



www.thomas.ksu.edu

Thomas County

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

Laurel Despain

4-H & Youth Development

ldespain@ksu.edu

Helen Giefer

Ag & Natural Resources

hpgiefer@ksu.edu

Tracy Fagan

Office Professional

tfagan@ksu.edu



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

www.ksre.ksu.edu

June 2025

Volume: 199

GET READY - FAIR SEASON IS ALMOST HERE!

The 2025 Thomas County Fair is only 7 weeks away! 4-H Family packets will be available to pick up at the office on **June 20th**. We will send out an email to everyone when the fair books are ready to be picked up. Please note: Pre-entries will continue to be online this year due to our subscription with the FairEntry program. If you are interested in being a Jr. Superintendent, please call the office at 785-460-4582, or email us at TH@listserv.ksu.edu. A copy of the Fair Book will be available on the Thomas County Extension website if you would like to look at it before Family packets are available.



Wow and Congratulations!

Walk Kansas 2025 is finished and let me say, I am impressed! We had 66 participants and 11 teams. Total miles walked were 8,316.5. That totals to walking across Kansas 19.6 times! Y'all smashed it!

Thank you for giving me the privilege of working with you and I'm looking forward to next year!

Tracy

Team Name	Miles
Methodist Marchers	-1237.2
Better By the Mile	-1132.3
Brewster Fleet Feet	-1122.3
County Line Walkers	-1078.6
Purple People Eaters	-838.9
Windy Walkers	-638.7
Walkin' & Talkin'	-636.8
Cheyenne Cardio Crusaders	-555.6
The Library Ladies	-486.1
Spring in Our Steps	-436.4
Chips & Walkamoli	-73.67

Upcoming Events

June

1st - YQCA Training 2

2nd - Prairie Senior Petting Zoo

3rd - Wheat Plot Tour

4th-6th - Discovery Days

6th--First Friday e-Call: All Things Kansas
[Register here!](#)

9th - Sourdough Class

9th-10th: Camp Lakeside

11th—Meat in the Meat Case Workshop in
Goodland

11th - 13th - Adventure Camp (ages 10-13)

12th - Fair Board Meeting

12th—FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training -
[Register Here!](#)

14th - NW KS Livestock Academy

13th - 15th—Geology Field Trip

16th - Photography Workshop



16th - Extension Day Camp (ages 5-8)

17th - Extension Day Camp (ages 9-12)

19th - Day at the Museum Program

21st - Hoof Trimming Clinic (Must be scheduled
- call the Extension Office)

23rd - 4-H Council Meeting

26th - Day at the Museum Program

26th - KIWANIS 4-H Member Presentation

27th - 28th-Insect Spectacular



28th - Open Horse Show

July

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

4th—Independence Day



Extension Office Closed

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

19th - 4-H Horse Show

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

22nd - Parade

24th - TCCF Free Fair Breakfast



Beef Quality Assurance Program

What started as a grassroots effort to reduce injection-site lesions in beef has evolved into one of the most comprehensive training programs in the cattle industry.

On their weekly Cattle Chat podcast, the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University explained how the Beef Quality Assurance program is still relevant and important today.



“Beef quality assurance was a producer-initiated program to decrease injection-site lesions in premium beef cuts,” K-State veterinarian Brian Lubbers said.

“Since then, beef quality assurance has kind of morphed and grown; it now covers many aspects of the cattle industry”

Over the years, BQA has expanded to include training on antimicrobial stewardship, animal handling, farm biosecurity, and proper injection protocols. The certification, available both online and through in-person sessions nationwide, promotes industry-wide consistency in animal care and food safety.

The benefits of BQA certification include consistency in safe meat and safer working conditions, as well as consistency between producers and employees working with beef cattle. Lubbers described the value gained for workers and producers from the certification, saying while a producer may forget something when telling workers about chute handling and safety, he can be assured they already know if they have gone through the training.

Another crucial benefit to getting BQA certified lies in maintaining consumer trust and building industry reputation. “I would love to say 99.95% of our producers are Beef Quality Assurance verified, because then it demonstrates a commitment from the entire industry to do things right,” Lubbers said.

The Beef Quality Assurance program is developed by producers, for producers. Its

voluntary nature reflects the cattle industry’s dedication to continuous improvement and responsible practices. Whether a seasoned rancher or a new employee, BQA equips individuals with practical, science-based knowledge to improve cattle management and protect the reputation of U.S. beef worldwide.

