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# Thomas County

## K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

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### **2016-2017 4-H Re-enrollment**

ALL returning members will need to re-enroll by January 15, 2017 in order to participate in the fair. However, projects can still be added or dropped until May 1st.

### **4-H Fundraiser- "The Satisfiers"**

Sales for our annual fundraiser started December 17th and will run through January 14th. The Council has decided that each family should be required to sell at least \$60. Payment is due at the time of sale and all orders/payments are due to the Extension Office by January 16th. Prizes will be awarded to the top 5 sellers.

### **4-H Volunteers**

Each year, volunteers need to complete a Renewal Form. Please return this form to the Extension Office as soon as possible so we can update your file. If this is your first year as a volunteer or you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact the Extension Office for a Volunteer Application Form.

### **Upcoming Programs**

Make sure to check out the various programs mentioned in the newsletter this month. There are several Agriculture and Family and Consumer Science programs scheduled for the next few months. Also, keep an eye out for registration deadlines and program locations.

## Cover Your Acres Winter Conference

Mark your calendars and get registered for the 14th Annual Cover Your Acres Winter Conference! January 17th and 18th, 2017 at the Gateway in Oberlin, KS. See the schedule and early bird registration form on page 3.

### Top 10 Consideration for a Struggling Farm Economy

**When:** Wednesday, February 8, 2017

**Where:** City Limits Convention Center 2227 South Range Colby , KS 67701

*For registration contact:* Thomas County Extension 785-460-4582 or kurtsexton@ksu.edu

Farmers and ranchers are currently experiencing one of the biggest downturns in history with many parallels to the 1980's. Kansas Farm Management Association farms recorded a substantial drop in accrual net farm income for 2015 with the average net income at \$4,568, down more than 95% from the net income level of \$128,731 in 2014 and down from a five-year average of nearly \$120,000. Commodity outlooks remain pessimistic, indicating tight financial conditions for farmers into the future. This program will focus on a host of different topics to start thinking critically about how the farm operation might withstand these hard times. Each topic will provide the decision framework of how to evaluate what viable options or opportunities exist to become more efficient and to strengthen the farm business.

### Extreme Cold and Tree Damage

The extreme cold throughout December have people concerned. This would not be a concern if there had been consistently cold temperatures earlier. Fortunately, temps were in the low teens for portions of the month. I think that our trees had been hardened off enough and they will be fine but some may have damage.

Many of you remember the November 10, 2014 freeze when the temperature dropped from 69 degrees to 19 overnight. Damage to trees was spotty and varied but very noticeable. Most trees showed no damage at all.

Also, damage may not show up right away. We saw all of the following.

- Trees died over winter and didn't leaf out in the spring.
- Trees leaved out and then either all the tree or a portion of the tree died seemingly overnight.
- Trees looked stressed and then either recovered or died either in 2015 or, in some cases, 2016.
- Trees lost bark but continued to bear leaves until the tree suddenly died. This often occurred late in 2015 or they survived until 2016 and then died.

Again, I think our trees were hardened off enough to escape damage but it is a "wait and see" situation.



