The Extension Response

Board Leadership Training Series Offered

Vibrant communities need community boards with members who have the tools and knowledge to run their respective boards effectively for a positive impact on the community. In early 2018 training sessions were held at 8 sites across Kansas with two of those sites offered in the Meadowlark Extension District. Session topics included Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members, Understanding Fellow Board Members and Conflict Resolution, Fundraising, Fiscal Responsibilities,Legal and Ethical Issues and Strategic Planning. Accomplished through locally facilitated host sites via online video conferencing and hands-on activities the series reached 34 participants in the District and nearly 90 participants this year during the seventh state wide series offering.

A quick review of the 2018 statewide participant survey results showed the following:

• The number of participants who strongly agreed that they understood their responsibilities of guiding their board more than tripled from 17% to 57%.

• Before the training over 30% felt strongly that they could help their organization move forward with a strategic planning process. That number improved to nearly 82% claiming a strong understanding after the training.

• The number of participants that strongly agreed they could see how each personality style has strengths that are of benefit to a board more than doubled from 33% to 88%.

• Before the training, 7% of participants strongly agreed they understood the legal and ethical issues of board membership. That improved six times with 43% strongly agreeing after the session.

The Board Leadership Series was developed in 2012 as way to provide participants access to leadership development instruction statewide using locally facilitated online video conferencing.
**Poor Fruit Set: Tomatoes**

We tend to keep a close eye on insect and disease pressure in tomatoes, but environmental stresses are another story. Why? It might be because they often happen without us knowing it. Plus, we can't do much about them anyway. Understanding environmental stresses can still help us manage the crop, however.

One stressor is excessive vine growth. We may think that more plant density equals more fruit, but not always. Heavy fertilization rates can actually hamper blossom set. Lots of nitrogen in manure or high nitrogen fertilizers can reduce bloom number. Fortunately, as the season progresses and the fertilizer is metabolized by the plant or leached out of the root zone, the problem may subside.

A second fruit set inhibitor is excessive summer temperatures – on both ends of the spectrum. On the low end, we can get some 55 degrees and below nights that affect pollination. What we tend to see more of is the dog days of summer when night time temperatures stay above 75 degrees. At that point, pollination is hampered and the fruit crop reduced.

In both cases, continue to water tomatoes so that they can thrive upon a return to 'normal' conditions.

**Summer Lawn Care**

Summer often means brown lawns as a result of hot, dry weather. We can't control the weather, but there are management practices we can control to give our turf grass the best chance to thrive this summer.

Start by mowing at an appropriate height - no lower than three inches for cool season turfgrass species like fescue or bluegrass. Allow the longer leaf blades to play defense against brutal summer sun by providing shade for the soil. Dull blades rip grass. Sharp blades cut - while reducing moisture loss and the unsightly whitish cast that occurs when blades have been used too long. If I were going to design a fertilization program for cool season turfgrasses, the first application would go on in September and the second in November. Fertilizer applications encourage growth. Growth requires water. Hot and windy summer days all of a sudden increase to a great degree the amount of water we'll need to maintain a good looking turf. Avoid the flush of lush growth that a fertilizer application will likely encourage and apply fertilizers when they can best be used – for growth in the fall as the plant prepares for dormancy.

**Summer Forage Stress**

Summer always provides our forage crops some stress. This summer has been no exception and that means we might want to consider some mid-summer TLC.

When possible, manage grazing so ample forage is left for in-season recovery, with an eye towards fall regrowth prior to dormancy. Grazing height is important. Avoid grazing cool season grasses shorter than three to four inches. In most cases, this can help the plant recover without a large depletion of root or leaf reserves that can weaken plants and reduce stands. Watch for ‘invaders’ like weeds or insects like armyworms to make sure they aren’t competing with the forage crop. Give stressed forage stands every chance to thrive to avoid long term damage.

David Hallauer, Extension Agent
Invigorating Board Meetings

Board and committee members invest a tremendous amount of time and energy at board meetings. A few simple changes may help maintain the momentum and invigorate all involved:

1. Does everyone know each other? It’s embarrassing to have seen people at several meetings and wondered what their names are…and later it is really hard to admit you don’t know their names!

2. Consider making a chart or handout of frequently used external and internal acronyms and post or provide the handout at every meeting. The chart or handout will help people unfamiliar with the acronyms know what others are talking about.

3. Make sure that each person on a committee or board says at least one thing at every board meeting. This is usually the board chair’s responsibility, but everyone should help.

4. If you have regular reports on your agenda, be sure that such presentations need a response or action from the board. If not, put those reports in writing in the board handout packet and just ask if there are any questions. Be sure to recognize the good work of the committee and refer people to the written report.