To get BQA certified visit www.bqa.org

To hear the full discussion, listen to Cattle Chat on your preferred streaming platform. This weekly program can be accessed at the following link: <https://ksubci.org/podcast-2/>

Tomato Management

Tomatoes could benefit from mulching as long as soils are warm enough and not saturated with water, according to K-State horticulture specialist Cynthia Domenghini.

“Tomatoes prefer even levels of soil moisture, and mulches provide that by preventing excessive evaporation,” she said.

Mulch also helps to suppress weeds, moderate soil temperatures, and prevent the formation of hard crust on the soil. Crusted soils restrict air movement and slow the water infiltration rate.

Domenghini said hay and straw mulches are “very popular for tomatoes, but may contain weed or volunteer grain seeds.” Grass clippings can be used as mulch, but should be applied in a thin layer – “only 2-3 inches thick,” Domenghini said.



“Do not use clippings from lawns that have been treated with weed killer until some time has passed,” she said. “With most types of weed killers, clippings from the fourth mowing after treatment may be used.”

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a [weekly Horticulture Newsletter](#) with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens.

Get Ready For Canning Season

Gardens are growing and more will be planted. Now is the time to prepare for preserving your harvest. It starts with equipment and recipes.

Jams and jellies, pickles, many fruits and most tomato products can be safely canned in a water bath canner. This is a large stock pot with a lid and a rack to keep the jars off the bottom of the pot. The pot must be tall enough so when jars are added the water covers the top of the jars by 1-2 inches. Learn more about water bath canning and also steam canning in the [How-to Guide to Water Bath Canning and Steam Canning](#). It is also in [Spanish](#)



Pressure canning is required for all plain vegetables and meats. There are no instructions to water bath these foods. Stovetop pressure canners are the standard and if you have dial gauge canner from Presto, National, Maid of Honor, or Magic Seal, many Extension offices can test the gauge for accuracy. We do not test All American canner gauges. Learn more about pressure canning in the [How-to Guide to Pressure Canning](#). It is also in [Spanish](#).

Use [recipes that have been researched](#). The testing and research behind these recipes will get you on the right path to success. If you have your own favorite recipe, eat it fresh or freeze it for later use. More information on canning, freezing and dehydrating can be found on the [Preserve it Fresh, Preserve it Safe](#) website.

5% Acidity Vinegar—The Standard for Pickling

For pickling, the recommended vinegar to use is one with 5% acidity. This is also known as 50 grain vinegar. While most vinegars are at 5% acidity, some are not. Therefore, shop wisely and read the label. The percentage may be on the front of the label or in the ingredient statement.

Typical distilled white vinegar and apple cider vinegar has 5% acidity, but it depends on the brand. There are some alternative vinegars, such as a “pickling vinegar base” which is only 2.5% acidity. There are no pickle recipes developed for this type of vinegar for canning, but it could be used in a refrigerator pickle. Do not use “cleaning” vinegars as they are too high in acidity. Learn more about different vinegars from [Penn State Extension](#).

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.

Remember the four steps to food safety, even in the middle of wheat harvest:

1. Wash your hands – bring soap and wet wash rags to clean dirty hands.
 2. Keep hot foods hot – keep hot food above 140°F.
 3. Keep cold foods cold – keep cold food below 40°F.
 4. Separate raw foods from ready-to-eat foods – this helps prevent cross contamination.
- Keep meals simple and easy to grab-and-go. Have a great and safe wheat harvest.



Dog Club Meetings

Pawsome Paws, the Thomas County 4-H Dog Club, has begun their spring practices. Meetings will be held on Tuesdays at 7pm at the 4-H Building.

A copy of vaccine records as all dogs are required to have a current Distemper/Parvo (DHLP), Kennel Cough (Bordetella), and Rabies vaccine before the dog can come to practice. Angie will keep a copy of the vaccine record and the 4-H member will keep the original. For more information, please contact Angie Harris at 785-443-2797.

YQCA Training Required for all Livestock Participants

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. **Species that require certification include beef, hogs, sheep, goats, poultry and rabbits.** All online certificates of completion are due to the office by **July 1st**. If you received your certificate at an instructor led training, you do **not** need to bring your certificate to the office. For questions please call the Extension Office at 785-460-4582.

