

www.lyon.ksu.edu

Lyon County

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

**October &
November, 2016**

**Lyon County
Extension Office**

2632 W Highway 50
Emporia, KS 66801
Phone: 620-341-3220
Fax 620-341-3228
www.lyon.ksu.edu

Brian Rees
Agriculture &
Natural Resources
brees@ksu.edu

Rhonda Gordon
Family and Consumer
Science
rgordon@ksu.edu

Corinne Patterson
4-H Youth Development
clpatt@ksu.edu

Travis Carmichael
Community Development
& Horticulture
trcarmic@ksu.edu

Debbie Van Sickle
Office Professional
dvansick@ksu.edu

Phyllis Krueger
Part-time Office
Professional
kruegerp@ksu.edu



K-STATE
Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.

www.ksre.ksu.edu

Extension Council Elections

October 5th

7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Lyon County Extension Office

Every year Lyon County residents have the chance to elect representatives to guide the programming for Lyon County Extension. Residents are asked to vote for three candidates from each of the four programming areas – Ag and Natural Resources, 4-H and Youth Development, Community Development/Horticulture, and Family and Consumer Science. The 12 residents elected will serve a two-year term and join the current Extension Council members to comprise the full 24 member Extension Council. These 24 members will meet at the annual meeting to elect the 2017 Executive Board to guide the overall programming and function for K-State Research and Extension, Lyon County.

Candidates are:

Agriculture and Natural
Resources:

Derrick Duncan, Emporia, KS
Mark Robinson, Admire, KS
Beth Skalsky, Hartford, KS

Family Consumer
Sciences:

Emily Darbyshire, Hartford, KS
Vicki Jones, Americus, KS
Doug Stueve, Emporia, KS

4-H Youth Development:

Patty Jenkins, Reading, KS
Amy Pedersen, Emporia, KS
Bryan Williams, Emporia, KS

Community Development:

Mark Lee, Emporia, KS
Martha Jones, Olpe, KS
Ruth Wise, Emporia, KS



The Clover Connection



Congratulations to all Kansas State Fair exhibitors! Exhibits are at the Extension Office and are ready to be picked up.

Lyon County was well represented at the 2016 Kansas State Fair. Please be sure you've picked up your state fair items from the Extension Office. We are proud of the outstanding projects Lyon County youth exhibited at the fair. Check out the results at www.Kansas4-H.org.

Find Us on Facebook

Do you want timely updates and reminders about 4-H deadlines and other opportunities provided by K-State Research and Extension, Lyon County? If you haven't already, be sure to like K-State Research and Extension — Lyon County on Facebook.

2017 Lyon County Fair Changes

There are a number of important changes to be expected at the 2017 Lyon County Fair. While changes highlighted in this newsletter will not be conclusive, please note some of the major changes shared.

Two species per 4-Her allowed in Premium Livestock Auction

The Lyon County Fair Board approved a motion to limit Lyon County 4-Hers to sell two (2) species at the Premium Livestock Auction in 2017. The only exception will be for any 4-Her who wins more than two grand or reserve grand champions. Winning grand or reserve grand will not allow you to sell more than 2 species, unless you win grand and reserve 3 or more times at the 2017 fair. A 4-Her may still show all 6 species of market animals, but can only sell 2 in the Premium Auction.

Assigned Livestock Housing

In an effort to make stalling more clear and account for all livestock, stall assignments will still be made by club, but will also be assigned by family name. With limited housing, 4-Hers in the pig project also need to be prepared to house two pigs together at the county fair. There is not enough space for all pigs to have individual pens, so please consider this when preparing for the fair.

Sheep and Meat Goat veterinarian inspection

Lyon County will utilize a veterinarian inspection for sheep and goats in 2017. The inspection will be just before the animals are allowed on the scale, which means animals can be unloaded and stalled prior to inspection. It is still the responsibility of the 4-Her and his or her family to inspect all livestock for any animal health concerns prior to bringing livestock to the fairgrounds. If an animal health concern is found at the fair, all livestock from the infected premises may be excluded from the fair. Also, no different than in the past, passing the vet inspection does not mean an animal is guaranteed to be sold in the premium auction nor does it mean it will not be asked to be removed from the fairgrounds if an animal health concern arises at the fair after the inspection.

4-Hers must verify that official 4-H tags are in place at July 1 pre-entry. No replacements will be made without an animal-specific decision from the Extension Office.

From time to time a 4-H animal that was properly tagged at the specific livestock tagging events will lose its 4-H tag by getting caught in a fence, for example. 4-Hers should be doing more than just dumping feed to their animals each day and actually evaluate the animal and make sure its official 4-H tag is still present. This tag is vital to allow the 4-Her to exhibit the animal at the county fair. Beginning in 2017, all 4-Hers must have notified the Extension Office prior to the July 1 fair pre-entry deadline if a 4-H animal has lost its tag. The 4-Her should also bring the lost tag if it can be found to the Extension Office by July 1. If the Extension Office is not made aware prior to July 1, the animal will not be retagged and will not be allowed to be exhibited at the fair. This means 4-Hers must pay special attention to their animals especially after the July 1 deadline. If a tag is lost after July 1 and the Extension Office is notified immediately, a farm visit will be made to determine if it is a case where the tag will be replaced (a torn ear should be visible, for example).

