2021 Thomas County Wheat Plot Tour

Monday, June 7th @ 7:30 am CST

WHERE:
Solomon Creek farm, (Mike, Jeanene, & Tanner Brown) 5 miles south of the Levant/I-70 interchange, at the shop on the east side of the road. Meet at the shop at 7:30 a.m. We will have presentations, then the group will proceed south to the field.

GUEST SPEAKERS:
Lucas Haag, NW Area Agronomist
Anthony Zukoff, K-State Extension Entomologist
Kelsey Anderson Onofre, K-State Wheat Pathologist

THE FAIR IS COMING!
We are just 6 short weeks away from the start of the 2021 Thomas County Fair! 4-H Family packets will be available June 4th. 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.
Bring on the Grilling Season!

Summer is quickly approaching which means we are approaching outdoor grilling season. Do you know where your food thermometer and ice chest are located?

Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee said knowing some basic food safety principles will help to keep the party fun for all.

“When it comes to food safety, the No. 1 thing to start with in any kind of cooking situation is washing your hands,” Blakeslee said. “It’s your first line of defense against foodborne bacteria.”

Handwashing is as simple as wetting the hands, rubbing them together with soap for 20 seconds and rinsing them thoroughly.

“It’s so easy to do and by now all of us should really be good at it with everything we have been through the past year,” Blakeslee said.

Other steps to promote food safety, according to Blakeslee, include basic cleaning methods during cooking. Clean counters and other prep areas as you go, especially drips from raw meat.

Rinse the outside of fresh fruit and vegetables with clean, running water, rubbing the food gently with your hands. As one example, a watermelon may have dirt on the outside that could be transferred by a knife to the flesh when cutting it open. Bleach, bacteria, and produce washes are not recommended for rinsing fruit and vegetables.

Meat should not be rinsed before cooking. Rinsing can lead to splattering water with meat juice to your ready-to-eat food on the counters and cabinets.

To help prevent cross-contamination, wash your hands anytime you are moving from one food to another. To help with this follow three easy steps separate, cook, and chill.

Separate; keep raw meat on one plate, and cooked meat on another plate. This is another plate to wash but it could keep you from getting sick. Also, keep raw meat away from ready-to-eat foods, such as salad and fruit.

Cook; if bacteria are present on meat, it can survive unless the meat is properly cooked. Use a food thermometer to keep your food safe to eat. Steaks, roasts, chops, and fish should be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees F; ground meats (including beef, pork, and lamb) should be cooked to 160 degrees F; and all poultry products should be cooked to 165 degrees F.

“Watching those temperatures is not just for food safety, but it can also be a good quality indicator, too,” Blakeslee said. “It will ensure that you’re not over-cooking your food.”

Chill; As outdoor temperatures get warmer; it becomes even more important to keep food chilled. “A good rule of thumb is to get food back in the refrigerator or ice chest within two hours,” Blakeslee said. “If it’s over 90 degrees outside, you want to cut that back to one hour because your food is going to heat up pretty quickly when it’s left out at ambient temperature.”

As for the grill itself, Blakeslee urges homeowner to give it a good cleaning before the first cookout of the season. That includes scraping the grate with a stiff brush or using approved cleaners. Clean out the grease pan or residual grease on the bottom of the grill. Check connection points on a gas grill to avoid gas leaks. “And you want to find a spot in your backyard that is away from your house, not too close to it because the residual heat from the grill could damage the siding on your house,” Blakeslee said. “I’ve seen a hot grill melt vinyl siding.” Never grill in a garage, even if it’s raining. The smoke from the grill could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
A Little Cup of Joe is All You Need

Do you crave that cup of coffee to give you a morning boost? Many do to get their day started. Caffeine has been a go-to source of energy for centuries.

Caffeine has some benefits. It is a mild stimulant and can improve brain function. It has some potential to lower risks for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer. Besides caffeine, polyphenols and antioxidants can also provide some protection to chronic illnesses.

But, while these benefits are encouraging, there are some risks. Not everyone reacts to caffeine the same. Caffeine consumption frequency can cause you to consume even more over time to get the same affect. Excess caffeine can raise blood pressure, cause insomnia, jitters, increased heart rate, headaches, nausea among other health concerns. Your weight and medications you take can also change how you tolerate caffeine.