Shotgun Project

The Shotgun Project is getting ready to begin their season. Members must attend one of the two safety meetings before they can participate in practices. Be on the lookout for safety meeting updates.

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

Monitoring and adjusting the feed program for your livestock, based on actual growth, is important to ensure that a member's project animal is in market ready condition come fair time.

Project Leader Resources

The Kansas 4-H Volunteer Project Leader Training Series recordings and resources are available [here](#). The resources are designed to help provide tangible examples of activities you can do with youth in their 4-H projects and connect you to useful resources to aid in your teaching. You can find additional resources for various projects on the [4-H website](#). New and returning volunteers need to complete the Volunteer Application/Renewal on 4-H Online. If you have questions, call the office at (785) 460-4582 or email ldespain@ksu.edu.

Thomas County Fair 2025

The 2025 Thomas County Fair will be held July 21st—26th.

- June 28th: Open Horse Show
- July 15th: Fashion Review
- **July 11th & 12th: Dog Show*****
- July 17th: Visual Arts & Communication Judg-

Upcoming Summer Programs

Extension Day Camp: June 16 & 17

16: 5-8 year olds 17: 9-12 year olds

Day at the Museum: June 19

STEM & Electricity—Details [here](#).

Hoof Trimming w/ Howard Fehlman: June 21

At the fairgrounds

Day at the Museum: June 26

STEM & Circuits—Details [here](#).

Electricity Camp w/ Bob Blume: July 7 & 8 4:30-8 PM

See post on Band app for details.

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!



Cloverbuds can now join Thomas County 4-H!

The 4-H Cloverbuds program is specifically designed for 5-6 year olds, providing them with a unique introduction to the world of 4-H and experiential learning. This program focuses on nurturing curiosity and encouraging exploration through hands-on activities tailored to younger children.

Cloverbuds can engage in fun projects related to their interests, attend club meetings, participate in community service projects, and foster a sense of belonging in 4-H early!

Goals for Kansas 4-H Cloverbuds

- **Self-understanding skills** (Initiating independence and self-direction)
- **Social skills** (Getting along with others)
- **Decision-making skills** (Making positive choices)
- **Learning skills** (Learning to learn)
- **Mastering physical skills** (Enjoying constructive and creative play)

The 4-H Cloverbuds program is an exciting and enriching non-competitive way for young children to start their journey in 4-H, laying the groundwork for lifelong learning and active participation in their communities.

How to Join

Enrollment is completed the same way as a non-Cloverbud 4-H member.

Easy as 1-2-3

1. Find a club
2. Visit a club
3. Enroll online

Cloverbud Division at the Thomas County Fair

- 4-H Cloverbuds may exhibit or showcase age-appropriate activity related items from their 4-H Cloverbud experiences.
- 4-H Cloverbuds may showcase a product, poster, or notebook for a show-and-tell type display.
- 4-H Cloverbuds will receive a special 4-H Cloverbud ribbon for their work. They may not participate as a competitive exhibitor and are not eligible to receive premiums.
- 4-H Cloverbuds cannot exhibit livestock in the 4-H division, if they wish to enter these divisions they must do so in the Open Class division.
- 4-H Cloverbuds may exhibit a pet from the approved list in the [Kansas 4-H Policy Handbook](#).



June 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 YQCA Training 2	2 Prairie Senior Petting Zoo	3 Wheat Plot Tour	4	5	6 First Friday eCall	7
			DISCOVERY DAYS @ KSU			
8	9 Camp Lakeside Sourdough Class	10	11 Meat in the Meat Case Workshop	12 Fair Board Meeting FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training Adventure Camp	13 Geology Field Trip	14 NW KS Livestock Academy
15 Father's Day Geology Field Trip	16 Extension Day Camps Photography Workshop	17	18	19 Day at the Museum Program	20	21 Hoof Trimming Clinic
22 Abilene Hustlers Club Meeting	23  4-H Council Meeting	24	25	26 Day at the Museum Program KIWANIS 4-H Member Presentation	27 Insect Spectacular	28  Open Horse Show
29	30					
					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

Thomas County Office Complex

350 South Range Ave. Suite 16

Colby, Kansas 67701

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



K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.