



Cottonwood Extension District

K-State Research & Extension News

Cottonwood Extension District #17

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2017

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A word from the Director...

Our first month as Cottonwood Extension District was a whirlwind of activity. We thought the Barton County Fair was hot until it was time to host the Ellis County Fair. I'm happy to say everyone survived and there were many great learning opportunities that culminated at each of the Fair events.

We said good bye and good luck to Holly Dickman, who provided great leadership and expertise in the Horticulture position for 10+ years. With her departure one of our Governing Body's first decisions was to open the Horticulture position and begin the process of filling it. If anyone reading this newsletter knows of someone who has a Bachelors or Masters degree in Horticulture, please share this website with them. www.ksre.ksu.edu/jobs It has the link to the job description and application process.

Until the horticulture position has been filled you can direct your horticulture related questions to Alicia in Barton County and Stacy in Ellis County. If they do not know the answer to your question, they will contact a specialist at K-State Research and Extension who does.

I hope you enjoy this joint newsletter that covers events and topics relevant for the months of August and September. Remember too, we are always open to suggestions of future program topics, so give us a call at: Cottonwood Extension District – Great Bend office – (620)793-1910 or Hays office – (785)628-9430.

Donna Krug, District Director





Family and Consumer Science

Linda Beech & Donna Krug

Basics of Home Canning Class-Great Bend

Just Because it Seals, Doesn't Mean It's Safe!

Whether your interest in home canning is a new kitchen adventure, a continuing hobby or a way to take advantage of seasonal fresh produce, K-State Research and Extension can help you do it safely.

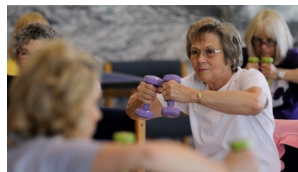


Join us on **Thursday, August 17 at 12:00 noon** at the Cottonwood Extension District- Great Bend office, when District Agent Linda Beech will review the science of preserving food at home. In this free 1-hour program, you'll receive the latest home canning guidelines, plus advice on canning equipment and products.

Participants will learn that just because a jar seals doesn't mean it's safe. It is important to use up-to-date canning recipes and equipment. Instead of untested online recipes or old-fashioned, hand-me-down procedures, home canners should rely on current USDA recommendations and reputable sources of research-based food preservation information.

Whether you're new to home canning, or you've been "putting food by" for years, you'll appreciate this review of the latest principles for preserving top quality food at home.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Workshop Set in Great Bend



A Stay Strong, Stay Healthy workshop is set to begin Thursday, August 17th from 10-11 AM at the Great Bend Extension Office. Each Tuesday and Thursday through October 12th participants learn exercises to improve their strength, flexibility and balance. Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is designed to increase an aging adult's access to a safe, structured and effective strength training program. During each session, a prescribed set of 8 upper and lower body strengthening exercises are done along with warm-ups and cool-down stretches. Participants are made to feel comfortable regardless of their current fitness level so they can safely participate and gradually build the strength beneficial

to health. Please register and pay the \$20 fee at the Cottonwood Extension District – Great Bend office, 1800 12th Street by Friday August 11th. Donna Krug is the instructor for this evidence based program. If you would like more information please contact Donna at (620)793-1910 or dkrug@ksu.edu

Medicare Basics-Great Bend

Tuesday, August 22nd, noon, at the Extension Office Meeting room, 1800 12th Street, Great Bend. If you are nearing age 65, you will want to mark your calendar and come to this free educational program. Erin Petersilie and Donna Krug, FCS Agents with K-State Research and Extension will be your hosts. Their presentation will cover Part A, B, supplemental and Part D drug plans. There will be time for questions and answers, and individuals who are already receiving Medicare benefits may sign up for an appointment to review their drug plan during open enrollment.

Take the Challenge: PREPARE KANSAS Starts September 1

Are you ready to take the challenge - the challenge to organize your financial life? Having records organized and up to date, including health, insurance and bank information, can help in your day-to-day life, but is especially important in emergencies.



Prepare Kansas 2017, an online challenge to all Kansans and others available through the K-State Research and Extension Facebook page, will provide guidance through steps to be more prepared to handle disasters. Prepare Kansas will run through September to coincide with National Preparedness Month.

This September's Prepare Kansas Facebook Challenge will be interactive, with information and resources to help individuals and families be better prepared, and providing the opportunity for participants to comment and share their own information on what they're doing in regard to personal and community preparedness. Weekly topics to be covered include Prepare a Household Inventory; Review Your Insurance Coverage; Create a Grab-and-Go Box; and Family Communication. Join us starting Sept. 1st!

