

[www.thomas.ksu.edu](http://www.thomas.ksu.edu)

# Thomas County

## K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

Laurel Despain

4-H & Youth Development

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

Helen Giefer

Ag & Natural Resources

[hpgiefer@ksu.edu](mailto:hpgiefer@ksu.edu)

Tracy Fagan

Office Professional

[tfagan@ksu.edu](mailto:tfagan@ksu.edu)

March 2025

Volume: 196

Come work with us as a paid  
**Summer Intern!**

Become an intern with the Thomas County Extension Office to help with agriculture questions, plan 4-H events, assist with fair, all while building your resume!

Go to [www.thomas.k-state.edu/](http://www.thomas.k-state.edu/) for more information!

 Thomas County

Thomas County Extension is an equal opportunity employer.

The Thomas County Extension Office is accepting applications for a summer intern! The work will consist of preparing and helping at all summer events and activities. Normal work hours will be from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Applicants must be 18 years old, with a high school diploma or GED equivalent. This internship runs from May 27 through August 1. Please submit an application and resume by April 18th. You can bring documents to the office or you can email it to [th@listserv.ksu.edu](mailto:th@listserv.ksu.edu). To complete the application, [CLICK HERE](#) or pick one up at the office! Thomas County Extension is an equal opportunity employer.

### Walk Kansas is Almost Here!

Get your teams together now! The KSRE Walk Kansas health initiative will be held March 30—May 24, 2025.

The goal of Walk Kansas is to help teams of six people or individuals be more active, make better nutrition choices, and lead a healthier life. Sign up and Walk Kansas!

### County Club Day

This is a reminder to contact the office and get registered for County Club Days on March 28th at Colby Community College. Activities include demonstrations, project talks, dancing, music and dramatics, reading, etc. **All entries are due to the Extension Office by 5 PM on March 21st.** You can email Tracy or Laurel or call our office to sign up.

**See an exciting 4-H announcement on page 7!**

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION AND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

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

[www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu)

# Upcoming Events

## March

**1st--Kansas 4-H Scholarship application with references due online**

**1st--Junior Swine Producer Day**



**4th--Crop Talk Webinar Series: Dryland Tillage & Rotations**

[Register here!](#)

**5th—Field to Fork webinar: Let's Preserve Salsa**

[Register here!](#)

**5th--K-State Garden Hour: Establishing a Native Prairie Stand at Home**

[Register here!](#)

**7th--Cattlemen's Day- in Manhattan**

[Register here!](#)



**8th--BB Gun Shooting Sports**

**11th--Crop Talk Webinar Series: A New Corn Disease: Corn Stunt**

[Register here!](#)

**12th—Field to Fork webinar: The Science Behind Indoor Plant Lighting**

[Register here!](#)

**12th--Living Well Wednesday webinar: Pinchin' Pennies in the Kitchen**

[Register here!](#)



**13th--Fair Board Meeting**

**15th--Thomas County 4-H Scholarships due to Extension Office**

**19th—Field to Fork webinar: Pickling Safety**

[Register here!](#)

**22nd--Junior Meat Goat Producer Day**

**24th--4-H Council Meeting**

**26th—Field to Fork webinar: Tips & Tricks for Vegetable Production**

[Register here!](#)

**28th County Club Day @ CCC**

**28th—Local Food Producer Workshop— in Garden City**

[Register here!](#)

**30th—Walk Kansas Starts**

[Register Here!](#)

## April

**2nd—K-State Garden Hour: Increasing Vegetable Yield** [Register here!](#)

**2nd—Field to Fork webinar: Plant Pathology 101: Common Plant Diseases**

[Register here!](#)

**9th—Field to Fork webinar: All About Alliums: Garlic, Green Onions, Dry Bulb Onions, Leek, and Shallots**

[Register here!](#)

**10th--Fair Board Meeting**

**16th—Field to Fork webinar: Ghost in the Garden: Night-flying Moths**

[Register here!](#)

**20th-26th--National Volunteer Week**

**30th—Field to Fork webinar: Food Preservation Toolkit**

[Register here!](#)

**26th-27th--Thomas County Livestock Expo**

[Thomas County Livestock Expo](#) | [Colby KS](#) | [Facebook](#)

**28th--4-H Council Meeting**

[Kansas State University Master Calendar](#)

## **ARC/PLC elections with the Farm Service Agency**

Producers have until April 15th, 2025 to make their farm program selections for crops to be harvested in 2025. Both Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) are offering higher price benchmarks this year, as historical prices setting these guarantees have been higher.

PLC will make payments if the national Marketing Year Price (MYA) falls below these reference prices. Producers will receive a payment calculated as the difference between the reference price and the MYA, times their individual farm's established program yield with FSA, then paid on 85% of their base acres in that commodity. This program will pay on losses in price unless the MYA gets below loans rates established in the 2018 Farm Bill, which means large payments will occur if commodity prices are low.

