County to Impose No Restrictions!

On Friday, May 29, 2020 the Thomas County commissioners agreed to drop all mandatory restrictions on business and individuals. That means the Thomas County Extension Office will be open to the public starting on June 8th with regular hours. With that being said, we will be planning for a modified fair for this year. In a statement from the Thomas County Health Department it says “the Health Department still reserves the right to revisit the situation and implement restrictions if a surge of Covid-19 cases emerge.” Please keep checking your email and newsletters to receive the most up to date information from the Extension Office.

Willie’s Farm Family Program

K-State Athletics will host the first “Celebrate Agriculture Day” with K-State Football on the November 7th game against Texas Tech. K-State will be honoring one Willie’s Farm Family from each county. The selected farm family will receive two complimentary tickets to the game and an opportunity to order additional tickets. If you are interested in attending or would like to nominate a family, please contact the Extension Office by June 26th.

Sheryl is retiring!

Come help us celebrate Sheryl with a card shower! Please have your cards to the Extension Office by June 19th. If you would like to come and celebrate with Sheryl in person you can stop by anytime on June 22nd for a come and go reception.
Watering Flower Gardens

As a general rule of thumb for flower beds, beds should be watered when the top several inches of soil is dry. To determine the soil moisture content, dig down 2-4 inches with a trowel and form the soil into a ball – dry soil will not form a ball. If water is necessary, water the soil to a depth of 6-8 inches (1-2 inches of rainfall or irrigation). Keeping the seedbed moist supports germination and softens the soil, allowing seedlings to emerge with less difficulty. Spacing plants further apart but within optimum parameters requires less water because of the foliage overlap that shades the soil between plants helps to reduce evaporation and optimizes water use. High summer temperatures and heavy winds lead to water loss from evaporation, so watering plants when it is hot is beneficial because it cools off the plant, preventing it from scorching in the heat. If using a garden hose to water plants, make sure water is cool before watering plants – when a garden hose is left in the sun, the water retained in the hose becomes hot and may scald the foliage, so we recommend running water through the hose before applying water directly to the plants. The cool water will help moderate stresses associated with intense afternoon heat in the summer.

Virtual Wheat Plot Tour

On Monday, June 1, 2020 Romulo Lollato, Lucas Haag, Kelsey Andersen Onofre and Erick DeWolf went through the Thomas County Wheat Plot on a slideshow showcasing each variety of wheat we have planted. The specialists discussed how the wheat is growing and how the varieties varied. There are 15 different types of wheat in the plot this year. They are KS Dallas, WB 4418, WB 4792, WB 4595, WB Grainfield, Tatanka, Paradise, Whistler, Canvas, Avery, Langin, LCS Fusion AX, LCS Link, LCS Chrome and LCS Valiant.

If you are interested in seeing the plot it is located:

10 miles South of the I-70 Levant exit when you hit the four way crossing, turn west and drive ½ mile. The plot is on the right side of the road.

There will be a recorded version of the session. It will be published on the Thomas County Extension Facebook page as well as on the KSRE Thomas County website. If you would like it sent directly to you please contact Emily at ebennigsdorf@ksu.edu
**Grilling Season is Here**

Warm weather is a sign that it is time to break out the grill! While meat and poultry are popular choices for grilling, the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) reminds us that cooking these foods with intense heat can lead to formation of potential carcinogens. Heterocyclic amines (HCAs) form in meat when its proteins react to the intense heat of the grill. Studies have linked HCAs to development of cancer.

You can modify your grilling technique to reduce the chance of cancer risk. Marinating meat before grilling can decrease formation of HCAs. If you are grilling larger cuts of meat, pre-cook them partially to reduce the time meat is exposed to flame. Trim the fat from meat to reduce flare-ups and charring.

Cut meat into smaller portions and mix with vegetables to shorten the cooking time. Another way to minimize cancer risk — grill more veggies!

Grilled vegetables and fruits are delicious and are key elements in a healthful diet. The bonus is they don’t form HCAs when cooked, so that cancer risk is eliminated. As you plan cookout meals this summer, include plenty of colorful grilled vegetables and fruits like asparagus, all types of peppers, squash, broccoli, tomatoes, onions, carrots, corn, mushrooms, eggplant, potatoes, mangoes, and pineapple. Try something new, like grilled lettuce!

Here are basic instructions for grilling veggies and fruit:

» Slice veggies the same thickness so they cook at the same rate.

» Drizzle or brush with olive oil before cooking.

» Season simply with a sprinkle of salt, pepper and any dried herbs you like.