A 4-Her, family member or friend shall not cut out an official 4-H tag. If you believe your animal has an infected ear and removal of the tag is needed to properly

care for the animal, visual documentation must be made and the Extension Office should be involved in any decision.

4-Her must be present at Anderson Building judging

Conference judging is an important part of fair judging, and the 4-Her should be present to represent his or her project. It is mandatory that 4-Hers show their own livestock at the fair (pending no medical exception), and the Anderson Building projects are no less specific to the 4-Her. In 2017, all Lyon County 4-Hers must be present at the time of their individual project judging of Anderson Building items. It will no longer be acceptable to have someone else drop off a project to be judged for a 4-Her who cannot attend the judging. If you cannot attend the judging the day it's scheduled, you will not be able to exhibit your item(s) in the 4-H division, but a 4-Her could enter an item in Open Class if the category and requirements can be met.

Expanded Dairy Show in 2017

With the expressed interest in exhibiting dairy cattle and limited numbers exhibiting dairy goats, it was determined a more inclusive Dairy Show would be appropriate for Lyon County. Because of the tight schedule for livestock with market divisions needing to be placed prior to the Premium Livestock Sale, the dairy show will be included in the schedule at a different time similar to other animal shows not influenced by the sale. It will be hosted as a drive in show (bring your animals the morning of the show) on the Thursday of the Anderson Building release. The dairy project will not be included in Round Robin in 2017. However, an appropriate show with hopefully more animals and the potential to bring in a judge to evaluate both dairy goats and dairy cattle will offer 4-Hers opportunity to learn from this opportunity to exhibit.

2017 Lyon County Fair tentative schedule

It may seem like an early notice, but be sure to mark your calendars with the 2017 Lyon County Fair Aug. 3-12, 2017. At this time I can **tentatively** confirm the dates of the 4-H activities and display times at the fair. We will likely kick off fair judging with the Dog Show on July 28; the Fashion Revue, various project judging on July 29; followed by the Horse Show and Hand Pet Show on July 30. The Foods, Horticulture and other various projects not being judged the first weekend will all be judged on Thursday, Aug. 3. The livestock will come to the Fairgrounds on Friday August 4 with shows and various 4-H events through Aug. 8. New this year, after livestock have been weighed in on Friday, the

Shooting Sports Awards will be presented in the Show Barn Arena at approximately 7:30 p.m. The Anderson Building will be cleared on Aug. 10 and the dairy show likely hosted that morning. This is my **best guess for the 2017 schedule** for those who need to schedule calendars, but this could change.

Achievement Celebration

The 2016 Lyon County Achievement Celebration will be hosted Sunday, October 23 at the Emporia Granada Theatre. We will begin with the awards presentation at 3 p.m. followed by fun for all in attendance. 4-H Council allocated funds in the budget to treat those 4-Hers who completed Kansas Award Portfolios with a special treat, and concessions will be available for others in attendance. The committee is working hard to make sure it's a fun change of pace for all who want to attend.

County-wide Foods and Nutrition Meeting

Arlene Roberts is hosting the first foods and nutrition county-wide project meeting on Nov. 5 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Extension Office. Please RSVP by Nov. 2 to reserve your spot at 341-3220.

Record Book Judging

Lyon County participates in a three-county exchange for record book judging. This year Lyon County will be judging Marion County record books. We will be judging them at the Extension Office Meeting Room Oct. 6 and Oct. 12 from 5:00 p.m. each night, and will need to stay until they are finished on Oct. 12. There will be a meal provided. Each club is *required* to have *at least* three adults here to judge. We will have a lot of books to judge, so we will need plenty of people to help. We would also encourage any youth over age 14 to come to help judge as well. This would be a great learning opportunity for your own record books! Please contact the Extension Office by Oct. 3 with the names of your club members who will be here to help provide a head count for food.

4-H Council

The October Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Extension Office Meeting Room. Elections will take place, so please have club representatives present. The Nov. 7 4-H Council meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Anderson Building so Officer Training may begin promptly following at 7:00 p.m.

County-wide Rocketry Meetings

We are excited that Kent Grieder is willing to add County-wide rocketry project leader to his generous list of volunteer roles for Lyon County 4-H. He has some exciting rocketry meetings scheduled for the 2016-2017 project year. All meetings will be hosted at the Extension Office and will last an hour.

Oct. 9, 2016, 4:15 p.m.

Activity: Bring your rocket kit, ideas and questions for discussion

January 21, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Activity: Working with an alignment jig

April 15, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Bring your rocket for the activity: "Having the correct stand for the Rocket display at the fair."

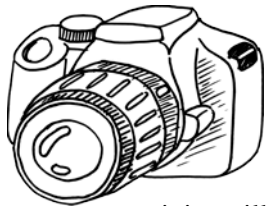
July 15, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Bring your rocket for the activity: "Preparation for the fair."