Employee ServSafe Class offered in Great Bend

A ServSafe Food Handler Program will take place in Great Bend on **Tuesday, September 19th**. Linda Beech, District Extension Agent in the Cottonwood Extension District will be the presenter. As Extension educators we are happy to offer this training to food handler employees. This is a 2 ½ hour course based on the 6th Edition of the ServSafe Food Handler Guide. Participants who complete the class will receive a certificate. The class on September 19th will be held from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. at the Cottonwood Extension District – Great Bend Office, located at 1800 12th Street.



Family Day Pizza Make and Take in Hays

A family meal is important. Research done by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse consistently finds that the more often children eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink or use drugs. The parental engagement that happens around a family meal table is the single most potent weapon in preventing substance use and abuse among youth.

Families who eat together, eat better. So, share a family meal and talk about what's going on in your child's world!

Family Day Pizza Make and Take- (For families with young children)

Monday, September 25

4:15-6:15 pm

Cost: \$2.50 per pizza (limit 2)

Cottonwood Extension District- Hays Office- Meeting Room, 601 Main, Hays (Enter the rear door from the north parking lot.)



Make a pizza with your children and take it home to bake and eat together! Fruit and vegetables will be provided to complete a healthy meal. Register and pay fee in advance at the Cottonwood Extension District-Hays Office, 785-628-9430.

Supplies are limited. We will offer about 75 pizzas– limit two per family, first come-first served. This is an event for parents with their young children.

DON'T WING IT Campaign for Safe Poultry Handling

Contaminated food sickens nearly 48 million people in the United States every year—that's 1 in 6. Poultry is the food category responsible for the second-largest number of foodborne illnesses. Salmonella and Campylobacter are two bacteria associated with poultry which can cause illness. Salmonella is more common, affecting nearly a million people every year, while Campylobacter is more potent- even one drop of raw poultry juice could contain enough Campylobacter bacteria to make someone sick. Follow these tips for safe poultry handling:

Don't Touch- *at the Store*

- Disinfect your shopping cart handle with disinfectant wipes.
- Place poultry packages in a plastic bag to help avoid cross-contamination.
- Use hand sanitizer after touching raw poultry packages.

Don't Touch- *at Home*

- Keep poultry in plastic bag, place on a plate on a low shelf of refrigerator to prevent leakage from contaminating other foods.
- Wash hands before and after handling raw poultry.



Check the Temperature

- Thaw in the frig at or below 40°.
- Use a food thermometer- Cook poultry to a temperature of 165° to kill harmful bacteria.

Think Before You Rinse

- Rinsing poultry increases the chance of cross-contamination by splattering raw poultry juice on the sink, faucet and counters. Only proper cooking removes bacteria.

Food Safety Kansas

Have you had a foodborne illness and don't know where to report the problem?

The KS Department of Agriculture and KS Department of Health & Environment just launched "Food Safety Kansas" at www.foodsafetykansas.org/. Here you can report an illness caused by a restaurant, food item, or from an event. You can also report a problem with a restaurant that did NOT cause an illness.

The public can also phone in complaints:

- Foodborne illnesses- 877-427-7317
- Restaurant practices- 785-564-6767

Be A Book Cook: Germs, Germs, Germs!

Kids learn to love reading, cooking and healthy nutrition when they become a Book Cook! This class, held in conjunction with Ellis Recreation Commission, links a favorite story book with a fun cooking experience. Join us on Tuesday, September 26, 3:45 -5:00 pm at the Ellis Public Library. Enjoy a fun story about germs, test your hand washing skills with glowing powder and create “giant germs” for a snack. Extension Agent Linda Beech will be the class instructor. The cost is \$5 per person. Contact the Ellis Recreation Commission, 785-726-3718, to register.

Join Us For “Extension Reading, Food & Fun” at Hays Library

The Ellis County Extension Office offers “Extension Reading, Food and Fun”– a nutrition story hour in the children’s department of the Hays Public Library– at 4:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, September-May. The programs are free and open to pre-school and elementary children and their parents.

Each program includes a children’s story with a healthy food theme, a food preparation or tasting experience and a physical activity linked to the theme.

Children will learn to love reading and healthy living at these programs which are supported by SNAP-ED and the KSU Family Nutrition Program.

“Canner’s Corner” Returns to *Hays Daily News* for 8 Weeks

Canner’s Corner is back! Watch for short seasonal canning tips on the Tuesday food page of the *Hays Daily News* for eight weeks from late August through early October. This special fall series was recognized with a regional Extension communication award.



Please thank the staff at the *Hays Daily News* for partnering with Extension on this food safety outreach, and special thanks to editor Nick Schwien for the graphic design!

Low-Acid Fruits- A Canning Concern

Low acid fruits include bananas, Asian pears, mangoes, melons, pineapple, persimmons, papayas, figs, and dates

When it comes to canning, foods are divided into two categories. Low acid foods have a pH 4.6 or above and high acid foods have a pH of 4.6 or below. In general, fruits fall into the high acid category. But beware -- there are some exceptions.