# Cover Your Acres

January 17 and 18, 2017



Winter Conference The Gateway in Oberlin, KS

Presented by Kansas State University and Northwest Kansas Crop Residue Alliance

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
7:45 8:15	Registration			
8:15 8:20	Welcome			
8:30 9:20	Profitability in NWWKS Operations <sup>1</sup> (M. Wood)	Current State of Weed Resistance <sup>1,2</sup> (P. Stahman)	Forage Sorghum and Cover Crops <sup>1</sup> (J. Holman)	Sunflower Update (Natl. Sunflower Assoc.) (1)
9:30 10:20	Marketing Grain and Storage Economics <sup>1</sup> (D. O'Brien)	Managing Bin Stored Grain <sup>1</sup> (K. Moore)	Learning from Long-Term Tillage/Rotation Studies <sup>1</sup> (A. Schlegel & L. Haag)	Industry Session (Dupont Pioneer) (1)
10:20 10:50	View Exhibits			
10:50 11:40	Weed Management Strategies <sup>1,2</sup> (C. Thompson)	Soil Biology: Who and What is Living In Our Soil (P. Tomlinson) <sup>1</sup>	Building Strong Business Dynamics in Tough Times <sup>1</sup> (C. Griffin)	Plant Nutrition (CPS) (1)
11:50 12:40	Economics of Soil Fertility <sup>1</sup> (D. Ruiz-Diaz)	Forage Sorghum Cover Crops <sup>1</sup> (J. Holman)	Lunch	
12:50 1:40	Current State of Weed Resistance <sup>1,2</sup> (P. Stahman)	Marketing Grain and Storage Economics <sup>1</sup> (D. O'Brien)		
1:50 2:40	Learning from Long-Term Tillage/Rotation Studies <sup>1</sup> (A. Schlegel & L. Haag)	Weed Management Strategies <sup>1,2</sup> (C. Thompson)	Economics of Soil Fertility <sup>1</sup> (D. Ruiz-Diaz)	High Resolution Imagery (CHS) (1)
2:40 3:10	View Exhibits			
3:10 4:00	Producer Discussion Panel Dynamics in Tough Times <sup>1</sup> (C. Griffin)	Soil Biology: Who and What is Living In Our Soil (P. Tomlinson) <sup>1</sup>	Improve Your Bottom Line (Sims Fertilizer) (1)	
4:10 5:00	Managing Bin Stored Grain <sup>1</sup> (K. Moore)	Profitability in NWWKS Operations <sup>1</sup> (M. Wood)	Industry Session (Green Cover Seed) (1)	Industry Session (EGE Products) (1)

## Platinum Sponsors:

**CHS**  
 Crop Production Services  
 DuPont Pioneer  
 Hoxie Implement Co.  
 SureFire Ag Systems  
**Lang Diesel**  
 Natl. Sunflower Assoc.  
 PacLeader Technology  
 Plains Equipment Group  
[www.northwest.ksu.edu/CoverYourAcres](http://www.northwest.ksu.edu/CoverYourAcres)

**Tuesday: Ball session with hors d'oeuvres begins at 5:00**

<sup>1</sup>CCA CEUs applied for.  
<sup>2</sup>Commercial Applicator CEUs applied for.

(1) indicate industry sessions.

**Like to Attend?**

**Early-Bird Registrations**

**Due January 11.**

**Online:**

[www.northwestksu.edu/CoverYourAcres](http://www.northwestksu.edu/CoverYourAcres)

**Mail in:**

Circle when you would like to attend.

**Tuesday, Jan 17**      **Wednesday, Jan 18**

Cost \$40.00      Cost \$35.00

**Both days - Jan 17 & 18**

Cost \$50.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include information for all attendees.

**After January 11**

\$50.00 per day

**Mail registrations to:**

Kansas State University  
 NW Area Extension Office  
 PO Box 786  
 Colby, KS 67701

For questions, call (785) 462-6281.

Program will be held regardless of weather. No refunds will be given.

Kansas State University is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

## K-State Sorghum Schools scheduled for early February



A series of four K-State Sorghum Production Schools will be offered in late January 2017 to provide in-depth training targeted for sorghum producers and key stakeholders. The schools will be held at four locations around the state.

The one-day schools will cover a number of issues facing sorghum growers: weed control strategies; production practices; nutrient fertility; and insect and disease management.