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that healthy adults can safely consume 400 mg of caffeine each day. This is equal to about four cups of coffee. Pregnant women should cut that amount in half.

Getting enough sleep can help reduce the amount of caffeine needed to stay awake. Adults should strive for seven to nine hours each night. Besides coffee, there are other choices. Check out this caffeine calculator to learn more.

Sesame—The Newest Food Allergen

Foods that cause allergic reactions can be life threatening. Up until now, there have been eight major food allergens. With the passage of the Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research (FASTER) Act, the ninth major food allergen will be sesame. This is the first new allergen added to the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) since 2006. The FASTER Act has been passed by the U.S. Congress and will likely be signed by the President into law.

There are more than 1.5 million Americans who are allergic to sesame. Until now, food products that contain sesame would list “natural flavors” or “natural spices.” This makes it almost impossible for consumers to know if the product contains sesame. Depending on the product, sesame may or may not be visible.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations requires major food allergens be clearly labeled on food products. If left undeclared, it can be life threatening. The allergen will be clearly listed within the ingredient statement or in a separate statement.

Undeclared food allergens have been the number one leading cause of Class I recalls by the FDA in the last three years. A Class I recall means the product could cause serious injury or death. The eight current major food allergens cause 90% of documented food allergen health issues.

Updated Ball® Food Preservation Book

The Ball® Complete Book of Home Preserving has been in print since 2006. It is now updated and will be available in May 2021.

One change is with any recipe that used fresh lemon juice, now uses bottle lemon juice. For home canning, bottled lemon juice has a consistent acid content. Fresh lemon juice acidity can vary which can lead to unsafe canned foods.

The new book also has some new recipes but also some recipes removed. This book has over 400 recipes and is a good companion to the traditional Ball® Blue Book.
Thomas County Project Meetings

**Horse project**– Practices are being held at the CCC Farm on Wednesdays at 5:30pm throughout the summer. Riders will need to provide a negative Coggins test (within the last year) and will have to wear helmets per CCC policy.

**Dog Project**– Practices are being held on Tuesdays from 7-9pm at the 4-H Bldg.

**Dog Immunization Forms**
The State 4-H Dog Show Immunization Record is available at the Extension Office. This form is required for all dog shows, including the State Fair.

**Insect Spectacular**
The 2021 Kansas 4-H Insect Spectacular will occur on June 21st, 23rd, and 25th. This year there will be three webinar sessions each lasting about an hour. Each session will begin at 7pm. The sessions are open to all youth and are designed as an opportunity to learn as a group. You may participate in one or all of the sessions and you can register [here](#). Registration is due June 11th. Topics include: Lookalike Insects: and how to properly identify them (6/21), Invasive Species: Asian Giant Hornets (6/23), and Invasive Species (6/25).

**Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic**
The 2021 Dr. Bob Hines Kansas Swine Classic will be held July 9-10 in Manhattan, KS. This two-day event features educational opportunities, including a swine skillathon, photography contest, showmanship, and a prospect and market hog show. Entry forms and registration will be due June 15th, and are available on the KSU Youth Livestock Program [website](#).

NW District Horse Show

The Northwest District Horse Show will be held on July 8th in Norton. Entry deadline is June 25th. 4-H members may participate in their county designated District Horse Show (Northwest District) and/or one additional District Horse Show of their choosing. If the 4-H member participates in two district horse shows and qualified for the State 4-H Show at both, the 4-H member must designate on their State Fair Horse Show entry which district they are advancing from. A 4-H member may only enter those State 4-H Show classes in which they received a purple or blue at that designated district.

**Horse Level Testing**
4-H Horse Project members who would like to compete at the District or 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. More information can be found on the 4-H Horse page.

**Wheat Variety Plot**
The 2022 Kansas 4-H and FFA Wheat Variety Plot program begins fall of 2021 and goes through September 2022. Members should contact the Extension Office by July 9 for information.

**Wheat Expo**
The Kansas State 4-H Wheat Expo is a wheat fun day showcasing all things wheat. There will be nine divisions open to youth members with cash prizes and ribbons awarded. This year’s event is planned for August 11th in El Dorado, KS.
Fair Changes & Reminders

The Kansas State Fair has made some changes to their fair book that will affect our fair as well.