Melons, including watermelon, honey dew and cantaloupe, are examples of low acid fruits. They have an average pH of 6.2. So, when canning, significant amounts

of acid and sugar must be included to safely can them in a boiling water bath canner. In 2011, there was an outbreak of botulism linked to watermelon jelly sold in Canada. It is important to choose research-verified recipes from trusted sources in all canning, and especially with low acid foods. A research-tested recipe for Watermelon Jelly can be found in the Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving or at www.bernardin.ca/recipes/zesty-watermelon-jelly.html (Bernardin is the Canadian brand of Ball canning products.)

Remember, while tomatoes are classified as a vegetable, they are botanically a fruit. Acid-- either citric acid powder, lemon juice, or vinegar-- must be added to tomatoes for safe canning.

For a list of pH values for common foods, see the chart at <http://www.ellis.k-state.edu/health-nutrition/home-preservation.html>



Celebrate Family Day September 25th

Hectic work schedule? Busy with after-school activities? Do outside influences interfere with your family's dinnertime? Mark Monday, September 25th on your calendar and get ready to celebrate Family Day. The fourth Monday of September has been noted as Family Day, a national effort to promote family dinners as an effective way to reduce youth substance abuse and other risky behaviors.

It sounds like a simple task to gather the family together for supper around the table and catch up on the day's activities. Although our nest has been empty for a few years, I still remember the crazy schedules when three kids were heading three different directions. Still, the importance of these 20-30 minutes of each day cannot be overlooked. Get out the calendar and protect the days that eating supper together as a family will work.

Plan a meal that is simple and nutritious so the focus can be on family communication. Adding a salad to a crock pot meal or preparing a quick stir fry served with brown rice is an easy way to feed a hungry family without slaving in the kitchen. Involve family members in choosing the foods that are served; this helps ensure they will be eager eaters at mealtime.

A final reminder with Family Day is to ask family members to turn off technology. This helps to maintain an uninterrupted dinner and focus on what is important; each other! Let us know how Family Day, (September 25th) goes at your house.



Agriculture

Alicia Boor & Stacy Campbell



Sugarcane Aphid Study to Predict Migration

Last year, sorghum producers experienced a new pest in their fields called the sugarcane aphid (SCA). This aphid comes up from Texas and Oklahoma on the prevalent southern winds and lands in our fields to establish themselves in grain sorghum and forage sorghum. With their prodigious ability to reproduce, they can quickly reach treatment threshold, and if left unchecked, ruin a field. This is because they are asexual reproducers that are born pregnant. By multiplying so quickly, they overtake sorghum plants either by sucking the life out of it, or with the copious amounts of honeydew they produce. Either way, some fields that escaped control last year in Barton County had as much as a 40-60 bushel per acre loss because of this pest. Fortunately in Ellis County it arrived about two weeks later and didn't seem to affect our milo yields.

This year, your Agriculture and Natural Resource agents, Alicia Boor and Stacy Campbell are participating in a study on SCA in the field. Once a week, they are scouting a chosen sorghum field for the pest. By sampling 10% of the field each time, they are able to monitor when the aphids arrive.

From that point, J.P. Michaud, K-State Research and Extension entomologist at the Agricultural Research Center – Hays will study the fields as well. J.P. explains his research as:

“We are collecting data on changes in SCA abundance over the entire central and southern plains. The data will be combined with retrospective weather records and used to build a synoptic model that can be used to project (anticipate) aphid migration in subsequent years. The idea is to eventually predict aphid movement patterns based on current weather (temp and wind direction etc.)”

Pre-plant wheat school offered for local farmers

Farmers needing to pick a new variety of wheat or having problems with weed control are encouraged to attend the Ellis County Pre-plant Wheat School on Wednesday, August 30th, in Hays.



The event will begin with a light supper at 5:30 p.m. with the program starting at 6 p.m. in the Extension Office back meeting room, 601 Main Street, Hays.

According to Cottonwood District Extension Agent Stacy Campbell, topics of discussion by Extension Specialists will be wheat variety selection, disease and weed control options, variety interaction with nitrogen and fungicide, managing nitrogen for protein, rotation and tillage interactions, and the use of stripper headers to optimize residue management and subsequent yields.

Pre-registration is requested by Monday August 28, by calling (785) 628-9430 or by emailing Theresa at tam3@ksu.edu.

Disaster Preparedness for Home, Family and Furry Friends

When the tornado sirens sound, are you confident that you are prepared to face a storm? Or if your house is on fire, are you prepared to evacuate? Would you be prepared to not only survive the damage, but also ease the process of recovery?