» Grill over medium heat to start. To prevent veggies and fruit from slipping through the grates, lay them crosswise or use a grill basket or topper.

» Close the lid to create the same environment as an oven. Flip half way through cooking time. More dense vegetables, like peppers and onions, will cook in about 8 to 10 minutes. Squash, eggplant, and asparagus will only require 5 to 7 minutes.

» After removing vegetables and fruit from heat, you can add a splash of balsamic vinegar (flavored varieties add interest) and fresh herbs. Before adding herbs, you may need to add just a bit of olive oil.

**Time for Tea!**

People around the world have enjoyed drinking tea for thousands of centuries. Studies have shown that many varieties of tea may boost your immune system, fight off inflammation, and could help protect you from cancer and heart disease. With warm summer days approaching, a glass of iced tea might just be the perfect refresher!

White tea has a high level of antioxidants and the least amount of caffeine. Herbal teas are similar to white, and contain a blend of herbs, spices, fruits, or other plants in addition to tea leaves. Green tea is exceptionally high in flavonoids to boost heart health and is also shown to be anti-inflammatory. Black tea is made from the same plant used to make green tea; however, the leaves are dried and fermented. This gives black tea a darker color and richer flavor, and it is caffeinated. Oolong tea is similar to green and black tea but processed differently. Oolong is allowed to oxidize more than green tea and not as much as black, creating its characteristic color and taste.

You can enjoy tea hot, cold, iced, or spiced! Tea is enjoyed regularly is sometimes referred to as the longevity drink. To enhance the flavor of tea, add citrus (grapefruit, oranges, lime, or lemon), berries, cinnamon or fresh ginger, honey, mint, and other fresh herbs. Avoid detox teas, fancy tea lattes, and trendy bubble teas as they are also loaded with sugar. If you have allergies to herbs or flowers, read the ingredient list on herbal teas.

**Garlic Grilled Broccoli**

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 cups broccoli florets
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

Directions:

Wash hands with soap and water. Wash broccoli by swishing it around in a bowl of water or place it in colander in the sink and rinse. Dry with a paper towel or use a salad spinner.

Place a large piece of foil on the grill, or use a grill basket or grill topper. Add the broccoli on top and grill for 8 to 10 minutes, until tender crisp.
Thomas County Fair
We are making preparations for the 2020 Thomas County Fair. 4-H Family Packets will be available later this month and we will send an email when they are ready to be picked up. Please be aware, Fair entries and procedures may look different this year due to COVID-19.

If you are interested in being a superintendent or volunteering your time, please let the Extension Office know!

Buyer’s Packets
Please make sure to pick up your buyer’s packets from your Club Leader or from the Extension office. We will be open regular hours starting on Monday, June 8th. Please contact Emily if you have any questions on your packets.

After-Fair Locker Information
Many of you may already be aware that area lockers are becoming increasingly busy. Therefore, if you know a potential livestock auction buyer, please tell them to schedule a processing appointment as soon as possible. Available processing dates are moving further in the future. Also, lockers will NOT be picking up animals after Fair as they have in the past. In order to reduce confusion after the auction, we are asking that 4-H families do not schedule a processing appointment for your potential buyer.

Consignment Fees
All consignment fees with completed waivers must be paid and turned in to the fair board members at the weigh-in table by 3:00 pm on the day of fair weigh-in. Check or cash only. Consignment fees are as follows: $10/head for small animals (sheep, goats, swine) and $20/head for beef. There will be no substitutions once the consignment form is turned in except for grand/reserve. If your paperwork and/or money is not turned in by the deadline, you will not sell at the premium sale. Consignment forms can be found in your fair packet or picked up at the weigh-in table.

Weekly Challenge
Hello Everyone! We are going to continue our Weekly Challenge! This is to keep everyone involved in our community and to see what everyone is up to. We are mostly posting on our Facebook pages including the private Thomas County 4-H Clubs group and the Extension Facebook page. Please let Emily know if you are still needing to be added to the private Facebook group. Please note, the private group is for active 4-H members and parents only.

Community Vitality Club Opportunities
Fairview Estates Retirement Community and Prairie Senior Living Complex have decided that our clubs would be able to go draw on the sidewalks outside of the homes for the residents and talk to them through the windows. They are feeling extremely lonely during this time and love to watch people draw and color. The bright pictures make them very happy.