The dates and locations of the K-State Sorghum Production Schools are:

Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> - Colby - City Limits Convention Center -2227 S Range Ave  
Kurt Sexton, Thomas Co., [kurtsexton@ksu.edu](mailto:kurtsexton@ksu.edu), 785-460-4582

Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> – Wichita – Wichita – Sedgwick Co Extension Center, 7001 W 21<sup>st</sup> St N  
Zach Simon, Sedgwick Co., [zsimon@ksu.edu](mailto:zsimon@ksu.edu), 316-660-0100

Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Concordia – Cloud County Community College, 2221 Campus Drive  
Kim Kohls, River Valley District, [kclarson@ksu.edu](mailto:kclarson@ksu.edu), 785-243-8185

Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Iola – Riverside Park New Community Building, 600 S. State St  
Carla Nemecek, Southwind District, [cnemecek@ksu.edu](mailto:cnemecek@ksu.edu), 620-365-2242

More information on the final program for each Sorghum School will be provided in future issues of the Agronomy eUpdate.

Lunch will be provided courtesy of Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission. There is no cost to attend, but participants are asked to pre-register by Jan. 27.

Online registration is available at: [K-State Sorghum Schools](#)

You can also preregister by emailing or calling the nearest local Research and Extension office for the location you plan to attend.

Ignacio Ciampitti, Cropping Systems Specialist, [ciampitti@ksu.edu](mailto:ciampitti@ksu.edu)

Pat Damman, Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, [pat@ksgrainsorghum.org](mailto:pat@ksgrainsorghum.org)

# Master Gardener Corner with Ray Imhof

## What Is the Master Gardener Program?

The Extension Master Gardener Program is an educational volunteer training program sponsored by K-State Research and Extension. Through this program, individuals are trained and certified in horticulture and related areas. These individuals, in turn, volunteer their expertise and services to help others through horticulture projects that benefit the community. Once trained, Extension Master Gardeners provide researched based information to the public on many topics including, water conservation, yard waste management, regional plant adaptability, yard waste management and the environment. The Master Gardeners work with their local Extension staff to develop educational programs that meet the horticultural needs of their local citizens. Projects may include school programs, demonstration gardens, speaker's bureau and answering questions on a horticulture hot line.

## When and Where is the training Offered?

Master Gardener training for North-west Kansas will be every Tuesday in February and March 2017. Training location: Thomas County 4-H Building Colby, KS

## What Does the Master Gardener Training Provide?

The Northwest Extension Master Gardener training program provides over 40 hours of classroom and hands-on instruction in horticulture related areas. Courses are taught by horticulture specialists from Kansas State University and County Extension Agents.

Class topics in the training program may include:

- Basic Botany
- Soil Science
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Landscape Design
- Lawn Care
- Annuals and Perennials
- Trees and Shrubs
- Entomology
- Houseplants

- Landscape Maintenance
- Plant Pathology

## What Does the Master Gardener Program Require?

The first year, after receiving the basic training, Extension Master Gardeners are required to return 40 hours of service time on projects that benefit the community and events sponsored by their County Extension Office. Active participation is a commitment each individual is asked to make to the program. After the first year, Extension Master Gardeners are asked to volunteer 20 hours and continue their education with 8 hours of advanced training.

## Why Become an Extension Master Gardener?

Extension Master Gardeners become friends with many interesting and talented individuals. They share ideas with one another. Extension Master Gardeners never stop learning, but continue to grow in their knowledge of garden related issues. Being an Extension Master Gardener volunteer is a fun, interesting and rewarding experience.

## Who Can Apply?

Anyone age 18 or over who has an interest in horticulture can apply. If you want to improve your skills and knowledge and like to work with people, the Extension Master Gardener program may be for you.

## Application Process

Applications must be submitted to your local Extension Office. Applications are due no later than January 20, 2017. A minimum of 15 people must be pre-registered to hold the program. Upon review of the application, all applicants will be contacted.

## Program Cost

An enrollment fee of \$95.00 covers the cost of all educational materials.

## Can Food Be Stored in the Snow?

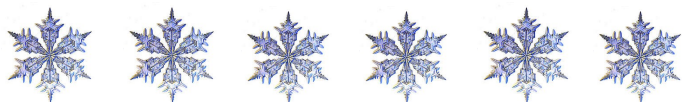
by Karen Blakeslee

Power outages are bound to happen at some point. During the winter, ice and snow can cause power outages for days. Or the refrigerator just can't hold all of the food for holiday meal celebrations. Can food be stored outside in the snow?