Plan to attend the free program “Disaster Preparedness for Home, Family and Furry Friends” led by Linda Beech and Alicia Boor, Cottonwood District Agents. Call to register for the location of your choice:

Thursday, September 14- 12:00 noon, Extension Office, Hays, 785-628-9430

Wednesday, September 27- 12:00 noon, Rec Activity Center, Great Bend, 620-793-1910

Many of us have taken some steps to protect our home and families from emergencies. But do you have a plan for your pets? And what about your financial emergency preparedness— would you have the records and documents needed to recover your losses if your home was damaged or destroyed?

Disasters are unpredictable and devastating to lives and property. Instead of just hoping to avoid a disaster, it is important to put some time and attention into preparing for the possibility. In case of emergency, you'll be glad you planned ahead. Attend this program and learn more!





4-H Youth Development

Susan Schlichting & Berny Unruh

Cottonwood Extension District Staff Fair Visits

On July 1, Barton and Ellis County Extension Offices joined forces to become the Cottonwood Extension District. Four days later, the Great Bend staff kicked off the Barton County Fair! Soon thereafter, the Hays staff went into “Fair Mode”, too.

We took the opportunity to visit each other’s’ Fairs in order to begin meeting community members. Here are a few shots of our staff in action at the Barton and Ellis County Fairs.



While at the Barton County Fair, Hays staff took in the Business Appreciation Breakfast / Chamber Coffee served by the Extension Council, exhibit judging (even got to judge some cool Lego creations), Livestock Skillathon and FCS Judging along with meeting some great 4-H families and community members.

While at the Ellis County Fair, Great Bend staff got to experience exhibit judging, lead a “Story Walk” during the Fun at the Fair tours, judge Food Challenge, assist with livestock shows and meet local 4-H families.

We are looking forward to new opportunities that the Cottonwood Extension District will provide to 4-H families and community members across the two counties.

Are YOU a 4-H Supporter? Want to Show YOUR 4-H Spirit in Style. . . on YOUR Vehicle License Plate? Sign up at www.kansas4hfoundation.org/myclovertag and you will be one of the first to know when plates are available. Once available, \$10 of every plate purchased will go to the county 4-H program (where purchased). Kansas 4-H clubs played an important role in making this project a reality and in choosing the winning design!



If you'd like to know more about 4-H opportunities in the Cottonwood Extension District, visit cottonwood.k-state.edu.

Summer: A Time of Learning!

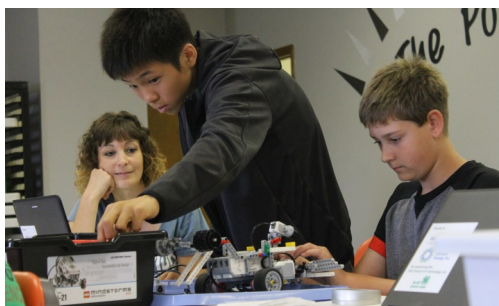
4-H members attending the week long STEM day camp are set to become exceptional future scientists. The camp was designed for young people to have fun and learn to work with others while secretly aiding students in achieving skills in science, technology, engineering and math. Volunteers from Barton and Ellis County presented and taught about wind energy, solar energy, rockets, robotics and drones. Brandy Proffitt, summer assistant in the Barton County office, and junior leaders Dalton Dicks and BrayLynn Anshutz assisted with the day camp.

The week began with teams of two working together to design a “wind wagon” out of cardboard, paper, tape, wooden skewers and some wheels. The challenge was to build a wind wagon capable of moving at least two feet across the floor with the wind being provided by an electric fan. With lots of brainstorming and design changes the teams realized much success. In the end, one wind wagon traveled the width of the room.

Susan Schlichting and Jacob Schmeidler, Ellis County 4-H member, brought Robotics to the Barton County classroom. Some members have had the opportunity to work with robotics in specific classes at school but several had not been able to join the fun. Younger members tried their skill at programming a mouse to go find the cheese.

Nathan Woydziak, a CropQuest consultant, shared with the group about drones and how he uses them in his job to check crops. Melissa Woydziak led the group in the steps to build a rocket. On the last day twenty rockets were successfully launched with only one lost. Nathan was asked to bring the drone back to help locate the rocket lost in the sorghum field.

The most important discovery our members made was that science really is everyday life and it is not scary or boring. Participants also learned that we all have a lot more to learn.



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Horticulture Agent

The Cottonwood Extension District has a job opening for a Horticulture Agent position.

Please visit the following link to view the position announcement and application instructions.

http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/jobs/current_openings/index.html

Position closes August 18, 2017.

Keep up on all the latest programs and research resources by visiting
www.cottonwood.ksu.edu

**WE'RE
HIRING!**



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