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# Thomas County

## K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

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### Walk Kansas Home Stretch!

Walk Kansas kicked off on March 30th. We have 11 teams and a handful of solo walkers! The program runs through May 24th, so let's use the rest of the month to get all our steps/minutes in!

### Fair Theme

It's time to start gearing up for Fair! Get your ideas ready for your club booths, parade floats, and more. This year's theme is:



# Upcoming Events

## May

**2nd--First Friday e-Call:** Regional Food Business Center & Rural Grocery Initiative (RGI)

[Register here!](#)

**3rd—Shutterbug Workshop**

**5th - Community Concerns Luncheon**



**7th--K-State Garden Hour:** Heat Loving Perennials for Kansas

[Register here!](#)



**7th—Field to Fork webinar:** Healthy Soil, Healthy Food

[Register here!](#)

**7th--Grant Writing Workshop—** In Person-Hill City

[Register here!](#)

**8th—Fair Board Meeting**

**10th—CCC Spring Show** Details [here!](#)

**12th & 13th--FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training-** online

[Register here!](#)

**15—Grant Writing Workshop-** In Person-Parsons



[Register here!](#)

**19th—4-H Council Meeting**

**24th—Walk Kansas Ends**

**26th—Memorial Day: OFFICE CLOSED**



**27th & 28th—Babysitting Clinic** Look [here!](#)

**29th—Fashion Review Clinic**



## June

**2nd—YQCA Training 2**

**4th-6th: Discovery Days in Manhattan**



**4th--K-State Garden Hour:** Native & Ornamental Grasses for Kansas

[Register here!](#)

**6th--First Friday e-Call:** All Things Kansas

[Register here!](#)

**9th-10th: Camp Lakeside**

**11th—Meat in the Meat Case Workshop** in Goodland

**12th—FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training -**

[Register Here!](#)

**13th - 15th—Geology Field Trip**



**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

**11th—Second Friday e-Call:** Creating Welcoming Communities

[Register here!](#)

# Thomas County Fair

## July 21 ~ 26, 2025

## **Prevalent Wheat Streak Mosaic**

Over the last several weeks, symptoms of wheat streak mosaic virus have been showing up in wheat fields across Kansas. This disease complex can be caused by several viruses, including wheat streak mosaic virus, Triticum mosaic virus, and wheat mosaic virus (high plains). These viruses are vectored by the wheat curl mite, a near-microscopic mite that survives between seasons on volunteer wheat and other grassy hosts. These grassy hosts serve as a “green bridge” for mites to survive from one wheat crop to the next. Infections may occur in the fall or spring, but fall infections typically result in the highest levels of yield loss. Although wheat streak mosaic infections can happen at any time, symptoms develop most rapidly at temperatures above 70°F. Symptoms have become more severe in Kansas over the last several weeks as temperatures have warmed. In this article, we walk through common questions about this complex of viruses.



Above: Field view of a field turning yellow from wheat streak mosaic complex

Unfortunately, there are no treatment options to slow disease progression. Application of foliar miticides and/or insecticidal seed treatments have never proven effective and have not been shown to reduce the spread or severity of the viruses.

The best prevention is control of volunteer wheat after harvest and continued control of any secondary flushes of volunteer prior to planting. After harvest, there will be millions of wheat curl mites active in most wheat fields in Kansas. These curl mites will move off growing wheat as the green tissue dries down and dies. After moving off the existing wheat at or near harvest time, the mites need to find green tissue of a suitable host or they will die



(death of the whole population will take approximately 2 weeks). The highest risk fields are those that have experienced hail and pre-harvest germination of volunteer wheat. Watch for hidden volunteer wheat in summer crops and cover crops. Curl mites prefer wheat but can survive on other grass species. Avoid planting wheat early to reduce the length of time mites have to increase their numbers and transmit disease.

Yield losses to wheat streak complex are influenced by several factors. Fall and early spring infections typically result in the highest levels of yield loss. Infections with multiple viruses result in higher yield losses than single viral infections. Variety selection can also have an influence on yield losses as some varieties hold up better than others under high disease pressure. K-State's most current ratings for the wheat streak mosaic complex can be found here:

[https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/kansas-wheat-variety-guide-2024\\_MF991.pdf](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/kansas-wheat-variety-guide-2024_MF991.pdf)





## Replacing Artificial Food Dyes in Foods

A recent ban to phase out Red dye No. 3 has now expanded to other artificial food colors. So which food colors are being eliminated and where are they used? These are typically found in candy, soda, baked goods, cereals, and also some vitamins and medications.

In a report from [Virginia Tech](#), here is the target list, some food examples, and possible natural options.

### Blue 1 and Blue 2

- Blue 1 is found in products such as Cool Blue Gatorade, M&M's and Baja Blast Mountain Dew. Blue 2 is also found in M&M's and cereals such as Boo Berry.
- Natural alternatives include extracts from blue-green algae, butterfly pea flowers, or gardenias.

### Red 40

- Red 40 is found in products such as M&M's, cherry Jello-O, and strawberry Yoo-hoo.
- Natural alternatives include juices and extracts from beets, red cabbage, hibiscus, red grapes, tomatoes, pomegranates, and sweet potatoes or with carmine from cochineal insects.

### Yellow 5 and Yellow 6

- Yellow 5 is found in products such as M&M's, Baja Blast Mountain Dew, Sunny D and Doritos. Yellow 6 is found in M&M's, Sunny D, Jolly Ranchers, Doritos, and Cheetos.
- Natural alternatives include extracts from annatto, turmeric, paprika, caramel, carrot, pumpkin, or carotene.

### Green 3

- Green 3 is found in products such as lime sherbet and canned vegetables.
- Natural alternatives include blue and yellow natural dyes.

