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# Thomas County

## K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

July 2025

Volume: 200

## THOMAS COUNTY FAIR



Fair pre-entries for each 4-H family are due on **Wednesday, July 8th**. Entries will be completed online this year on the [FairEntry website](#).

Fair Set-up will be July 17th at 6:00 pm &

Fair Clean-up will be July 26th at 8:00 am

\*50% of your club must be present at both to qualify for a Club Seal!\*

The Thomas County Fair parade will be Tuesday, July 22nd at 5:30 p.m.

Register for the fair parade [here](#) or contact the Colby Chamber Office at 785-460-3401.

**4-H entries need to be entered on the FairEntry website.**

**Go to [thomas.fairentry.com](http://thomas.fairentry.com) to register! Open Class entries should use paper entry cards that can be found at the Extension Office in advance and at the 4-H Building during drop-off on Tuesday for judging.**

### Again this Fair Year

**The Thomas County Extension Office will be closed Monday through Friday during fair week.** This is a very busy week for us and we want to do a better job serving everyone at the fair. If we are needed we will be around the fairgrounds. Laurel, Tracy, Helen and Mallory can be found around the 4-H building or near the livestock facilities to assist you.

### Reminder!!!

There will not be an August newsletter as we will be busy with Thomas County Fair activities!

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Research and Extension

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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION AND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

# Upcoming Events

## July

2nd—K-State Garden Hour: Cutting-Edge Efforts in Kansas Demo Gardens [Register here!](#)

4th—Independence Day



**Extension Office Closed**

6th - Abilene Hustlers Club Meeting

7th - FAIR PRE-ENTRY DEADLINE

7th - 8th - Electrical Camp w/Bob Blume



11th—Second Friday e-Call:  
Creating Welcoming Communities  
[Register here!](#)

11th - 12th - 4-H Dog Show

14th Fashion Review Practice

15th - Shopping in Style and Sewing & Textile Design Fashion Review

16th - EMG Community Call

17th - Visual Arts& Communication Judging



17th - Photography Judging

17th - Fair Set-Up

19th - 4-H Horse Show



21st - 26th - **Thomas County Fair**

**\*\*\*SEE PAGE 9 FOR A DETAILED SCHEDULE FOR FAIR WEEK\*\*\***

22nd - Parade

24th - TCCF Free Fair Breakfast



## August

**15th - Deadline for State Fair Entries**

## Farewell Come & Go

**Where:** Thomas County Extension Office

**When:** August 1st, 2025

Please join us in saying goodbye to Laurel Despain and Mallory Jackson.

Laurel has been a wonderful asset to our county and 4-H Community. She has a beautiful heart, and has given so much of herself to our different youth programs.

Mallory came in as a Summer Intern and has immersed herself in every project. She has the experience of being in 4-H and we have been able to tap into her resources far beyond what we expected.

We will host a Come & Go starting at 10:00am and wrapping it up by 3:00pm. Come out and show your appreciation for these two ladies. We will have coffee & cookies and an opportunity to sign a goodbye note.

Tracy

## Rattlesnake Safety



Top photo: Rattlesnake

Bottom photo: Bull snake

If you're anything like me, nothing will give you the heebie jeebies faster than a snake . . . or a stick that looks like a snake . . . or a bug that sounds like a snake . . . well, you get the idea.

It may not be a bad thing if you also possess this inborn fear of these slithery little creatures. While it may only serve to send you and your heart rate into orbit following a false alarm, it may just save your life one day!

Rattlesnake safety is no joke if you live in any one of the continental 48 states. Here in

western Kansas, our primary snake of concern is the prairie rattler. Reaching up to 4 feet in length, these snakes are patterned with dark blotches that gradually turn into rings near the tail. The most distinctive part, of course, is the rattle at the end of the tail. Bull snakes are often mistaken for rattlesnakes; however, there are a few key differences. Bull snakes are generally longer and thinner than rattlesnakes, but not always. They also tend to be shiny whereas a rattlesnake is duller in color. Rattlesnakes, and many other venomous snakes, have distinct features including an elliptical, or cat-like, pupil shape in the eye; pits between the eyes and nostrils; two fangs on the front of the upper jaw; and scales on the underside of the tail in a single row. On the contrary, non-venomous snakes generally have a round pupil, lack pits between the eyes and nostrils, have teeth approximately matching in size, and have a double row of scales on the bottom side of the tail.