A launch date may be planned with input from the 4-Hers participating. To keep up to date on meetings and announcements for the Rocketry project, be sure to send your email contact to studiogphoto@yahoo.com. Kent may be reached at (620) 749-0100 or (620) 794-0162 or (620) 343-5136.

County-wide Photography Meetings

County-wide photography project leaders Kent and Jenny Grieder have some exciting project meetings planned for the 2016-2017 year.



The first meeting is scheduled for Oct. 9 at 3:00 p.m. at the Emporia Zoo. Bring your camera and possibly a new recruit to the 4-H photography project. The activity will cover "Capturing Shadows."

Mark your calendars for additional photography meetings all located at the Extension Office on Sat. Jan. 21 at 9 a.m., Sat. April 15 at 9 a.m. and Sat. July 15 at 9 a.m. Kent and Jenny may be reached at 620-794-0100 or 620-794-0162, by Facebook message or e-mail studiogphoto@yahoo.com.

Rawhide Wranglers

The Rawhide Wranglers 4-H Horse Club will meet Oct. 25 at 6 p.m. at the Extension Office Meeting Room.

Even if you don't have a horse but are interested in the horse project, I encourage you to attend. There are many opportunities to help the county-wide club and participate in learning activities even if you do not own a horse. This is a good place to start with the Horseless Horse project. Call the Extension Office if you want more information or ideas about getting your youth involved.

National 4-H Week

National 4-H Week is October 2-8, 2016. Clubs are encouraged to inform their communities about 4-H during this week. 4-H members should be prepared to discuss contests, presentations, displays and other ways to promote 4-H during National 4-H week. If your club wants ideas for activities during National 4-H Week, contact the Extension Office. Hopefully, we can use the week to promote the 4-H program to the best of our ability.



Online 4-H Enrollment Process

Enrollment for the 2016-2017 4-H year will again be online, but will not begin until October 1. The sooner you get your 4-Hers enrolled the sooner you will be receiving accurate information regarding project meetings and various project related information. Returning 4-H members may be re-enrolled with the original account created for last year's enrollment. It's important that each family enroll their own 4-H members with a valid email address so that we can continue to improve the communications with our 4-H families. In addition to enrollment/re-enrollment online, a 4-H Participation Form is required. This form is part of the online enrollment process. It's important the Participation Form information is accurately completed.

4-H Sunday

We have celebrated 4-H Sunday as a county for the last four years. This year, 4-H clubs are encouraged to select a regular church service to attend as a club as we will not be hosting a county-wide event. 4-H Sunday is "one Sunday during the year set aside to highlight the heart 'H' and the spiritual side of 4-H work. 4-H strives for fourfold development – spiritual, mental, physical and

social. Spiritual growth is enhanced as young people take their place in the church and put its teachings into place in everyday living.”

48 Hours of 4-H

Join thousands of 4-Hers and volunteers across Kansas for 48 Hours of 4-H October 8 and 9, 2016. Kansas 4-Hers are encouraged to set up service projects in their local communities to showcase the positive impact 4-Hers can make in just one weekend. Be sure to visit the state 4-H website to find forms to document your service and contribute to the statewide event. Check out <http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/48-hours-of-4-h/index.html> for more information.



4-H Officer Training

Officer Training will be held on Monday, November 7, 2016 at the Anderson Building beginning at 7:00 p.m. The training will follow the 4-H Council Meeting. All club officers are strongly encouraged to attend.

Leader Training

A Club Leader Training is scheduled for Wednesday, November 2, at 7:00 p.m. at the Extension Office meeting room. We have a handful of new leaders joining our team this year, so I hope both experienced and new leaders will attend. It's an opportunity to learn and share with each other, and also help provide direction for the 4-H year. This training will be primarily for community club leaders, but invites are extended to individuals who host regular project meetings or potential new candidates interested in becoming a community club leader. Please RSVP by Oct. 28 by calling the Extension Office at 341-3220.



4-H Age and Cloverbuds

With the new 4-H year coming up, Lyon County would like to see some new 4-Hers. As you are recruiting friends and neighbors, be sure to mention the age requirements.

- Individuals may officially enroll on his/her 7th birthday and after, **but not before**.
- **To participate in the 2017 Lyon County Fair, the 4-H'er must be 7 by January 1, 2017.**
- Youth who turn 19 before January 1, 2017 cannot re-enroll in 4-H for the 2016-2017 4-H year.

If you know a youth who is itching to join 4-H but is not quite old enough, the Lyon County 4-H Cloverbuds program is a great option. Cloverbuds is for youth ages 5 and 6 and is currently a county-wide club. Youth can join when they turn 5, but they should be 5 before Jan. 1, 2017, to enroll in the 2016-2017 Cloverbud year. Cloverbuds meet the third Tuesday of each month, and the next meeting is Oct. 18.