ARC is a revenue program, which takes the benchmark price in the table above and multiplies it by the county's benchmark yield to establish a benchmark revenue for each crop. If the current year's revenue (national MYA price multiplied by the 2025 county yield) is less than 86% of this amount, there will be an ARC payment. That is why "86% of ARC Benchmark" is also included in the table, as these would be the MYA prices that would trigger an ARC payment if the county had an average yield. The advantage of this program is that it has both a yield and price component, which has produced ARC payments in recent years due to drought, even at high prices. The disadvantage is that the payment is capped at 10% of benchmark revenue, which tends to happen quite quickly if a payment is triggered.

Like PLC, it also pays on 85% of the farm's base acres in each crop.

Remember the payments for the 2025 crop year will NOT be paid until October of 2026 once the 2025 county yields are determined and Marketing Year Average price is known, so a lot could happen to market prices between now and then. While ARC may be more likely to pay unless there is a bumper crop yield in the county, overall protection against low prices is less than PLC because of the 10% cap on payments. A great tool for assessing potential ARC-CO versus PLC payments at various MYA price levels and county yields is the ARC/PLC Tradeoff spreadsheet:

<https://agmanager.info/ag-policy/2018-farm-bill/tradeoff-between-20252026-arc-and-plc>

Another factor in the decision to choose ARC or PLC for each crop is if a producer wants to elect the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) on their individual crop insurance. If so, base acres in that commodity cannot be enrolled in ARC. For many counties, their benchmark yield for ARC is much higher or lower than their expected yield (provided by RMA). A much higher benchmark means ARC will trigger easily, a lower benchmark yield means that this is less likely. A new tool that also analyzes SCO in relation to ARC and PLC can be found here: <https://agmanager.info/crop-insurance/crop-insurance-papers-and-information/advanced-arc-plc-sco-tradeoff-tool>

The K-State Department of Agricultural Economics recently had a webinar on these topics, with more in-depth information and analysis. The recording available here:

<https://agmanager.info/events/2025-winter-wednesday-webinars>

Crop Name	Corn	Grain Sorghum	Soybeans	Wheat
<b>PLC 2025 Reference Price</b>	\$4.26	\$4.51	\$9.66	\$5.56
<b>ARC 2025 Benchmark Price</b>	\$5.03	\$5.30	\$12.17	\$6.72
<b>86% of ARC Benchmark</b>	\$4.33	\$4.56	\$10.47	\$5.78





## NDSU Field to Fork Webinars

North Dakota State University Extension will again host the Field to Fork Wednesday Weekly Webinar series. It will be held online from 2-3pm on Wednesdays from February 21st through May 1st.

Experts from across the region will provide information about growing, preserving and preparing specialty-crop fruits and vegetables safely.

Presentations will be recorded and archived for later viewing, in case participants are unable to attend. The webinars are free of charge, but registration is required. For more information and to register, [visit the Field to Fork website](#).

## FDA Bans FD&C Red No. 3

As announced on January 15, 2025, the Food and Drug Administration is banning the use of FD&C Red No. 3 in any food product or drugs that are ingested. What foods does this affect? Any food or ingested drug that has a bright, cherry-red color. Food examples include candy, cakes and cupcakes, cookies, frozen desserts, and frosting or icings.

Two studies have shown cancer in laboratory male rats when exposed to high levels of FD&C Red No. 3 due to a rat specific hormonal mechanism. There are no scientific studies that have shown the relationship of consuming FD&C No. 3 causing cancer in humans or other animals. According to the Delaney Clause, if any food additive or color additive is proven to induce cancer in humans or animals, it cannot be used.



paprika extract.

Manufacturers using FD&C Red No. 3 must reformulate their products by January 15, 2027 or January 18, 2028 based on sales. Imported foods into the U.S. must comply with FDA regulations and not contain this ingredient. Examples of colors to replace FD&C Red No. 3 may include red beet extract or

## Don't Let the End Zone be the Danger Zone

With spring and summer celebrations in the forecast, here are some tips to host a great party!

### **Clean: Prepare for the win!**

- Wash your hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds.
- Wash and sanitize all dishware and utensils.

### **Separate: Your best defense!**

- Keep raw meat and poultry away from ready-to-eat foods.
- Use a clean utensil for each dish.
- Use a clean plate when going for second helpings of food.

### **Cook: A game winner!**

- Use a food thermometer to check for doneness
- All poultry—165°F
- Burgers and sliders—160°F
- Soup and reheated foods—165°F

### **Chill: Don't let the clock expire!**

- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Put out food in batches.
- Follow the 2-hour rule.

### **Party Food Penalties:**

Don't wash chicken wings

- Washing poultry splashes bacteria up to 3 feet around your sink!

