District Extension Agent

Preventing Norovirus at Camp

Summer is coming! And many youth may be gearing up to go on a camping adventure. Getting sick with norovirus at camp will ruin the fun quickly. Norovirus is contagious and will spread quickly when many people are in one location.

How can norovirus happen? An infected person can spread it with:

- A simple handshake
- Shared food or utensils
- Contaminated food or water
- Unwashed hands that touch contaminated surface.

Source: K-State Research and Extension/cdc.gov

TV Chefs on Food Safety

Food chefs on TV provide entertainment and fun food ideas. But, when it comes to safe food preparation, they fall short.

Viewers follow what they see.

When chefs handle raw meat, 88% did not wash their hands afterwards. For meat doneness, 75% did not use a thermometer to check the temperature. Chefs are often caught licking their fingers, touch their hair, and using the same cutting board for raw and ready-to-eat foods.

Chefs must keep shows engaging, navigate time schedules, TV sets and crews, and still be relatable to the audience. Consumers can speak up, make chefs accountable, and focus on recipes with food safety messages.

It's about "striking a balance between the steak and the sizzle."—Greg Moyer, former President of Scripps International.

Source: Ellie Kreiger, M.S. RDN, 2019 Partnership for Food Safety Education Conference

Backyard Campfire Cooking

On spring/summer evenings, have fun with your children around a campfire or a backyard fire pit. It's a great opportunity to teach fire safety and cooking skills while enjoying a snack.

Foil packets are a simple way to cook on the campfire. The keys to success are double wrapping with foil and making sure the foil is sealed securely. The foil packet retains the moisture in your food to keep it scrumptious!

Campfire Apple Pie Packet

- 1 apple
- 1 tablespoon raisins
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- Sprinkle of cinnamon

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Gently rub apple under cold, running water.
- Slice the apple (or use an apple slicer) makes this an easy task.
- Place apple slices on a 12" foil square.
- Let children sprinkle with raisins, brown sugar and cinnamon.
- Wrap the foil around the apple and seal using the fold over method.
- Wrap in a second layer of foil.
- Place packet on or just above white coals in your campfire or grill.
- Using long-handled tongs, turn the packets after 5 minutes and cook 3 minutes more. Times vary according to the hotness of the coals. Remove packet from the coals.
- Using a hot pad, unwrap the apple pie and let it cool a few minutes on a plate before serving.

Nutrition: Makes 1 serving, each serving contains 137 calories, 0 grams fat, 6 mg sodium, 37 grams carbohydrate, and 5 grams fiber.

Source: University of Nebraska Extension - Lincoln

Reusable Bottles..Keep Clean

As the weather heats up, so does our need to stay hydrated. Experts suggest drinking at least eight 8-ounces glasses of water per day, and more if you're exercising. The reason is that liquids consumed are vital for keeping all bodily systems functioning properly including our brain which is 85% water. One of the least expensive, easiest and most environmentally responsible ways to get all that water is by using a refillable water bottle.

Reusable water bottles come in metal, glass and safe plastic, not to mention a variety of shapes, sizes and designs. But the one thing all water bottles have in common is that you need to keep them clean. Bacteria can build up in water bottles if they are left full, especially if you are using them for beverages other than water, and can actually make you sick if the bottles are not kept clean. Here are some key points to good, clean, (healthy) drinking!

- Wash and disinfect your water bottle at least every few days, if not more often. It's simple--- just add a few drops of dish soap to your water bottle, fill about half full with warm water, screw on the top and shake!. Rinse the bottle thoroughly and leave open to air dry.
- If your bottle is in need of deeper cleaning (think---to remove an odor?) after you wash with soap and water, use a vinegar soak of 1/5 white vinegar and 4/5 water. Let it sit in the bottle overnight, then rinse thoroughly with water in the morning.
- Disposable plastic water bottles aren't designed to be used more than once. Continuously reusing and washing disposable water bottles may begin to break down the plastic exposing the user to harmful chemicals which can pose a health risk. So, use disposable plastic bottles as they are intended and remember to protect our environment by recycling them after use.



Cindy Williams, District Extension Agent



Grab and Go File

During the recent outbreak of tornadoes, news reports were that some people had only three minutes after sirens were sounded before tornadoes were at ground level. That barely allowed time for people to take cover, but not to gather important items and documents.

If you already have a “grab and go file” of important documents prepared, good for you!

Now, think about where it is stored. If it is in your home office, often on the second floor of your house, in an extra bedroom, that may not be the best place. Consider moving it to the basement, and storing it on a high shelf, so that will be one less thing you need to find, on your way to taking cover.

Your “grab and go file” could contain:

- Copies of birth certificates, driver’s licenses, social security cards for all family members
- Copies of passports, marriage certificates, and similar documents
- Copies of insurance cards, policies, or other proof of coverage, as well as contact information
-

- A copy of your household inventory
- Bank account numbers and contact information
- Front and back copies of your ATM and credit cards
- Cash to cover immediate expenses
- A key to your safe deposit box
- A small notebook and pens for taking notes

The information could be contained on a flash drive or memory card, rather than storing paper copies of the information.

Having a “grab and go file” is just part of the complete emergency plan. Other things you might include:

- Back up your computer regularly
- Decide how you will communicate with family members
- Collect and assemble a disaster supply kit, including a portable generator, water, and medications
- Practice and maintain your plan

Source: K-State Research and Extension, Family Resource Management

Schedule A Home Audit

Schedule a home energy audit or find an online checklist and pick two things to do to be more energy efficient. An energy audit can determine if you qualify for certain rebates to help make your home more energy efficient. Energy efficiency not only helps save the plant but also helps save you some money that you can use toward your other financial goals.

Pay Extra on Your Credit Card Balance

If you have been carrying a balance, make a plan to pay extra each month so that you can pay off the entire card. Use the free calculator tool at www.powerpay.org to calculate the most efficient strategy to pay down

debt, called the “power pay” or “snowball” method.

Consider Healthy Physical Contact

If you have been sheltering in place with family you may be in need of a little separation from those folks, but the reality is that we need each other. We need physical contact. It is a way we communicate shared meaning, interact with the world around us, and it is required for normal childhood development. Determining the healthy way forward, yet maintaining healthy physical contact will take intentional thought and some practice!

Conversely, the CDC says that going forward we will need to be aware of social space that reduces the risk of contracting this or any other infections. Here are a few suggestions for the future:

- *Wash your hands often
- *Shop by looking, not by touching
- *Fist bump instead of shaking hands with random folks
- *If you develop flu-like symptoms, self-isolate (early)
- *Cover your cough
- *Maintain social distance with people you don’t know
- *Be extra careful with individuals with underlying medical conditions and the elderly
- *Be considerate and use common sense

Remember, we do need touch but let’s be wise in how we do it. Hug your kids often, then wash your hands!

Meadowlark Extension District

P.O. Box 326
Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326

Address Service Requested

Upcoming Events

- Northeast Kansas Youth Entrepreneurship Academy, Highland Community College Campus, Highland, KS—June 20-23, 2022

2022 County Fairs

- Jackson County Fair—July 25-28
- Jefferson County Fair—July 25-28
- Nemaha County Fair —July 28-August 1

www.meadowlark.k-state.edu.html

