Dear Meadowlark Extension District Supporters,

Please review our 2018 Annual Report. K-State Research and Extension and the Meadowlark Extension District provides research-based information to help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

Sincerely
David Key
Meadowlark Extension District Director

Forage Utilization and Management
Educational Efforts are Timely and Popular

Stocking rates are never more critical than during periods of drought. This year with little rain during the summer months producers were forced to lower stocking rates and look for alternative methods to sustain their livestock. Agents responded to over 300 forage based inquires for information on topics related to stocking rates, pasture health, alternative forages, plant identification, drylotting livestock, weed control, fencing and pond water quality.

A series of tail-gate talks were held over three nights this summer reaching 91 producers with pasture walking demonstrations related to rotational grazing, plant species, brush and weed control, fencing and watering options and the use of a grazing stick and land use maps to determine stocking rates.

Pasture health visits and livestock water suitability testing helped support the educational effort through our dry summer months.

Walk Kansas Encourages Health Lifestyles

In 2018, 45 teams with 251 participants increased their physical activity during the eight week program. Forty Walk Kansas teams met the 435 mile team goal. Twenty-two of those teams met the 764 mile challenge of 4 hours of exercise per week for each person while three teams accomplished the 1200 mile challenge of 6 hours per week for each person!

Nearly 84 percent of the participants who responded to the program evaluation reported they ate more fruits and vegetables.

In conjunction with Walk Kansas, four Cooking Healthy Meals Under Pressure workshops were held.
reaching 39 participants gaining hands on experience preparing recipes in an electric pressure cooker. Eighty percent of the respondents reporting increasing their confidence in using and learning additional information about using their electric pressure cooker.

4-H Camp Rewarding Experience
4-H Camp is held yearly at Rock Springs 4-H Center and is a collaborative effort of several Extension Units coming together to plan and offer a powerful and impactful experience for our youth. The Meadowlark District took 109 campers and 14 youth counselors to camp this year. Independence, teamwork, skill accomplishment and belonging are all wrapped in this high content event.

Money Matters Newsletter Reaches Consumers Quarterly
The Meadowlark Extension District offers a quarterly newsletter with tips and ideas designed to help consumers use their resources wisely. Working in cooperation with 20 plus financial institutions across the District and through related organizations and events the newsletter reached over 425 participants this past year. The newsletter is now shared with the Wildcat Extension District so they can distribute the newsletter to consumers in their District.

Food Preservation Skills Shared
The Meadowlark District partnered with the Brown County Extension Council to conduct an in-depth hands-on workshop for youth and adults. The goal was to teach participants new and safer approved methods to preserve food.

Twenty participants made several kinds of sweet spreads, canned carrots, salsa and dried herbs. Topics covered during the day-long workshop included how bacteria grows, safe and danger-zone temperatures, raw vs. hot pack, head space in jars, adjusting cooking time for altitude and other canning problems that can happen.

District Hosts Board Leadership Training
The Meadowlark Extension District hosted two sites for the 2018 Board Leadership Training Series in Holton and Sabetha with 34 participants taking the four-week course. Before taking the training 30 percent of the participants felt strongly they could help their organization move forward with a strategic planning process. That number improved to 82 percent claiming a stronger understanding of the
process after taking the training. Seven percent of the respondents reported strongly agreeing they understood the legal and ethical issues of board members before taking the course with that percentage increasing to 43 percent after taking the training.

Mandated Applicator Trainings Creates Educational Opportunities
Issues with offsite movement of dicamba herbicide during the 2017 growing season led to mandated applicator trainings in 2018. The Meadowlark Extension District hosted producer trainings to get applicators certified to be able to apply dicamba reaching 203 producers creating awareness among participants about the potential movement of dicamba to sensitive crops and plants.

Parents as Teachers and the Meadowlark Extension District Offer Snack Tips
The Meadowlark Extension District partnered with the Parents as Teacher group in Oskaloosa to help parents identify foods that are choke hazards, MyPlate snack tips for toddlers and healthy food sampling reaching 12 adults and 35 young children.

Beef is BIG
The Meadowlark Extension District started a Beef Issues Group or BIG in 2018. Designed to reach beef producers during the winter months to discuss topics designed to increase profits and efficiency. Producer participate in the evening sessions with a professional presenter usually by conference call to reduce travel and expense. Topics this year addressed the characteristics of high, medium and low efficiency herds and four things a producer can do to increase their bottom line.

Grant Workshops Support Communities
Grant writing workshops were offered in Holton and Sabetha this year with 96 participants participating in the training to help their communities be more successful finding grant funds to complete community projects. Nearly 80 percent of the participants have reported: greater confidence to write a successful grant, can better explain the problem or opportunity they grant will address and have gained confidence in producing a grant budget.

Why 4-H?
I have learned more can be done as a group than any one person can do alone. Our club’s community service project of cleaning the cemetery where we meet is done as a thank you to the church; it’s that simple. But what we learn is that a group of people with various talents and abilities can work together to accomplish what no one or two people could do alone for the greater good. We need the father that may have a tractor, all the way down to the youngest child who can find those pieces of trash that have blown about the grounds. (Carter Kabus – Scholarship Form 2018)
Why 4-H?
I started in the Photography project as a beginner with a basic camera. Today, because of my 4-H experience, I have won multiple state contests and have had my photographs used in national livestock advertisements. I could not be at this level if it were not for 4-H and the critiques I received from the 4-H judges over the years. (Ella Barrett – Scholarship Application Form 2018)

Stay Strong Stay Healthy Classes Benefit Older Citizens
Meadowlark Extension District agents began offering Stay Strong Stay Healthy in 2017 as a way to provide an eight-week evidence based program for older adults to maintain healthy muscle strength and quality of life. Courses have been offered in Seneca, Grantville, Ozawkie and Delia. At the completion of the program nearly all of the participants have reported improvement in balance, strength and flexibility.

Elaine Kramer, a 2017 participant, reports nearly all her class participants still meet weekly a year after taking the class. She reported she is more flexible after committing to exercise weekly with her class members.

Meadowlark Extension District Invests in New 4-H Family Orientation
Retention of first year families is key to retaining membership and to grow the 4-H program. District 4-H staff have committed to reaching out and supporting new 4-H families in their first two years of membership. The District has developed a new family web page, new family 4-H newsletter and guide as well as a mentoring type program at the club level. Participant survey responses indicate that if they had not had the support they received through this orientation program they would not have survived their first year in 4-H.

4-H Project Training is Key to Success
Many project specific training events are planned and conducted throughout the year filling the need of a project meeting for many youth. We know that project enrollment stems from exposure to events like this making them a popular activity. Following one of these events one mother commented “I don’t know what you talked about at that training, but you have the kids excited to do herdsmanship!”