Keep in mind that a full freezer of food usually will keep about two days, if the door is kept shut. A half-full freezer will stay cold enough about a day. If you find that the power will be out longer, you may need to resort to other methods to preserve your frozen food. If it's short-term, the best thing is to keep the freezer closed.

It's tempting to use our giant outdoor "walk-in freezer" to store food, but storing food outside is not recommended by the USDA due to potential variable temperatures, unsanitary outdoor conditions and/or disturbances by animals. There can be temperature fluctuations from the sun's rays, which could thaw the food.

Depending on the outdoor temperature, you may be able to store the food in impermeable covered plastic containers in an unheated garage or other place where the food won't be disturbed. Monitor the temperature and the state of the food.



## Radon Education in Northwest KS

In Kansas, *as many as 1 in 4 homes may have elevated indoor radon levels*; nationally, 1 out of every 15 homes is estimated to have high indoor radon levels,

Radon can be found in any home, not just homes with basements.

Radon levels can vary widely, even from home to home in the same neighborhood.

Radon levels can be reduced in existing homes, and by incorporating radon-resistant construction techniques into the building process, problems can usually be avoided in new homes.

Two educational opportunities are available. One, 45 minutes, for the **general public** and one for **professionals** in the real estate business.

## **Radon for Real Estate Professionals, seminar:**

4-hour course, will cover the questions and issues in handling radon in residential purchase and sale transactions. This course has been approved by the Kansas Real Estate Commission and is recognized for *3 to 4 continuing credit hours*. For more information call Sheryl Carson, Extension Agent at the Thomas County Extension office at 785-460-4582 or email at [scarson@ksu.edu](mailto:scarson@ksu.edu).

## Available Sites

**Colby:** **January 26**, 1:00 to 5:00 pm for realtors and other professionals. Public presentation at 7:00 to 7:45 p.m. . Both are at the Thomas County Office Complex board room. Please, RSVP by calling the Thomas County Extension office at 785-460-4582 or email to Sheryl Carson, Extension Agent at [scarson@ksu.edu](mailto:scarson@ksu.edu).

**Oakley:** **January 27**, 8 a.m. to noon professional workshop and noon hour for public presentation at the Logan County EMS Building.

Other available sites TBA: Goodland, Atwood (presentation only), Norton, and Scott City.

## Upcoming Programs in February

[More information in next newsletter](#)

**Board Leadership Training Series** provides an opportunity to give community-based boards — elected, appointed, or recognized by local units of government — affordable training necessary to be most effective and efficient with their responsibilities.—**February 21, 23, 28 and March 2.**

- Roles & Responsibilities of Board Members/Effective Meetings
- Understanding Fellow Board Members/Conflict Resolution
- Fundraising and Fiscal Responsibilities/Legal and Ethical Issues
- Strategic Planning

All sessions will be from 6-8 p.m. and will be conducted through a "high tech/high touch" approach at K-State Research and Extension offices across the state for interactive participation!

## **Preserving the Family with Estate Planning**

**February 21** at Hays, 5:30-9:00 p.m. Ag Research Center

**February 27** at Atwood, 5:30-9:00 p.m. American Legion



# JANUARY 26

## RADON IN THE HOME

Colby, Thomas County Office Complex  
Board Room, 350 S. Range  
7:00 pm – 7:45 pm  
To register call Thomas County Extension  
at 785-460-4582;

No fee required.

RSVP by January 24 to reserve your seat.

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers. Radon is a natural, tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas produced from the decay of uranium found in nearly all soils. Radon gas moves from the ground under and around your home through cracks and other holes in the foundation. Nationally, 1 out of every 15 homes is estimated to have high indoor radon levels.