A commonly held myth is that the number of segments – or buttons – on a rattle indicate age; rather, a new button is added each time the skin is shed which may occur multiple times each year. Rattlesnakes will commonly rattle their tails when sensing a threat, but they may strike without rattling first. Other snake species will also shake their tails when sensing danger. Rattles are made of keratin which is relatively brittle. As a rattler grows older and the rattle grows longer, the rattle can become fragile and break off. This breakage can also occur with injury. It is important not to assume the snake is a bull snake just because it is missing a rattle!

Rattlesnakes are frequently found in rocky open areas, grassy prairies, or agricultural areas. They commonly hide in a nook or under an object or vegetation waiting for prey, so be careful when picking something up off the ground. While they oftentimes avoid people, occasionally they are found in high-traffic areas or even in town. They commonly winter in large groups; several hundred have been found in a single den. Snakes overwinter in a modified hibernation called

brumation. Unlike in hibernation, snakes don't enter a deep sleep but are simply less active. On warmer days, they are capable of leaving the den or other protected place in search of food. While snakes prefer temperatures between 80 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit, they can survive for several days in temperatures as low as 37 degrees and briefly endure temperatures as low as four degrees.

Snakes carry a limited amount of venom and can control venom release, though very young or very old snakes make be poor at regulating release. In order to conserve venom, snakes may deliver a dry bite when trying to deter a threat, but if the snake feels its life is in danger, it may deliver a large dose.

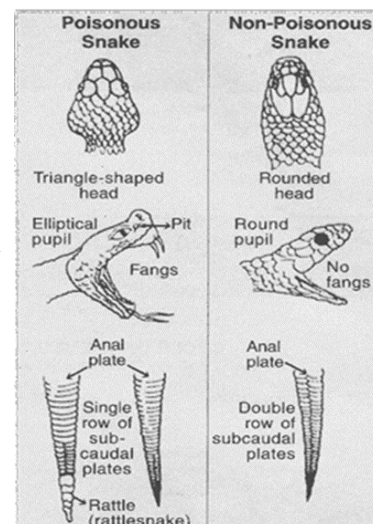
Rattlesnakes can still strike for several hours after death, so be very careful handling a dead snake. If you need to dispose of a dead snake, use a utensil or wear gloves as snakes can carry Salmonella bacteria. Thoroughly clean any items that touched the snake.

Because of their coloring, rattlesnakes can frequently blend into their surroundings quite well. Though they are generally considered non-aggressive, they will bite if they feel threatened. Snakes use the pit organs on their head for heat detection, allowing them to sense heat even in the dark. Therefore, protective gear covering the feet, ankles, and lower calves is key. A boot that is only ankle-height may not be sufficient, as the snake can aim for the lower leg where it senses heat. If wearing shorter boots, consider also wearing snake-resistant chaps or gaiters.

A bite may not feel how you expect – rather than a puncture feeling, it has been described as a sharp, intense pain. Some liken it to being struck by lightning, burned, or hit hard by a blunt object. Blood may or may not be visible. Symptoms vary in severity depending on whether it is a dry bite or a venomous bite. Symptoms typically show up within a few minutes and may include difficulty breathing, numbness and tingling, lightheadedness, and in some cases, shock.

In the event of a bite, or even if you are not sure you were bitten, seek medical help **immediately**. The

faster antivenin is administered, the faster recovery is expected. Surgery may be required in some cases to reduce swelling. Do not apply ice, use a tourniquet, try to suck out the venom, or slice the bite site. Remove wristwatches, rings, and anything else that may cause constriction, and if possible, wash the wound with soap and water. Avoid exertion and keep the affected extremity below heart level.