5. Consider adding an anticipated action for each agenda item. After each agenda item include the words “anticipated action” and indicate what type of board action will be needed.

6. On your agenda try to have an open ended discussion on at least one of the most important matters facing the organization. Consider any board related topic that is keeping the leadership awake at night.

7. Encourage “dumb” questions, respectful dissent and authentic disagreements. Always find a chance to be encouraging at every meeting.

8. Make sure the room is comfortable! Not too hot or cold or crowded. Offer beverages and something light to eat such as cookies or fruit.

9. Board and committee members want information that will be needed for the next board meeting. A thoughtful, carefully prepared packet not only provides the board with the information it needs for the meeting, but it also increases board confidence in the staff and in the board-staff relationship.

10. Be sure notices, agendas and board packets attend to logistics. Be sure to include meeting location, directions if necessary, contact information if there are travel related issues or questions about agenda items.

11. Don’t be rigid about how meetings are conducted instead make sure that discussion on each item allows everyone a chance to speak and that options are fully discussed before an item is acted upon.

12. Chairpersons-lead the group by encouraging discussion, not by talking more than others. Make sure everyone has a chance to participate; listen carefully to what each person says; and keep the meeting focused and on track.

13. Adjourn on time, or agree to stay later. The chair can ask the group if there is agreement for the group to stay later.

From “Working in Groups for Community Improvement” and “The Best of the Board Café—second edition”

David Key, District Extension Director

Discussion and active participation are essential to a productive meeting! District sponsored Grant Writing Workshop in Nortonville.
The 4-H Formula

Empowering youth to reach their full potential through youth-adult partnerships and research based experiences. This is more than just something we say in 4-H youth development, IT’S WHAT WE DO! When the term “4-H” comes to mind, the image for some is kids at the county fair. As youth development professionals, we have a very specific, year-long, ongoing formula which is far more reaching! Take Our Reason (Youth Needs) plus Our Method (Essential Elements) plus Our Mission (Content Priorities) and that Equals our IMPACT!

Youth Needs: 4-Hers experience a sense of belonging. Be this at the Community Club level, school enrichment program, after school setting or at 4-H camps in the summer; 4-Hers belong to a group who cares for their growth, safety and wellbeing. Mastery is accomplished as youth set goals and work to achieve goals. Independence is gained as 4-Hers are asked to take on projects, lead activities, problem solve, think for themselves and achieve success through learning. Generosity is at the heart “H” of our four H’s. Community service and giving are foundational to many of the 4-H activities and experiences.

Essential Elements: The 4-H experience comes in many shapes and sizes and varies from place to place. What remains the same no matter the location or delivery mode are the Essential Elements of the 4-H experience. This consist of: Caring Adults, Safe Environments, Inclusive Settings, Opportunities for: Mastery, Service, Self-Determination, Planning for the Future and Engaged Learning.

Content Priorities: 4-H has something for every kid! Every part of what we do revolves around the major priorities of: STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) & Agriculture, Communications & the Arts, Healthy Living and Community Vitality (Leadership and Citizenship).

Impact: The goal of 4-H is not a big purple ribbon or shiny trophy to set on a shelf, the goal of 4-H is that youth grow as: Learners, Communicators, Collaborator and Contributors. Evidence of this best comes from the members themselves. Here is an example of what a ten plus year member wrote in an essay on how 4-H as impacted their life.

“4-H has given me the option to hold positions of leadership and demonstrate acts of leadership. I have learned to always behave in a respectable manner because someone is always watching. Without 4-H, my desire to serve my community and be successful may not have been developed. It has molded my character and morals. I have learned through 4-H that by helping others, I am also actually improving myself. I have realized that simple acts of leadership and community service, such as leading a food packaging event, is what changes the lives of people, not holding the title of President. Through 4-H I have also gained confidence in myself and my ability to lead people. It takes true desire to serve others and the ability to continue to learn from others to be a true leader. Pushing me to join this organization is the greatest thing my parents have ever done for me.”

— Emma Jolly, 11 year member of the Jolly Juniors 4-H Club
Summer Fly Control on Cattle

Summertime brings flies! Economic losses occur because of the worry of the flies, because they suck blood from animals and they spread Pinkeye.

The first major type of fly that affects our cattle is the horn fly. It was named “horn fly” as that was where it rested, now with polled cattle, it tends to rest on the withers, back and sides but the flies also spend time on the belly of the cattle. The threshold to look for is 200 to 250 flies per animal, at this point, it is economically feasible to control. Studies at Texas A&M University have documented average increases in weaning weights of 20 to 27 pounds with control of horn flies.