2017 Calendar

Work has begun on the 2017 4-H Calendar. If countywide project leaders have any regularly scheduled meetings or special meetings scheduled that you would like to have on the calendar, please inform the Extension Office by Friday, Nov. 4. This excludes regularly scheduled 4-H club meetings.

Lyon County 4-H Alumni

The Lyon County 4-H Alumni and Friends would love for former 4-Hers to join the organization by paying annual dues of \$10. This organization helps to ensure Lyon County 4-Hers have financial support to attend national events such as state project award winners who earn the right to attend the National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, Georgia, each November. Lyon County has had several winners the last few years as well as a national judging team to help fund. If you want to give your money to an organization that is here for Lyon County 4-H youth, please contact Barbara Burum at (620) 443-5790 in the evenings or weekends. The annual meeting is scheduled for Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. at the Extension Office.

Club Project Leader List

Community Club Leaders should have received a form to list the project leaders for your club. Please be sure to list your teen leaders and officers on this list as well.

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum

The Kansas Youth Leadership Forum is November 18-20, 2016 at Rock Springs 4-H Center. The Forum is for youth ages 14-18. Registration will be available on the State website.

Club Financial Reviews due Nov. 15!

All 4-H clubs, including county-wide project clubs like shooting sports and Rawhide Wranglers, will be required to submit Financial Reviews for the 2015-2016 4-H year which is from October 2015 through September 2016. They are due by Nov. 15 to the Extension Office.



Lyon County Extension Agent
Brian Rees
620-341-3220
brees@ksu.edu



Agriculture and Natural Resources

October-November 2016

Know Your Costs!!!

Anyone involved with agriculture recognizes the concerns facing producers in today's economic times. Input costs were high at the beginning of the year and many have declined only slightly if at all, especially in comparison with commodity prices. Both livestock and grain prices continue downward.

One of the best things a producer can do in these times is to pay attention to their variable costs. There is a certain amount of expense that will have to be there for the particular operation – livestock or grain – that is often referred to as fixed costs and/or overhead. These costs do not change based on the number of acres or animals in the operation. Often these costs can account for a high percentage of expenses for the operation and unless you are buying equipment or facilities, you can't change these much.

The variable costs, however, are very much in your control, and I would encourage you to make sure you know what your costs are on a per unit basis – per acre, per bushel, per head, etc. Variable costs are those that vary as the production volume changes. Basic examples could be feed costs for livestock operations, or seed and fertilizer expenses for row crops. These numbers will have a huge impact on whether you do or do not make money, and how much you make or lose.

Hopefully you can work with your accountant or banker to identify your costs, and determine if there are areas that you could or should take a closer look at to lower these costs. Although most producers work to maximize their efficiency and profits, it is apparent there are many that have not seen what I am estimating to be the tight times in the near future.

I hope most producers were able, over the past few "better" years, to address any equipment or facility needs when times were better. With good planning, attention to detail and just a little luck, maybe most crop and livestock producers will be able to be sustainable – economically – through the tight times ahead.

Harvest Safety

With corn harvest underway, I want to remind everyone to be aware of large, slow-moving farm equipment on the roads. As producers are moving from field to field, it

is important for everyone – both producers and the public – to be courteous and observe traffic laws for the safety and well-being of all. Most of the equipment isn't going far, and the seconds you save by passing in an unsafe manner normally are not worth the risk.

The days get longer (and daylight shorter) as harvest progresses, which results in tired producers and employees operating equipment for very long hours. I know there is often a push to get a little more done each day, but it is still a good idea to take regular breaks. Getting out for a couple of minutes is really a good idea for both the operator and the equipment. You can take a walk around the equipment to stretch your legs, get some circulation back to your body, and check for debris buildup or hot spots on the equipment. A little visual inspection can save a lot of money not only in potential damage but also in lost time spent on equipment repairs. Be safe around equipment and on the roads this harvest.

Test Your Forage Supply!

Speaking of knowing your costs, have you thought about knowing what you are going to feed your animals? I don't get a kickback from the lab to promote forage testing, but it is still a great idea. Even though there is a HUGE amount of hay available this year it probably is NOT the quality to which you are accustomed. Yes, many supplements are less expensive today than last year. But you shouldn't use them "just because", and you may need to change supplements or use a different quantity due to the quality of your forage.

Even though feed ingredients seem to be much less expensive this year than last, with the price decline on cattle it is that much more imperative to get all you can from your feeding program. Test your forage NOW to plan for your winter supplementation.

Talk about testing, how 'bout a Soil Test?

Talking about knowing costs and keeping a handle on expenses, do you know what your 2017 crop nutrient needs will be? As fall harvest progresses and some fields already harvested, now would be a GREAT time to get caught up with your soil testing! A soil testing program is the only way to know if you are getting all you can from your fertilizer dollars, and also put yourself in a position to take advantage of any favorable weather conditions that may occur in 2017.

Do you know if you are applying the appropriate amount of plant nutrient to get the most from your fertilizer dollars? What about any alternative forages or cover crops? They use nutrients as well, but can also help cycle nutrients in the soil, depending on the crop. And remember wheat is very responsive to phosphorus. Do you know if your phosphorus levels are adequate?