## Serve Up Safe Homemade Ice Cream

The heat of summer is a bit cooler with a dish of cold ice cream. A special treat in itself, but can be more special when homemade ice cream is the star.

Eggs are a key ingredient in traditional homemade ice cream. They help add rich flavor, a light yellow color, help prevent crystallization and add a smooth creamy texture. But raw or undercooked eggs that are contaminated with *Salmonella* can survive cold temperatures and lead to foodborne illness.

To make homemade ice cream safely, here are some tips from [University of Minnesota Extension](#).

### **Cooked egg base**

- To make a cooked egg base: mix eggs and milk to make a custard base and then cook gently to an internal temperature of 160°F. This temperature will destroy *Salmonella*, if present.
- Use a food thermometer to check the mixture temperature. At this temperature, the mixture will coat a metal spoon. Try to resist the temptation to taste-test when the custard is not fully cooked!
- After cooking, chill the custard thoroughly before freezing.

Try this recipe from the [American Egg Board](#).

### **Egg substitutes**

Egg substitute products also may be used. You may have to experiment with each recipe to determine the correct amount to add.

### **Pasteurized eggs**

Another option is to use pasteurized eggs in recipes which call for uncooked eggs. Pasteurized shell eggs are available at some supermarkets and cost more. Commercial pasteurization of eggs is a heat process at low temperatures. It destroys *Salmonella* bacteria that may be present. Pasteurization has a small effect on flavor, nutritional content and functional properties of eggs.

### **Egg-less Ice Cream**

There are many homemade ice cream recipes without eggs, and these would be a good option for those allergic to eggs.

## Plan For Harvest Meals Now!

Combines will soon be rolling across Kansas for wheat harvest! Part of this event is feeding the people working hard to harvest the wheat in a timely and safe manner. So start planning now for meals in the field!

[Many foods can be prepared and frozen for easy preparation](#). Use freezer-safe containers for best results. Pack foods in the amounts you plan to use and reduce leftovers. Foil baking pans covered with heavy aluminum foil work well for casseroles. Freezer resealable bags and rigid plastic freezer containers are best for baked goods or frozen fruit.

Plan now to transport food. Keep cold foods cold, below 40°F, and hot foods hot, above 140°F. Use ice chests with plenty of ice for cold foods and beverages. For hot foods, there are many insulated options to use, or equipment that can plug into your vehicle. A simple option is wrapping the hot dish in several large towels inside an insulated carrier.

Keep meals simple and easy to grab-and-go. Have a great and safe wheat harvest.

## Preserving Green Beans

Many gardeners plant green beans every year. Harvest snap beans when the pod is crisp, smooth, and before the seeds enlarge significantly. Do not harvest in early morning when dew is on the plants as this may spread bacterial blight.

Once harvested, they are a nutritious addition to many meals. But if you have a bountiful harvest, preserving them is a great choice. Green beans can be pressure canned, pickled, frozen or dehydrated. Use these resources to find methods to preserve green beans safely.

[Preserve it Fresh, Preserve it Safe – Beans](#)  
[Conservas Frescas, Conservas Seguras, Los Frijoles](#)  
[National Center for Home Food Preservation](#)





## YQCA

The Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) certification training will be required for 4-H members ages 8-18 to be able to show and sell their livestock this year for fair. **All certificates of completion are due to the office by July 1st.**

### Entry Deadline

All entries (with the exception of horticulture) are **due on FairEntry on July 8th.**

### Fashion Revue

Cost-Per-Wear forms and Fashion Revue Descriptions are due to the Extension Office by Wednesday, **July 9th.**

### Horticulture Entries

Our office understands that some horticulture items may not be ready until the fair. Final Entries for horticulture will be due on FairEntry on **Friday, July 18th.**

### Fair Packets & Rule Changes

There have been many important fair changes for 2025. All of these changes will be outlined in a document within your fair packet. It is critical that you read through your family packets thoroughly so you are aware of the fair changes as well as what rules apply to your projects. Fair packets have been available in the office since June 20th.