♦ One new project for 2021 is STEM Ag Mechanics. This project is starting with an emphasis on welding and smithing. We will continue to use the Welding department in our Fair Book for this year. However, if you are interested in possibly sending work to the State Fair, please contact the Extension Office to make sure you have the exact details of the project.

♦ The second new project for 2021 is STEM Architectural Block Construction. This project is starting with an emphasis on using architectural blocks (“Legos”) to construct dioramas. This project will be added to our Fair Book and our office has added 4-H members to this project if they were enrolled in the Legos project on 4-H Online. Please note: this is NOT the same as a traditional Lego exhibit. Lego kits will still be entered under Visual Arts.

♦ Visual Arts classes will be changed for our Fair to match the State Fair. Classes now include: Fine Arts, Clay & Ceramics, Leather & Jewelry, Three-Dimensional, and General Crafts.

♦ Reminder: Patchwork and quilted items will be judged at the Buymanship and Clothing Construction judging event. This is held Tuesday before Fair week (July 20th). They are listed under Fiber Arts in the Fair Book due to State Fair classes, but should be judged with other Sewing Construction pieces.

Record Keeping for 2021

Each year, Thomas County 4-H members can earn project pins for completing a project record book and submitting it for judging. This year, the Kansas State 4-H Office has created new Project Record Report Forms for 2021.

Record Keeping and Project Reporting are valuable skills taught to members of the Kansas 4-H program. Members are encouraged to keep a permanent record of all 4-H and Non-4-H Experiences and are encouraged to summarize their experiences on the NEW Kansas 4-H Project Report Form for project recognition. These reports will replace the Kansas Award Portfolio (KAP) forms that have been used in the past. There are two report forms per age division. One is for animals including all livestock, horses, pets, cats, dogs, and rabbits. The other is a general form that should be used for all non-animal projects. Project Report Forms and Achievement Pin Applications are due October 1st each year. However, 4-H members should work on these reports throughout the year.

The new forms and instructions can be found on the Kansas 4-H website. You are able to open and save the form-fillable PDF in order to complete the necessary information. We have also put an example together to show which forms need to be included in the final record book. The example and the Guide to 4-H Project Recognition are available at the Extension Office.

Club Attendance

For the 2020-2021 year, 4-H members wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to attend 6 club meetings between the months of August 2020 and July 2021. Club members and leaders can check their attendance record by going to the Thomas County Extension website. Click on “4-H Youth Development”, followed by “Record Keeping.”
4-H Events & Spring Shows

Many counties are still hosting their annual spring livestock shows. There are also several other 4-H events being announced. We have a notebook of flyers available with more information. Check with the Extension Office periodically to learn about these upcoming events.

Livestock Quality Assurance

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a national, multi-species livestock quality assurance program available for youth ages 8-21. This annual educational and certification program focuses on food safety, animal well-being, and character awareness for youth producing and/or showing livestock. Youth swine exhibitors in the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive and/or KJLS are currently required to have quality assurance certification (YQCA or Youth PQA Plus) in order to participate. Non-swine exhibitors are encouraged to participate in youth quality assurance training as an educational opportunity and become YQCA certified. It is a requirement to exhibit at the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive and/or KJLS for all species exhibiting livestock in 2021.

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. The 2021 nomination information has been distributed to county offices and may be found on the Youth Livestock Program website. The 2021 Declaration and Specie Nomination Forms MUST be used for nominations to be accepted. All families are encouraged to use the nomination checklist as a guide to ensure their nominations are complete upon submission. This resource may be found on the Youth Livestock Program website, or through the local county office. Please double check that there are not any blank fields or questions on the Declaration and Nomination Forms before placing them in the mail.

As a reminder, ear notches are required for swine nominations and scrapie tag numbers are required for sheep and goats. Nominations received without this information will be considered incomplete and returned to the family for completion. Confirmation letters will be sent to families once their nominations have been processed, and reports will regularly be posted on the Youth Livestock Program website. Families are encouraged to use one of these options to verify their nominations.

A complete nomination does NOT constitute show entry. The Kansas State Fair and KJLS will release entry information to agents and through their respective websites as entry season draws near. 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 nomination questions, please contact Lexie Hayes at adhayes@ksu.edu.
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**Notes:**
- 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 Emily Bennigsdorf at 785-460-4582.