The only way for you to know for certain what is taking place from a nutrient standpoint is to soil test. Thanks to a grant from the Lyon County Soil Conservation District most soil tests that run through our office are relatively inexpensive in Lyon County especially for the information they can bring about your fields!

Free BQA Certification Underway

Ranchers, feeders and dairy farmers can become BQA certified for free through the Beef Quality Assurance program until November 13. Boehringer Ingelheim (BI) is picking up the \$25 to \$50 online fee for every person who completes BQA training prior to that date. Go to www.bqa.org to take advantage of the open certification period. The online modules are customized for each industry segment.

Other Upcoming Events

OCT 7 – NEW EVENT!! K-State Ranching Summit at the K-State Student Union Ballroom. The program will begin at 9:30 a.m. with registration and will conclude by 4:30 p.m. The schedule includes: Defining the unit of profit in cow/calf operations, *Burke Teichert, Teichert Consulting*; Evaluating the cost of alternative and new grazing opportunities, *Mykel Taylor and Dustin Pendell, K-State Ag Econ*; Solving complex problems in ranching, *Rich Machen, King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management*; Profitable systems approaches to ranch (resource) management, *Trey Patterson, Padlock Ranch*; Farm Economy and Financial Implications, *Allen Featherstone, K-State Ag Econ*; Building communities to support ranching in 2050, *Chuck Schroeder, Rural Futures Institute, Univ. of Nebraska*; and will end with a Q & A session with all speakers.

Registration is \$35/person or \$60 per couple and is due by September 30. More information and schedule updates are at www.KSUbeef.org, or contact Bob Weaber (bweaber@ksu.edu; 785-532-1460), Sandy Johnson (sandyj@ksu.edu; 785-462-6281), or Justin Waggoner (jwaggon@k-state.edu; 620-275-9164).

OCT 11 – VFD – If you haven't heard about the Veterinary Feed Directive for livestock feed, here's an

opportunity at St Anthony Hall in Strong City. Hosted by the Flint Hills Extension District, A. J. Tarpoff, DVM, Extension Beef Veterinarian with Kansas State will be the featured presenter. I know our main focus in this area is cattle, but the VFD will apply to all livestock, including chickens, ducks, pigs, sheep and goats. And the same rules will apply whether you have a couple of 4-H animals, a backyard flock, or a feedlot of cattle.

Even though we had a session during the Beef Fest seminar in August, we hope to host another VFD session in Emporia in December as the actual January 2017 implementation date gets much closer.

NOV 10 – Kansas Crop Insurance workshop at the Bicentennial Center in Salina. This one-day workshop will help crop insurance agents, agricultural lenders, farmers/ranchers, and other financial consultants provide better risk management information and advice to their clients or apply to their farm-ranch. More information and registration details will be coming soon at www.agmanager.info.

In early to mid-January, we hope to host an AG Econ seminar. "Top 10 Considerations to Navigate a Struggling Farm Economy" is the title for the session. There will only be 6 sites across Kansas, so we hope to be one of the host sites. Details are still being worked out but we should know more by the time our December-January newsletter is put together.

Late January/Early February – If you are looking to try to do a better job tracking your income and expenses, we hope to have a QuickBooks session geared for ag producers. This should be a one-day event, covering the basics of QuickBooks and how to set up your system.

FEB 2017 – Sprayers, nozzles, calibration, and concerns in light of some of the new seed and herbicide technology soon to both be in the market. Extend soybeans are out, and the thought is the herbicide will be labeled for use in 2017 – WITH CAUTIONS!!! This should be a very good session for everyone spraying.

Fungicide Seed Treatments for Wheat

Seed-borne diseases can cause a lot of problems for us, and fungicides can provide a pretty low-cost protection. But priorities should be set on use especially with lower commodity prices. Focus on 1) new varieties brought onto the farm that you plan on saving seed (if allowed); and 2) seed-borne diseases, especially common bunt, loose smut, flag smut, and Fusarium. Most fungicides will control the smuts, but you may need to be more selective if working to achieve Fusarium control.

Wreath Making Workshop

The holiday season will soon be in full swing. With that comes all the sights, sounds, and smells of the holidays. What better way to get ready for the holiday season, than making your own holiday wreath out of local greenery. This hands-on workshop will take all participants through all the steps to make you very own wreath. Participants will also learn how to hand tie a bow that can adorn their wreath.

When: **November 30, 2016**

Where: **Lyon County Extension Office**

Time: **2:00 pm and 5:30 pm**

Cost: **\$20.00**

A limited number of seats are available at each session, so registration is required. Registration includes a wire form, florist wire, ribbon and greenery. Please register no later than November 18th, by contacting the Lyon County Extension Office at (620) 341-3220.