### Sewing Construction Judging

Don't forget that sewing construction entries (clothing and non-wearable) are judged late morning, following the shopping in style judging, on Tuesday, July 15th at Celebration Community Church. Constructed clothing will be modeled and judged followed by the judging of sewn items. **This includes patchwork and quilts.**

### Visual Art Hangers

To assist volunteers who hang art work, please be sure the hanger is above the art work (see illustration.) Remember to mat or frame the art work so the art doesn't roll up while hanging. Also, be sure the hangers are secure (tape tends to loosen up very easily.) These three points will make hanging/displaying art work faster and less frustrating.

## Buyer's packets

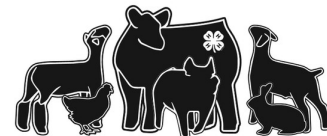
If you have not delivered the Buyer's Packets that you picked up, please deliver them now. We would like all potential livestock buyers to have advanced notice of the sale. If you can think of someone you would like to invite, please call the Office. We have extra packets available. Please try to deliver these in person. This helps 4-H members with their public speaking skills and shows the buyers they would like them to be present at the sale.

### Livestock Entry Limits

Each exhibitor may only show 2 market animals per species and 2 breeding animals per species. Only 1 market animal per species may be sold in the livestock sale, per exhibitor.

### Pee-Wee Livestock

If you know of a Thomas County youth under 7 years old who would like to show in the Pee-Wee Livestock classes, please let us know at the Extension Office. We would like to add these participants to the livestock programs that are printed and distributed at the shows. You can also sign up on the day of the show as well.



### Officer Notebooks

Club notebooks for Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter and Historian are to be turned in with Project Record Books, NOT at the Fair. This judging will occur in late-September/early-October. We want the entire 4-H year to be included in these books when they are judged.

### Fair Campground Reservations

Don't forget to contact Curtis Carman to reserve your spot on the fairgrounds during fair week at 785-443-2217. To have a camper on the fairgrounds it is \$30/night. Please have your deposit ready when you reserve your spot, spots are not guaranteed.



## 2025 Fair Livestock Weights

A reminder on livestock weights requirements for the 2025 Thomas County Fair are as follows:

- Beef- 1000-1800 • Swine- 225-350
- Sheep- 100-160 • Goats- 50-125

All over and underweight animals regardless of species, will show in Heavyweight or Prospect classes.

## Consignment Fees

All consignment forms with completed waivers must be turned in to the present fair board member at their table at weigh-in by **1:00pm on the day of fair weigh-in** (Monday, July 21st). Consignment fees for the 2025 Thomas County Fair have been so graciously covered by Adams Bank & Trust. This does not include late fees. We want to extend a **HUGE** thank you to them for their continued support of the 4-H Program. There will be no substitutions once the consignment form is turned in except for grand/reserve champions. If your paperwork is not turned in by the deadline, you will not sell at the premium sale. Consignment forms can be found at the Extension Office or picked up at the fair board table at weigh-in.



## Sign-Up Sheets

Don't forget to sign-up for a time to work a Putt-Putt or Security Watch time slot. We still have several shifts open. We also have sign-up sheets for Superintendent and Junior Superintendent volunteers. Our Fair cannot run without your help! Please let us know if you are willing to help. We also have a sign-up sheet for large and mini booths if you would like to decorate one for the Fair.

## Fair Superintendent Meeting

Fair Superintendent meeting will be on Thursday, July 17th at 5:15 p.m. under the gazebo by the grand stands before setup.

## Open Class Entries

Open class entry will continue to be on Tuesday of Fair week (July 30th). Exhibits will need paper entry cards to be completed and attached to them for entry. Cards can be found at the Extension Office. 4-H members may drop off completed Open Class entries during the 4-H entry time on Monday, July 29th if they would like to do so.