The face fly is larger and more robust than the horn fly. They periodically feed on the face of cattle and consume secretions from the eyes and nostrils. These pests are the ones that transmit Pinkeye organism from one animal to the next, damaging the eye and discounts occur.

A number of products are available for these flies. The topical products that are currently approved for control are of four major categories: organophosphates (OP), Pyrethroids, organochlorines and endectocides. Pyrethroids give the best face fly control because of their ability to cause rapid knock down. Pour on’s, spray formulations and dust bags come in a varieties of different products.

You can also use feed-through and rumen bolus products that prevent fly development in manure. Both flies lay their eggs in manure. Inhibiting compounds will prevent the hatching of flies. It is very important that there are no untreated cattle within 1-5 miles.

Please consider these when developing a control program: Young cattle should receive more attention than older cattle. Young cattle are much more susceptible to pinkeye. Fly tags are convenient, but may not offer full season protection. Dustbags, oilers, face mops and other “self-medicators” can be very effective.

Beef Issue Group Held

A new concept was piloted in the Meadowlark Extension District. This past winter a Beef Issues Group conducted a series of meetings. The topics of the meetings were varied and chosen by the group.

The first meeting, animal identification was the focus. Participants discussed their ear tagging. The second meeting featured Dr. Kevin Herbel, Director of the Kansas Farm Management Association. Dr.Herbel discussed the beef herds that are represented by the KFMA and the differences between the high, average and low profitability. At the third meeting Dr. Bob Weaber, KSU Cow/Calf Specialist discussed the “4 Free Lunches for Cattlemen”, the four things you can do to put money in your pocket.

Participants have found the experience beneficial and as a result, have worked with the Livestock Agent and conducted forage testing and requested rations formulated using BRANDS software.

The BIG meetings were held at the Glacial Hills Resource Center in Sabatha. The series will reconvene next fall. If you’d like to be a part of this group, please contact an Extension office.

Jody Holthaus, Extension Agent
It’s Canning Season, Time to Get Ready!

Can You Just Guess at Canning Process Times?

If you guess at a process time for canning, this can lead to under processing your food, resulting in food poisoning and/or product loss due to spoilage.

All reliable recommendations for canning include process times that have been determined by or based on results of laboratory testing. The exact time and temperature combinations of tested canning processes are needed to assure the destruction of microorganisms that may be present in the filled jars. Sure, it’s possible that you could use unsafe canning practices for some time without wasted or harm, but it only takes one batch of food with destructive microorganisms in it to ruin your streak of luck. And especially if you are canning low acid foods, the consequences could be severe and irreversible.

While some microorganisms are apparent just by looking, others remain invisible to your bare eyes. Many different types of mold, yeast, and bacteria dwell on food. Given their preferred conditions of moisture, acidity, oxygen levels, and temperature they will grow, and some will even produce toxin.

Process times recommendations can deliver safe amounts of heat to destroy microorganisms of concern. You can trust that your home-canned foods will receive adequate heat treatment by using proper canning methods and following recommended process times. If you have questions about processing foods, be sure to contact your local extension office or Cindy Williams at 785-863-2212. I would be happy to help you with your canning questions.

Tips for Parents to Help Children Understand Savings:

• Your example is the best teacher for your children.

• Saving for a rainy day” doesn’t mean much to a child. Saving for a definite goal that they can picture is much easier.

• Goals need to be realistic. Consider the child’s age and maturity.

• Money will add up faster if a child learns to save regularly, no matter how small the sum.

• Children usually learn better from praise and encouragement than from criticism and scolding. Pick out what they are doing right and try to build on it instead of just looking for what they are doing wrong.

Even money “mistakes” are valuable lessons.

Too Many Green Beans?

Each year we seem to have a plentiful crop of green beans and we hope that is the case this year, too. With anticipation of an abundance of this vegetable, I would like to share this recipe that I have used (and shared) many times. My family is not a “fan” of frozen green beans, but they “love” this recipe and I think you will, too.

Recipe: Frozen Green Beans

8 cups water
8 beef bouillon cubes
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon onion salt
4 quarts cut green beans

Combine water, cubes, powder and salt in an 8-quart saucepan. Heat to boiling. Add beans; cover and bring to a boil again. Boil 12 minutes. (This preparation time is crucial.) Less time leaves vegetables too firm and more time leaves them mushy. Cool quickly, stirring occasionally. Fill containers with beans and liquid. Be certain liquid covers beans.

NOTE: You may want to double the recipe for the juice only so that you have enough liquid to complete this step. Seal and freeze in a food grade container.