Winterizing Garden Hand Tools

As fall continues and we get closer to the end of gardening season, it is a good idea to prepare your tools for the winter. Many garden tools such as garden hoes and shovels may have wooden handles that can deteriorate over time. Storing these tools in a protected location can help slow that process, but normal use will still expose the tools to the elements. At the end of the season it is a good time to clean up and protect the tools so they will last many years. Weathering can raise the grain of wood on handles, which can result in splinters. A light sanding can smooth any raised areas on wooden handles. Following the sanding with a light application of wood preservative like linseed oil or polyurethane will help protect the wood. Wipe off any excess after a few minutes as oil-based products can attract dirt.

Remove soil from metal surfaces. Use sandpaper or steel wool to remove any rust that may have formed. Now would also be a good time to sharpen any dull edges. A light coating of oil will help protect metal through the winter.

Soil Testing

Before amending your soils or adding fertilizer prior to planting it is a good idea to have a soil test. A soil test helps us understand what the pH, phosphorus, and potassium levels are. If these levels are within recommended ranges for your crops, then we only recommend fertilizers with nitrogen. We will also inform you to be cautious on the amount of organic matter, peat moss and some other amendment you want to add to the soil as they can affect the pH level. The only element we normally do not test for is nitrogen. Nitrogen is easily leached out of the soil during watering or rain events. When giving soil recommendations we generally do recommend a nitrogen fertilizer.

Here are a few tips on collecting soil samples. If you follow these tips, then the results will be more representative of the overall area. When taking the samples, make sure that you are collecting soil to a depth of 8 to 12 inches. This is to give a more representative sample in the root zone. Take at least 10 samples from the area. Combine these samples in a clean bucket and mix them together. After mixing the samples together, select about a pint of soil and place it in a zip top container and bring it into the Extension Office to be sent off for testing. If you are doing more than one area, make sure to label your samples.

When you bring the samples into the office, you fill out a form that gives some background information about the garden plot, landscape bed or lawn to help with recommendations. Once results are received by the office, you will then receive the results with recommendations for your area.

Keep Compost Pile Moist

This is the time of year when there are lots of materials available to compost. Remember that the compost needs to be kept moist so that the bacteria and fungi can break down the raw materials. Use a sprinkler to soak through the pile to the center. Allow the pile to drain. The goal is for the pile to remain moist; not waterlogged. Edges will dry out the quickest and may need a light sprinkling from time to time. If you are interested in composting but don't know how it is done, see our publication at the Lyon County Extension Office.

Harvesting Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes should be harvested no later than the first fall freeze because cold temperatures can damage the sensitive roots. However, you may want to harvest earlier if you prefer a smaller sweet potato. Test dig a hill to see if they are the size you want.

Sweet potatoes should be cured after being dug. The digging process often damages the tender skin, and curing helps these small wounds heal. Place the roots in a warm, humid location for 5 to 10 days immediately after digging. A location with a temperature around 85 to 90 degrees is ideal. A space heater can be used to heat a small room or other area. Raise the humidity by placing moist towels in the room. The curing process not only heals wounds but also helps convert starches to sugars. This process improves the texture and flavor of the roots.

Sweet potatoes should be stored above 55 degrees. Storage at temperatures below that injures the roots, shortens storage life and gives them an off flavor.

Oak Leaf Itch Mite

Unlike chiggers which have been long-recognized for producing annoying bites, quarter-sized raised reddened areas each with a centralized pinhead-size blister have now been attributed to the oak leaf itch mite (*Pyemotes herfsi*).

Although the existence of these mites had been well known for multiple decades, the correlation between them and reported widespread occurrences of human discomfort was unknown. The severity of recent outbreaks have resulted in cooperative efforts between K-State and the University of Nebraska entomologists, with the results being the identification of oak leaf itch mites as responsible for the stressful skin disorders.

Oak leaf itch mites were recovered from marginal fold galls on (primarily) pin oak leaves. Marginal galls are associated with the larvae/maggots of tiny midges, which oak leaf itch mites prey upon.

Due to their minuscule size compared to that of midge larvae, the itch mite possess a potent neurotoxin used to paralyze their maggot hosts. This toxin is responsible for irritating the skin, which cause discomfort in individuals upon contact with a itch mite. Because of the association with the midge larvae responsible for marginal galls on oak leaves, *Pyemotes herfsi* have been given the common name, Oak Leaf Itch Mite. It is believed that oak leaf itch mites also prey upon the larvae of another closely related midge species responsible for the formation of vein pocket galls on the undersides of oak

leaves. A full description of the oak leaf itch mite life cycle is available online by accessing Kansas State University Extension Publication MF2806.

The good news is that oak leaf itch mite populations can be extremely low or absent for years on-end. Allowing people to enjoy the outdoors without having to contend with oak leaf itch mite encounters. The bad news is that the reappearance/resurgence of oak leaf itch mite populations is unpredictable.

Each female oak leaf itch mite produces many offspring. The developmental cycle is reported to be just 7 days. The results of this production is uncountable numbers of oak leaf itch mites, which ultimately leave the confines of leaf galls. Passive dispersal via air currents is the bane to people, especially those in neighborhoods where pin oaks constitute the main trees species.