## Ribbons

The color of a ribbon represents four levels of skill. White– the minimum standards of quality have not been met; Red– the minimum standards have been met but improvements are needed; Blue– exceeds the minimum standard but there might be some minor flaws where improvements can be made; Purple– outstanding on all standards. The purple level should be a prized achievement, one sought because it is difficult to obtain and represents a skill learned with careful and persistent effort.

## Shooting Sports

**Shotgun**– Fair Shoot/State Qualifier will be held on August 2nd at the Colby Trap Club. Please contact Jeff or Dave for more information.

**Archery**– Fair Shoot/State Qualifier will be held on August 9th at the Colby Baseball Diamonds. Please contact Jared for more information.

## Animal Science Project Learning

If you're wanting to brush up on your showmanship skills and nutrition knowledge on your animal science project, check out this [link](#). All of the past recordings and educational materials from past Junior Producer Days is saved here. Hear from the professionals about how to be the most prepared for fair!

## Exhibit Building Set-up

Fair set-up will be held Thursday, July 17th at 6:00 p.m. Please meet at the 4-H building should there be some last minute directions and to sign *the attendance sheet*. We need families to help move and clean the display cabinets, *being careful to not break the glass*.



## Farewell...

My family will be moving back to Wyoming in August as my husband has accepted a new position, my official last day will be the 1st. As I prepare to close this chapter as your 4-H Agent, I want to express my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to serve this incredible community. It's hard to put into words how much this role—and all of you—have meant to me.

Being a part of the Thomas County 4-H family has been more than just a job; it's been a calling and a joy. I have been blessed to work alongside passionate volunteers, supportive parents, dedicated community leaders, and most of all, some incredible youth. Watching young people grow in confidence, develop leadership skills, and pursue their passions has been one of the greatest honors of my life.

This community is truly special, thank you for letting me and my family be a part of it. Thank you for the blessing of getting to raise my own child amongst yours. Your commitment to youth development, your generosity of time and spirit, and your belief in the power of hands-on learning have made this experience unforgettable. We've been able to accomplish so much together, countless programs, thousands of fair entries, livestock weigh-ins, county club days, way too many pizzas, and so much more. Whether it was late nights at the fairgrounds, early mornings at board meetings and overnight camps, or quiet moments of encouragement, every memory has left a lasting imprint on my heart.

Though I am stepping away from this role, I will carry the lessons, friendships, and memories with me always. I will think of the youth of Thomas County and the adults that had a hand in raising them often. Thank you for trusting me with your children's growth, for welcoming me into your lives, and for sharing in the journey of building strong kids. I hope that I've made as profound of an impact on you as you have on me.

With a heart full of gratitude and pride, I wish you all of the best.

Love, Laurel

Thank you for letting me serve you. Here's a [farewell video](#).



# 4-H GROWS HERE





JOIN US IN  
**CELEBRATING**  
**70 YEARS**  
OF THE  
**ABILENE HUSTLER'S**  
**4-H CLUB**

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**COME & GO RECEPTION**  
**WEDNESDAY, JULY 23**



**4:00-6:00PM**

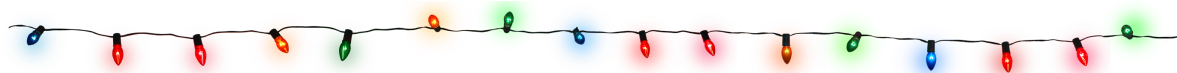
**THOMAS COUNTY 4-H BUILDING**  
**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED**  
**PLEASE BRING ANY MEMORABILIA TO SHARE**