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Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Earl Sexton at (785)460-4582.  
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service  
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### Sponsors

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Homeland Realty &  
Auction  
S & S Home Inspections  
People's State Bank  
Rocking M Radio Station  
Greater NW KS  
Community Foundation

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1 in 4 Kansas homes  
may have high radon  
levels

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Brian Hanson,  
Presenter  
KS Radon Program,  
K-State University

### OTHER LOCAL SITES

January 27 @ Oakley  
Logan County EMS Bldg  
Noon to 12:45 pm  
Call Logan Co. Extension @  
785-671-3245

February 16 @ Goodland  
6:00 pm (site TBA)  
Call Sherman Co. Extension  
@ 785-890-4880



### Workshop topics include:

- Family Communication
- Getting Started with Estate Planning
- The Do's and Don'ts of Estate Planning
- Farm Succession Planning
- Small Business Succession

## Preserving the Family with Estate Planning

Save the date and register now!

February 21st / Hays, KS 5:30 pm-9:00pm

February 27th / Atwood, KS 5:30-9:00pm

\$20 registration fee with family discounts available until early registration deadlines (Feb 13th). Meal and material packet will be provided.

To register online go to: [www.northwest.ksu.edu](http://www.northwest.ksu.edu) under "Events" or call:

785-626-3192 - Atwood

785-628-9430 - Hays



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## **Adult Volunteers**

If you are an adult volunteer for the 2016-2017 year, we need your information! Volunteer Service Renewal Forms need to be completed and turned in to the Extension Office as soon as possible. Also, please re-enroll in 4H Online, if you haven't already. If you are a new volunteer, we have additional paperwork for you.

## **Citizenship in Action**

The purpose of the event is for Kansas youth to learn how the state legislative process works and how their voice and participation in decision-making can make a difference in their local communities. The legislative visit will not only familiarize youth with the capitol building, but will also show them how they can affect the legislative process. The registration deadline is January 15th, 2017 and the event will take place on February 19-20, 2017 in Topeka, Kansas.

## **Kansas 4-H Dog Judges'**

### **Certification Training**



The 2017 Kansas 4-H Dog Judges' Certification training will be held January 20-22, 2017, in Salina, Kansas. Training includes the four dog phases of showmanship, obedience, agility and rally obedience of the Dog Care and Training Project. New judges can be certified and returning judges can get a refresher and be recertified all in one weekend. Local dog project leaders and 4-H members 16-years-old and up are also encouraged to attend. Registration fee and participation form are due January 10th, 2017 to the 4-H Foundation.

## **Club Meeting Attendance**

This year we have a new rule in effect pertaining to club meeting attendance. Any 4-H youth wanting to sell an animal through the 4-H/FFA Livestock sale must attend 6 club meetings from October 2016 to July 2017. Attendance lists should be turned in to the Extension Office after each monthly meeting.

## **4-H Day with Wildcat Women's**

### **Basketball**

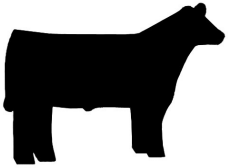
The 9th Annual 4-H Day with the Wildcat Women's Basketball team has been scheduled for Saturday, February 11, 2017, when the Wildcats take on the Iowa State Cyclones. Tip-off will be at 1:00 p.m. For \$20, each individual will receive a ticket into the game, a game day t-shirt, and a \$7 meal voucher to use at the main concession stands. 4-H and non 4-H families are welcome to attend. Online registration is due January 17, 2017.

## **4-H Scholarship**

Applications for the 4-H Scholarship are due to the Extension Office by January 25th, 2017. The application packet and directions can be found on the KSRE website in the [4-H Library](#).

## **Horse Panorama**

The 2017 4-H Horse Panorama has been scheduled for January 27-29 at Rock Springs. This event is a compilation of various contests and educational activities related to the Horse Project. Registration is due January 15, 2017. For more information about registration and contest rules, see the [Horse Events page](#).