There is a wide time frame during which encounters with oak leaf itch mite might occur. It is not only the initial late summer encounters, but the presence of oak leaf itch mites extending well into the fall when people are raking leaves and kids having fun playing in leaf piles. And if this is not enough negativity regarding oak leaf itch mites, there is little to be done (well, actually nothing to be done) in treating and reducing/eliminating their populations.

When oak leaf itch mite populations are excessive, restricting outdoor activities is one method of reducing the risk of exposure. While the use of repellents may work against annoying insect species which actively seek a host, repellents have little effect against oak leaf itch mites which are passively dispersed, and lack the ability to alter their course/direction. It has been suggested that susceptible individuals spend as little outdoor time as possible. And showers immediately upon returning indoors might eliminate/wash off mites before they bite and cause reactions.

Individuals experiencing oak leaf itch mite encounters might utilize medications and lotions so designed to provide relief from itching discomfort as well as secondary infections of excoriated areas. Seek advice and recommendations from appropriate personnel.



Rhonda Gordon
County Extension Agent
rgordon@ksu.edu

Family & Consumer Sciences

President's Council Dates Extension Office Meeting Room

Noon

October 7th Bring updated membership list

November 4th Updated lists will be returned

December 2nd

SHICK

(Senior Health Insurance Counselors of Kansas)

I have completed my training for the 2017 enrollment year. I continue to be a certified SHICK counselor. The open annual enrollment period for 2017 is **October 15 - December 7th 2016**. I will be available by appointment only starting **October 17th**, if you would like to look at what Medicare Drug Coverage you currently have and what else is available. There are several changes being made to drug plans this fall that will take effect next year.

Please call me if you have questions or to make an appointment at 341-3220.

Sr. Life Fair Senior Health Fair Wednesday October 19

Change of Location

Anderson Building, Lyon County Fairgrounds

8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

- 8:00 Registration and Vendor Booth Open
- 9:00-11:30 Blood Pressure Checks by the nursing students from Flint Hills Technical College
- 9:15 Education Session - Preparing for the Next Step
- 10:30 Education Session - Active Life
- 11:45 Lunch with Entertainment - Catered by Olpe Chicken House
- 12:45 Keynote Address - Happy On Purpose, Esther Luttrell, Author and Businesswoman
- 1:45 Door Prizes Drawing
- 2:00 Closing

"None of us got to where we are alone. Whether the assistance we received was obvious or subtle, acknowledging someone's help is a big part of understanding the importance of saying thank you."

Harvey Mackay

The Family Nutrition Program at Work Again in Schools



Penny Smith, Dana Cain and Angel Poertner are the three program assistants, and Elizabeth Moreno, Nutrition Assistant, will be working with the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) in schools again this year.

We are in our fifteenth year of providing nutrition education in Lyon County schools. We have also expanded to include more adult education at the Salvation Army, Mental Health and Horizon Plaza. This program is provided with funds from the Family Nutrition Program, a program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-ED).

Over the years the program has grown. We will be providing nutrition education this school year to 122 classrooms (pre-K to fourth grade.) We visit approximately 50 classrooms each month. That translates into about 1100 children a month we serve. Our adult audience is growing as well. We are serving between 50 and 100 adults monthly.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate are the foundation of FNP nutrition education. Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st grade are engaged in learning about nutrition through use of our puppets "Chef Combo" and "Mr. BAC". Second grade students are learning about diabetes from the Wise Eagle in the Eagle Series Books published by the Center of Disease Control. Third grade students are baking whole wheat bread, learning about calcium from Bare Bones Bart, and conducting taste tests. Fourth grade students are going to grow lettuce in their classrooms hydroponically. Lessons are interactive and demonstrate choosing nutritious foods from MyPlate.



A nutritious, healthy food sample accompanies each lesson. Each grade level has a hands on cooking lesson. We added Americus, Reading and Olpe three years ago. We hope to add cooking lessons with parents after school once a quarter. If you would like to volunteer to go with us please let me know. We can always use extra hands when cooking in the classroom.

Our Adult programs center on the curriculum MyPlate My Family. Adult programs are more driven to what the

group we are working with needs. We have covered diabetes, cutting fat, cutting sugar and cutting salt from their diets. Emphasis is placed on getting more fruits and vegetables in their daily diet.

Fall Classes

Must have 10 participants pre-registered to hold classes. Register by calling the Extension Office at 341-3220.

Barn Quilts (Make Your Own)

November 5th (Saturday)

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Extension Office Garage

Cost \$35.00

Limit of 20 people

All supplies and a light lunch will be provided.

You will need to bring a hairdryer.

Barn quilts have become the rage across North America. The grassroots art phenomenon is soaring in popularity among rural residents anxious to display their family heritage and community pride. In turn, combing the countryside to view the quilts has become an addiction among tourists lured off the highway by trail maps guiding them to unique displays of Log Cabin, Ohio Star or other quilt designs.