## 2025 Thomas County Fair

Fair Theme: **'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE FAIR**



### June

- 23** Registration opens on FairEntry  
**28** Open Class Horse Show


### July

- 1** YQCA certificates are due to the Extension Office  
**3** Dog 4-H fair pre-entries due on FairEntry  
**8** All 4-H fair pre-entries (except horticulture) due on FairEntry (INCLUDING LIVESTOCK)  
**9** Cost-Per-Wear sheets for Sewing & Textile garments and Shopping in Style outfits and Public Fashion Revue description sheets due to Extension Office  
**11** 1:00 p.m. – Registration & Vet. Check-In for 4-H Dogs  
1:30 p.m. – 4-H & Open Class Dog Obedience/Showmanship at Heartland Christian School  
**12** 8:45 a.m. – Registration & Vet. Check-In for 4-H Dogs  
9:00 a.m. – 4-H & Open Class Dog Agility/Rally at Colby Ball Diamonds  
**14** 5:30 p.m. – Fashion Review Practice at Celebration Community Church (C3)  
**15** 9:00 a.m. – Shopping in Style Judging at Celebration Community Church (C3)  
Following Shopping in Style – Sewing & Textile Modeling & Judging at C3  
7:30 p.m. – Public Fashion Revue at Celebration Community Church  
**17** 9:00 a.m. – Visual Arts & Photography Judging at the 4-H building  
1:30 p.m. – Demonstrations/Illustrated Talks & Public Speaking at the Health Department Annex Building  
5:15 p.m. – Fair Superintendent Meeting  
6:00 p.m. – Fair setup (all 4-H members)  
**Following Fair Setup there will be a county wide dinner hosted by 4-H Council**

- 18** Horticulture entries due on FairEntry  
**19** 4-H Horse Show  
7:30 a.m. – Vet check/check-in  
9:00 a.m. – 4-H Horse Show  
**20** 4-H Booth construction 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
**21** 7:30 a.m. – 4-H/FFA Livestock Weigh-in  
7:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. – Entry of all 4-H exhibits. 4-H judging begins at 11:15 a.m.  
1:00 p.m. – Consignment fees & forms due to Fair Board  
**22** 7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Entry of all Open Class exhibits (all non-animal entries)  
8:00 a.m. – Swine Show  
5:30 p.m. – Fair Parade  
**23** 8:30 a.m. – Sheep and Goat Shows  
3:00 p.m. – \*\*Poultry, rabbit, cat & hand pet show\*\*  
**24** 8:30 a.m. – Beef Show  
5:30 p.m. – Livestock Sale followed by the Buyer's Meal  
**25** 9:00 a.m. – Round Robin Showmanship  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. – Release of all LIVESTOCK entries that are going to Resale & Lockers  
3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Release of all LIVESTOCK entries that are going home  
**\*\*ALL LIVESTOCK MUST BE OFF THE GROUNDS BY 6:00 PM\*\***  
**26** 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. – Release of all non-livestock  
4-H & Open Class Fair Entries 8:00 a.m. – 4-H Fair clean up (all 4-H members)



# July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>  Independence Day <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>  <b>Abilene Hustlers Club Mtng</b> 	<b>7</b> <b>Fair Pre-Entry Deadline</b>  <div>Electrical Camp w/ Bob Blume</div>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>  <div>4-H Dog Show</div>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <i>Fashion Review Practice</i>	<b>15</b> Shopping in Style <i>Sewing &amp; Textile Fashion Review</i>	<b>16</b> EMG Community eCall	<b>17</b> Visual Arts, Communications, and <b>PHOTOGRAPHY</b> Judging	<b>18</b>  <div>4-H Horse Show</div>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>TCCF Free Fair Breakfast</b>	<b>26</b>
2025 Thomas County Fair - See page 9 for detailed schedule.						
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		
					PP = Pawsome Paws SS = Shooting Sports	AH = Abilene Hustlers BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H SV = Solomon Valley



# **K-STATE**

## **Research and Extension**

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Bookmark our website for quick reference to educational and informational resources as well as contact information for all of your questions:

**<http://www.thomas.k-state.edu>**

**Check us out on Facebook:**

**K-State Research and Extension Thomas County 4-H**



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