Helping Paws
The Colby United Methodist Church is hosting a donation for animal supplies. The food bank is not able to collect these supplies so Colby UMC has set up a drop off location on 950 S. Franklin in the little cabin on the South side of the church. They are accepting unopened bags of pet food, unopened bags of cat litter and monetary donations. They are open Wednesdays from 11:00-1:00 and 5:00-6:00pm.
**Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic**

The 2020 Dr. Bob Hines Kansas Youth Swine Classic will be held virtually on July 10-11. The Classic will include a showmanship contest, prospect and market hog shows, as well as a skillathon and photo contest. Register online by June 15th.

**Horse Level Testing**

4-H Horse Project members who would like to compete at the State level, must complete the Level 1 workbook, do some community service work, attend an educational seminar, take & pass the Level 1 written exam, as well as take & pass the Level 1 riding exam. Please contact Emily Bennigsdorf when you are ready to perform your riding test and take your test online. More information can be found on the 4-H Horse page.

**Dog Shows**

The Kansas 4-H Dog Action team has voted to cancel the in-person state fair dog show for 2020. Emily and Angie are currently working together to make a decision regarding the dog show for the Thomas County Fair. Please stay tuned for more information.

**Kansas State Fair Geology**

The 4-H Geology Action team has voted to modify the collection rules for the 2020 Kansas State Fair. The new rule says, “the current year specimen number rule shall be modified for the 2020 4-H year for the geology exhibit state fair classes 5200, 5201, 5202 and 5203, due to these extraordinary circumstances to read: Five (5) specimens must be collected during the current 4-H year.

**Virtual Insect Spectacular**

Make plans to attend the virtual webinars discussing entomology!

**Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease**

The Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease is present in some of our neighboring states. Since this outbreak is happening we are asking that you bring your rabbit the day of the show and take them home the same day. We want to make sure everyone and their animals are safe during fair. If you have any questions about this please contact Emily Bennigsdorf.

**Shooting Sports Quiz Bowl**

Youth enrolled in the 4-H Shooting Sports Program are invited to participate in the National 4-H Virtual Shooting Sports Quiz Bowl. It will be held June 22-26. For more information and study materials, visit the National 4-H Shooting Sports website.

**Wheat Variety Plot**

The 2021 Kansas 4-H and FFA Wheat Variety Plot program begins fall of 2020 and goes through September 2021. Members should contact the Extension Office by July 10 for information.
State Livestock Nominations
All small animal nominations (non-market beef) are due June 15th. Any 4-H or FFA youth who would like to exhibit in the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive or KJLS is required to nominate their livestock projects. However, a complete nomination does NOT constitute show entry. State Fair Grand Drive entries will be due July 15th, and KJLS entries will be due August 15th. Animals who are nominated, but do not follow the appropriate entry processes set forth by each show, will not be permitted to show. For more information and questions, visit the Youth Livestock Program website or contact Emily at ebennigsdorf@ksu.edu.

4-H Summer Camp Online
State 4-H leaders have developed ways in which they can still celebrate some aspects of 4-H camp and teach the values the experience offers. For the entire month of June, they will have different challenges and video content on social media including a backyard photography contest and virtual camp song challenge. To join in the fun, follow Kansas 4-H on Facebook and use the hashtag, #4HCampLivesOn.

Leadership Opportunity
Our local Options office has contacted the Extension Office in hopes that we can help them find one to two older 4-Hers that would be willing to help babysit kids during their meeting. They meet on Tuesdays and will need the babysitter(s) from 5:15pm-6:45pm. This is a great volunteer opportunity to serve your community. For more information please contact Angie Gaede at (785) 625-4202 or contact the Extension Office at (785) 460-4582.

Wheat Expo
The Kansas State 4-H Wheat Expo is a wheat fun day showcasing all things wheat. There will be eight contests open to youth members with cash prizes and ribbons awarded. It will be held Aug. 6th at the Sedgwick County Extension Education Center. Registration is due July 27th. For more information, visit the Wheat Expo page on the 4-H Youth Development website.

BIF Symposium
The 52nd Annual Beef Improvement Federation Symposium has been moved online and will be hosted the week of June 8th starting at noon CDT each day. There is a free registration for all participants this year. The topics being covered throughout the week range from What Will the Purebred Cattle Industry Look Like in 20 Years, Global Perspectives on Beef Sustainability, Advancement in Selection, Genomic and Genetics and more! To register or find the schedule of events please visit https://beefimprovement.org/symposium.
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SS = Shooting Sports
AH = Abilene Hustlers
BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem
Gem = Gem 4-H
CC = Colby Comets
SV = Solomon Valley
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 and Thomas County Extension are committed to making their services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision or hearing disability, or a dietary restriction please contact Sheryl Carson at 785-460-4582.