## Citrus Red 2 and Orange B

- Citrus Red 2 is applied to the rind of navel oranges.
- Orange B makes hot dog casings and sausages look more appealing.

There will be many challenges for food manufacturers to make these changes. Natural dyes are expensive and consumer acceptability is important. Natural colors don't react well to heat or acidity. These changes will take time, but the initial goal is to phase out these colors by the end of 2026.

## What are Microplastics?

You may see news stories about the large amount of plastic waste in the ocean, lakes and streams. This plastic waste is visible and can have a negative environmental impact. But it is what you cannot see that can also be a problem, and that's microplastics.

Microplastics are less than 5 millimeters in size, about the size of a pencil eraser, and can be divided into two types. The first type is small pieces, such as microbeads in personal care products or plastic pellets for manufacturing. The second type is tiny pieces of plastic that break or degrade off of large plastic items that are not disposed of properly.

According to the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#), current scientific evidence does not indicate that levels of microplastics in foods pose a risk to human health. There are no standardized methods to detect, quantify, or characterize microplastics in foods.

But you can still do your part to take small simple steps to reduce plastic waste and usage. Here are some ideas from [PennState Extension](#):

- Use refillable water bottles made of stainless steel
- Use reusable food containers.
- Bring your own bags when shopping.
- When using single-use plastics, such as plastic water bottles, recycle them properly.
- Share practices that work for you!





## Camp Lakeside

Camp Lakeside will be held on June 9th-10th this year. The theme this year is Exploring the Waters at Camp Lakeside!

## 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.



## State Livestock Nominations

State livestock nomination deadlines:

- **Small Livestock: June 15**

DNA Envelopes must be ordered in advance. Find more details [here](#).

## Horse Papers

Horse Identification papers are due to the Extension Office on May 1st. The 4-H Horse ID Certificate has been updated for the 2025 4-H program year. Please destroy previous versions of the ID form and use the update certificate moving forward. The form must be front and back only, not two separate pages and must have a standard-sized photo attached with all markings visible. Here is the [new form](#).



## 4-H Camp 2025

Ready, set, register! 2025 4-H camp sessions at [Rock Springs Ranch](#) are now available for registration. A full list of session dates and costs for Summer Camp 2025 can be found [here](#).



## 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. 7 year-olds are encouraged to attend, but will not become certified. **Species that require certification include beef, hogs, sheep, goats, poultry and rabbits.** This training focuses on food safety, animal well-being, and life skill development. There is only one remaining in-person led training hosted by the extension office on June 1st at 2:00 pm at the Thomas County Office Complex meeting room. If they cannot attend either in-person date they are able to complete the training online. The training will be \$3/participant in-person or \$12 online. All online certificates of completion are due to the office by **July 1st**. **Registration for instructor-led trainings needs to be completed on the [YQCA website](#)!** 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.

## Archery Project

The Archery Project is getting ready to begin their season. Members must attend a safety meeting before they can participate in practices. Jared has set the safety meeting as Saturday, May 17th at 6:30 PM at the 4-H Building. Please contact Jared Haggard if you're unable to participate in the safety meeting so that other arrangements can be made.



## 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](mailto:ldespain@ksu.edu).

## Thomas County Fair 2025

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

- June 28th: Open Horse Show
- July 12th & 13th: Dog Show
- July 15th: Fashion Revue
- July 17th: Visual Arts & Communication Judging
- July 19th: 4-H Horse

## Insect Spectacular

The Kansas 4-H Insect Spectacular, a two-day state-wide entomology workshop, June 27th & 28th in El Dorado, Kansas. You can view the prior year's details and find the updated information and registration [here](#). Registration deadline is May 26th!

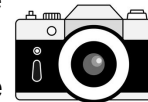


## 4-H Shutterbug

If you missed this event in May, there are two more sessions that will be hosted this fall in Hays and Manhattan. Shutterbug events are photography workshops put on across the state, and are a perfect opportunity to develop new camera skills, hone your creative talents and try new photography techniques. Find more information and registration [here](#) when it is available.

## Animal Science Project Learning

The Animal Science Webinar Series is designed to give Kansas 4-H members an opportunity to learn more about the livestock industry, career opportunities and good animal husbandry practices. To view previous recordings, visit the 4-H [website](#).



If you've been interested in K-State Junior Producer Days and haven't been able to attend, you can find very useful educational materials and videos of past sessions [here](#). Everything from nutrition, hair care, showmanship, and breeds are covered for each species.

## Upcoming Summer Programs

### **Babysitting Clinic: May 27-28**

Details & registration [here](#).

### **1-Photography Workshop: May 26**

See post on Band app for details.

### **Fashion Revue Clinic: May 29**

Details coming soon.

### **Northwest Kansas Youth Livestock Academy: June 14**

Details coming soon.

### **2-Photography Workshop: June 16**

See post on Band app for details.

### **Extension Day Camp: June 16 & 17**

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

Details coming soon.

### **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 — DC Powered Projects

Details coming soon.





## 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](#).



# May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Prairie Fair	2 <b>First Friday eCall</b>	3  <b>Shutterbug Workshop</b>
4	5 AH - Meeting	6	7  Field to Fork  Grant Writing Workshop	8 Fair Board Meeting	9	10 CCC Spring Show 
11 Mother's Day 	12 FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training  BPG ,Gem, SV -Meeting	13	14	15  Grant Writing Workshop	16	17
18	19  4-H Council Meeting	20	21	22	23	24 
25	26  <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	27 Babysitting Clinic	28	29 Fashion Review Clinic 	30	31
					PP = Pawsome Paws SS = Shooting Sports	AH = Abilene Hustlers BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H SV = Solomon Valley





# **K-STATE**

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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>**

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



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