Makes 8 pints. To serve, dip containers in hot water to loosen. Put into saucepan, cover and heat slowly and liquid begins to boil. This method does result in the loss of bright color, so beans will look canned. This is a good recipe to have on hand when you are tired of canning beans in a pressure canner. This is especially good in vegetable soup, juice and all.

Source: University of Nebraska-Lincoln—Research and Extension.
New fact sheet on opioid crisis available

Resource sheds light on opioids, including what they are and where to go for help

With no shortage of news coverage about the opioid crisis affecting people from every socio-economic level in communities large and small across the country, it’s helpful to step back and take a look at exactly what opioids are, the risks, and how to respond whether they’re a problem in your home or your community.

A fact sheet, “The Opioid Crisis: What You Need to Know,” (MF3404) developed by Kansas State University assistant professor Erin Yelland is available online or at local K-State Research and Extension offices. Yelland is a specialist on adult development and aging with K-State Research and Extension.

Opioids are a class of drugs that include powerful prescription pain relievers, including oxycodone, codeine, morphine, and fentanyl, and the illegal drug heroin. The prescription drugs can be an important part of treatment and are commonly prescribed by doctors for pain. They also carry the significant risk for addiction and overdose because of the euphoria they create and the tolerance that occurs after repetitive dosing.

Many people are prescribed these medications by a doctor for legitimate reasons – often for pain management – but anyone who takes a prescription opioid for an extended period of time or does not take it as prescribed is at risk for misuse and abuse.

From 1999 to 2015, the amount of prescription opioids dispensed in the United States nearly quadrupled, yet there has been no verifiable change in the amount of pain that Americans report, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At the same time there has been a dramatic increase in prescription opioid misuse, abuse, overdoses, and deaths.

“Although Kansas is far from being one of the states that has been hardest hit by the opioid epidemic, it is crucial that we take steps to bring awareness and education to Kansans on the crisis before it gets worse. By helping individuals understand what opioids are and the risks associated with taking them, we hope to empower them to be proactive in their own healthcare and seek appropriate alternatives if opioids are not a good fit for them. We are also working to provide individuals with the skills to recognize addiction and overdose so that they can help people in need,” Yelland said.

How to properly store prescription opioids

To prevent theft and accidental exposure, opioid medications should be stored securely and preferably locked up. The National Safety Council recommends treating opioids medications as you would a firearm:

- Choose a location that cannot be reached and is out of sight from children and visitors.
- It is highly recommended to store your medication in a lock box or a locked medicine cabinet.
- Do not leave medication on countertops, nightstands, or other noticeable locations that can be easily accessed by others.
- Return medication to a secure location after every use.
- Be safe at work or while traveling by using locking travel medication cases.

Nancy Nelson, Extension Agent
Walk Kansas gets people moving!

Did you know?

Less than 1/2 of Kansas adults meet the minimum recommendations for physical activity.

Just 19% of Kansans eat enough fruits and vegetables.

Chronic disease, including obesity, is responsible for more than 70% of health care costs.

Walk Kansas is a team-based program that helps participants lead a healthier lifestyle by being more active and making food choices that include fruits and vegetables.

Individuals on teams of six work toward averaging 30 minutes of walking or other exercise five days a week. Collectively, they cross the state during the 8-week program. Co-workers, family members, friends and neighbors formed teams and kept track of physical activity March 18 – May 12, 2018.

Forty teams in the Meadowlark District met the goal of crossing the state, 435 miles. Additionally, 22 of those teams met the 764-mile challenge of 4 hours-per-week for each person while 3 teams accomplished the 1200-mile challenge which is a 6 hour-per-week goal per person.

Statewide, Walk Kansas attracted 9,062 participants. A weekly newsletter offered current information on positive lifestyle habits including selecting and preparing nutritious foods, walking technique, strengthening exercises, and increasing water intake.

In conjunction with Walk Kansas four workshops were conducted in the Meadowlark District on Cooking Healthy Meals Under Pressure. Participants learned how to use an electric pressure cooker to help prepare healthy meals quickly. Topics covered were why pressure cook and how it works, and featured hands-on cooking and sampling of different foods that participants prepared.

Nancy Nelson, Extension Agent

Several generations of a local family and their friends met on May 5 at Kansas State University for the Walk Kansas 5k for the Fight and 1.5 mile fun walk that supports the Johnson Cancer Research Center.

Upcoming Events

Jefferson County 4-H Fair
July 30-Aug 2
Jefferson County Fairgrounds,
605 Ratz St, Valley Falls, KS

Kansas State Fair entries are due in all three District offices by August 10th.

All District Offices will be closed in observance Labor Day, September 3rd.

Events | Meadowlark District www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/events/