## **Beef Weigh-In**

Beef weigh-in will be held February 18th from 7:30am to 11:30am.

Please bring cash or check to purchase your tags. They are \$3.50 per ear tag. Each market steer/heifer is required to have an ear tag at the county fair and state fair. Breeding animals are not required to have tags at our fair.

## **County Club Days**

County Club Day will be held on March 17th. 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. More information involving registration and event location will be given in future newsletters, so stay tuned!

## **Ambassador Training**

4-H members in 8th-12th grades are encouraged to attend Ambassador Training at the Rock Springs 4-H Center on February 24-25, 2017. This event will help participants learn the leadership, marketing and communication skills needed to promote 4-H in their county. The theme this year is “Ambassadors—Growing 4-H” and the conference will include six exciting workshops and a keynote speaker. Registration is due February 9th and can be completed on the [4-H Events Page](#).

## **Save the Date**

The Great Northwest Rock Springs Camp will be held from June 17th - June 20th, 2017. This camp is for ages 7-12. Start planning your summer now by saving the date!



## **Junior Swine and Junior Meat Goat**

### **Producer Days**

Junior Swine Producer Day will be Saturday, March 11 and Junior Meat Goat Producer Day will be Saturday, March 25. Both events will be in Weber Arena on the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan. The junior day programs are a one-day educational opportunity for youth, parents, 4-H and FFA project leaders, agents, and other adults to increase their knowledge about livestock production and management. Early registration for Junior Swine Producer Day is Feb. 22 and March 3 for Junior Meat Goat Producer Day.

## **4-H and Open Youth Rabbit Show**

Sponsored by the Haskell County 4-H Rabbit Club, this show is on January 28th at the Fairgrounds in Sublette, Kansas. Along with the show, there will be youth contests in showmanship, judging classes, breed ID, and best bunny costume as well as a photography contest for all ages. For more information, contact Superintendent Charity Horinek, (620) 272-6016, [chorinek@gmail.com](mailto:chorinek@gmail.com).

## **Festival of Breads Contest**

Entries are being accepted for the National Festival of Breads baking contest. Entrants must be amateur bakers and must feature King Arthur Flour and Red Star Yeast. Entries are due January 16th. For more information and contest rules, visit [www.nationalfestivalofbreads.com](http://www.nationalfestivalofbreads.com).

## **4-H Sewing**

Call the Extension office if your 4-Her is interested in learning to sew. Let us know what time of the day and what day of the week works best .

# January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 <b>Office Closed for New Year's</b>  AH—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	3	4	5	6 <b>Executive Board Meeting @ 6:30am</b>	7
8	9 BPG—Meeting @ Hunter Hall 7pm GEM—Meeting @ Comm. Bldg. 7pm SV—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	10 Reg. due for Dog Judges' Cert. Training	11 Early reg. due for Winter Conference—Cover your Acres	12	13	14 Fundraiser Deadline
15 <b>4-H Online Re-enrollment Deadline</b>  Reg. due for Citizenship in Action and Horse Panorama	16 <b>Fundraiser forms due to Extension Office</b>  National Festival of Breads entries due CC—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 6:30pm	17 Ag. Program: Winter Conference—Cover your Acres  Reg. due for 4-H Day w/ Women's Wildcat Basketball	18 Ag. Program: Winter Conference—Cover your Acres	19 <b>Thomas County Fair Board Meeting @ 8pm</b>	20   Dog Judges' Cert. Training 	21
22	23 <b>4-H Council Meeting @ 6:30pm</b>	24 RSVP due for Radon Education courses	25 4-H Scholarship Application due to Extension Office	26 Radon Education courses	27 Reg. due for Sorghum School Horse Panorama @ Rock Springs 	28 4-H & Open Youth Rabbit Show, Sublette, KS
29	30	31 Ag. Program: Sorghum School				
					SS = Shooting Sports AH = Abilene Hustlers	BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H CC = Colby Comets 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