“Painting a board to match a quilt square and then hanging it on a barn or other building is a simple idea that has turned into the largest public arts movement in history,” says Suzi Parron, author of the books *Barn Quilts and the American Quilt Trail Movement* and *Following the Barn Quilt Trail*.

“From a humble beginning in Adams County, Ohio, the idea has spread to 49 states with more than 9,000 barn quilts organized into more than 120 Barn Quilt Trails—and surely thousands more that are not mapped,” adds Parron.

Never too Early to Plan for the Holidays

This hotline is always available but a greater need appears when preparing the holiday meal. I am also available if you have questions as you plan your holiday meals.

The USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

Can answer your food safety questions.



You may speak with a food safety specialist — in English or Spanish — from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on weekdays year round. (The Hotline is closed on Federal government holidays, with the

exception of Thanksgiving Day. Hours of operation on Thanksgiving are 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time). **Call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline at:** 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). For the hearing impaired (TTY) is 1-800-256-7072. **Or send Email to:** mphotline.fsis@usda.gov Website: www.fsis.usda.gov FSIS Web-based automated system “Ask Karen”: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp

Save the date



The next National Festival of Breads baking contest will be held on June 17, 2017, in Manhattan, Kansas.

Entries will be accepted from October 1, 2016 through January 16, 2017.

The 2017 National Festival of Breads is sponsored by King Arthur Flour, Red Star Yeast and Kansas Wheat.

Who can enter? Amateur bakers Youth (ages 8-17) and Adults (18 years and older) - **Free to enter.**

How to enter? First, read and follow the rules at NationalFestivalofBreads.com then enter your original bread recipe online from October 1, 2016 to January 16, 2017. It is acceptable to enter more than one recipe in each of the four recipe categories.

Who will be selected? Each recipe is evaluated and many are test baked in the Kansas Wheat test kitchen. After several rounds of judging, eight adult finalists will be selected to bake their winning recipe in Manhattan, Kansas on June 17, 2017. Youth winners will win a cash prize, but are not required to be present at the National Festival of Breads baking competition.

What are the prizes? One adult bread baking champion will receive \$2,000 in cash plus an all-expense paid trip to attend a baking class at King Arthur Flour Education Center in Norwich, Vermont. Also included is a year's supply of Red Star Yeast. The top eight adult finalists will receive \$500 cash and a trip to Manhattan, Kansas on June 15-17, 2017. The trip includes a wheat harvest tour plus an exciting day of baking. Additional prizes are included in the complete rules found at the website mentioned above.

“Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it.” **Ralph Marston**

Return Service Requested

Check out our website at
www.lyon.ksu.edu

October

- 02-08 National 4-H Week
- 02 4-H Alumni Meeting, 6 p.m., EMR
- 03 Master Gardener Meeting, noon, EMR
- 03 Ambassador Meeting, 6 p.m., EMR
- 03 4-H Council Meeting, 7 p.m., EMR
- 03 Ambassador Applications Due
- 05 Extension Election, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Extension Office
- 05 Agricultural Lenders Conference, Manhattan
- 06 Judge Marion County Record Books, 5 p.m., EMR
- 07 FCS President's Council, noon, EMR
- 07 K-State Ranching Summit, 9:30 a.m., KSU
- 08-09 48 Hours of 4-H
- 09 4-H Photography Meeting, 3 p.m., EMR
- 09 4-H Rocketry Meeting, 4:15 p.m., EMR
- 10 Columbus Day, Extension Office Closed
- 11 Veterinary Feed Directive, 9 a.m., Strong City
- 12 Judge Marion County Record Books, 5 p.m., EMR
- 16 Poultry Club Meeting, 1 p.m., EMR
- 18 Cloverbuds, 6 p.m., EMR
- 19 Sr. Life Fair, 8:00 a.m. – 2 p.m., AB
- 20 Hop To It Rabbit Club, 7 p.m., AB
- 23 Lyon County 4-H Achievement Celebration, 3 p.m.,
Emporia Granada Theatre
- 25 Rawhide Wrangles, 6 p.m., EMR

AB = Anderson Building
BCB = Bowyer Community Building
EMR = Extension Meeting Room

November

- 02 4-H Leader Training, 7 p.m., EMR
- 04 FCS President's Council, noon, EMR
- 05 4-H Foods Meeting, 9 a.m., EMR
- 05 Barn Quilt Class, 10 a.m., Extension Office
- 07 Master Gardener Meeting, noon, EMR
- 07 4-H Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., AB
- 07 4-H Officer Training, 7 p.m., AB
- 10 Kansas Crop Insurance Workshop, Salina
- 11 Veterans Day Holiday, Extension Office Closed
- 15 Cloverbuds, 6 p.m., EMR
- 17 Hop To It Rabbit Club, 7 p.m., AB
- 18-20 Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, Rock Springs
- 20 Poultry Club Meeting, 1 p.m., EMR
- 22 Rawhide Wranglers, 6 p.m., EMR
- 24-25 Thanksgiving Holiday, Extension Office Closed
- 30 Wreath Making Class, 2 p.m. & 5:30 p.m., Extension Office