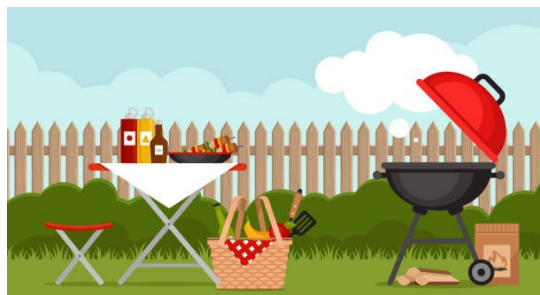
Don't leave food at room temperature

- Reheat or chill foods within 2 hours

Don't double dip

- Use individual plates or bowls for dipping

Be safe & happy hosting!





## 4-H Council Scholarship

Thomas County 4-H Council Scholarships are open to Thomas County high school seniors enrolled in 4-H. Applications are available at the Extension Office and must be turned in by **March 15th**.

## County Club Day

County Club Day will be held on Friday, March 28th at Colby Community College. Now is the time to start thinking about how you might like to participate. Activities include demonstrations, project talks, dancing, music and dramatics, reading, etc. **All entries are due to the Extension Office by 5 PM on March 21st.** You can email Tracy or Laurel or call our office to sign up.

## Super Saturday

Super Saturday is a North West Kansas judging event to be held on **Saturday, March 22nd at Colby Community College**.

The event consists of judging contests including Crops, Entomology, Horticulture, Life Skills, Photography, Livestock Skill-A-Thon and Livestock judging. The event starts at 9:00 AM and will last until the conclusion of the livestock judging contest in the afternoon. Lunch is provided for those that register for a sack lunch for \$7. The afternoon will consist of the Livestock Judging contest taking place at the **CCC Farm**, starting at 12:30 pm and STEM and Visual Arts learning stations at the college for the non-livestock judging youth starting at 1:00 pm. See the flyer and registration [here](#). Please note the **location change of the livestock judging from the Thomas Co. Fairgrounds to CCC Farm.**

## Camp Lakeside

Camp Lakeside will be held on June 9th-10th this year. We have 10 camper spots (ages 7-9) and 2 counselor spots (ages 14-18) available. Cost is \$140 per camper. Camp Registration is open. Please call the office to sign up and register!

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. Kids will need to bring 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. Please note, there have been a few changes in Agility which will be covered at practice. For more information, please contact Angie Harris at 785-443-2797.



## Insect Art Contest

The Pesticide Safety and IPM program is hosting an insect-themed art contest for Kansas 4-Hers and art students across the state. The theme this year is "By the Light of the Moon: Insects at Night." The program encourages youth and adults to get creative and create an entry before the April 15, 2025 deadline. Visit their [website](#) for contest rules and entry forms.

## 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](#).

## State Livestock Nominations

State livestock nomination deadlines:

- **Market Beef: May 1**
- **Small Livestock: June 15**

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



## Discovery Days

Discovery Days offers in-depth training through educational sessions from content and youth development experts. It will be held June 4-6 on the K-State Campus. Registration is coming soon. Click [here](#) to learn more about the event and



## Small Animal Weigh-In

Small animal weigh-in will be held **April 12th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm** at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Make-up day if necessary will be **April 19th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm**. Regular visual tags are \$3 each. Please let the extension office know if you are needing **Kansas State Fair or KJLS tags BEFORE weigh-in and how many.** Please have your livestock ready and bring cash or check to purchase tags.

We need volunteers to help unload, load, and move the animals during weigh-in. Please contact the office if you are able to help!

## 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.

## Club Attendance

For the 2024-2025 program year, 4-H members wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to **attend 5 club meetings between the months of August 2024 and July 2025 and complete the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) training each year.**

## Spring Shows are Coming!

- Thomas County Fair Board Show: 26th & 27th
- CCC Classic Show: May 10th



## 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. The office will be hosting two in-person dates for members to receive their certificate. If they cannot attend either in-person date they are able to complete the training online. In-person training locations are to be determined. The first training will be Thursday, April 24th at 6:30pm and the second will be Sunday, June 1st at 2:00pm. The training will be \$3/participant in-person or \$12 online. All online certificates of completion are due to the office by July 1st. For questions and to register, please call the Extension Office at 785-460-4582.

## 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](#) or you can contact the Extension Office for assistance.

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.

This year's fair theme is 'Twas the Night Before 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](#).



# March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1  Junior Swine Producer Day
2	3  AH—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	4	5  	6 SS	7	8
9	10  BPG—Meeting @ Henry Hall 7:30pm  GEM—Meeting @ Gem Comm. Bldg. 7pm  SV— Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	11  Crop Talk Series	12  Field to Fork  	13 SS  Fairboard Mtg. @ 8pm	14	15
16	17  	18  Crop Talk Series  PP--Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	19  Field to Fork 	20 SS  HELLO SPRING	21	22  Junior Meat Goat Producer Day  4-H Super Saturday in Colby
23	24  4-H Council Mtg. 	25  Crop Talk Series  PP--Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	26  Field to Fork 	27 SS	28  County Club Day @CCC	29
30  Walk Kansas begins	31				PP = Pawsome Paws SS = Shooting Sports AH = Abilene Hustlers	BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H SV = Solomon Valley





**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 & Twitter:**

**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.