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Thomas County

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

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Spring is just around the corner, and with warmer weather comes a variety of activities and things to do.

Check out the Agriculture Focus page to learn about low pH crop soils.

It's time for Walk Kansas! Packets will be available at the Extension office soon and registration can also be completed online. More information can be found about Walk Kansas and National Nutrition Month on the Family and Consumer Science News page.

Plus, don't forget to read the 4-H Tidbits pages for project meeting & practice information, upcoming deadlines, new events, and upcoming camp information.



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Low-pH Crop Soils Spreading Across Kansas

K-State crop nutrient Dorivar Ruiz-Diaz joined Eric Atkinson on Agriculture Today to discuss the escalating issues with low-pH crop soils around Kansas.

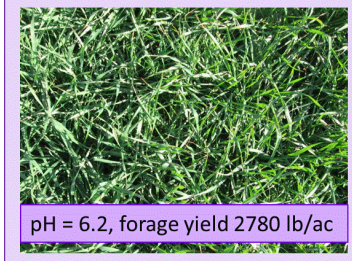
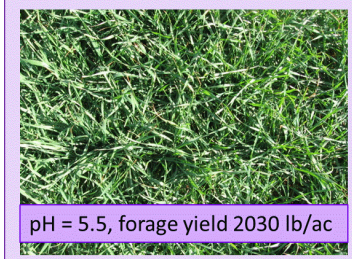
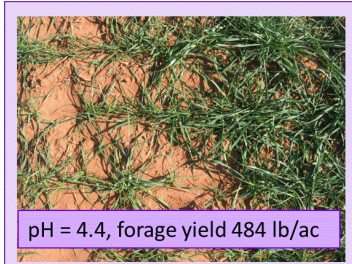
Dr. Dorivar brought up how they are seeing a trend of lower pH levels throughout the state even moving into Western Kansas. Applying nitrogen over multiple years will cause acidic buildup causing lower pH field levels.

Make sure to test your soil this year to see where your level is currently at. K-State specialists recommend if the test comes back at level 5.8 that you start lime applications.

Lower on the scale you will start to see larger problems when you reach around 5.5 or lower. With low pH you can start to see aluminum toxicity potential. The main issue with low pH is aluminum in solution, this will become toxic to the roots and affect plant growth. This can look like nutrient deficiencies in the field or water stress symptoms.

When dealing with a more sandy soil you will need to apply less lime since it will soak it up faster than a fine or medium textured soil. Using a no till system may help in raising your pH levels.

When getting a sample from your field, it is recommended to go at least 3 inches into the soil when collecting for lime recommendations



with no till practices. This will help the lab be able to test how much lime you will need and how acidic the layer of soil is.

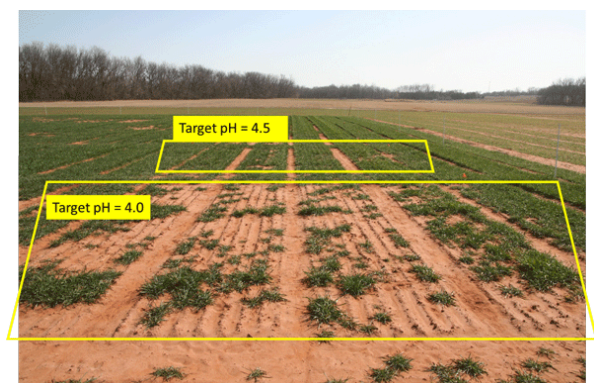
The ideal timing for lime application is right after wheat harvest in the summer. In a corn/soybean rotation it is best usually after harvest in the fall. This will give the lime time to react to the soil before the next planting season.

Applying lime in the spring is possible but the window is much shorter and much more difficult to get it in the soil before planting.

In the west we are known to have higher pH levels in our soil, about 6.0. This affects the micronutrients, levels of zinc, creates iron deficiency in the situation of the pH being around 8.0 and higher. Soybeans and Sorghum tend to be more sensitive to higher levels of pH than other crops.

Some farmers have asked Dorivar if applying sulfur to lower the level of the high pH soils will work. Dorivar responded with, "In theory that is possible, the challenge is that often times because we have such a high pH and presence of potassium carbonate it tends to be a sort term fix. If we are able to lower the pH, after 2-3 years that level of pH goes back up again. It makes it difficult to work on the economic standpoint."

The key is to get your soil tested a few times to see what pH level your fields are at consistently.





Walk Kansas 2021

March 28–May 22

Team packets will be available for pickup soon at the Thomas County Extension Office. We are located at 350 S. Range Ave., Suite 16 Colby, KS in the Thomas County Office Complex.

For information call (785) 460-4582

NEW:

Track your miles with a cell phone app!
Collect online badges.

This year's colors are heather sangria and heather dark chocolate brown.

March is National Nutrition Month

Eating right and being healthy means something different to each person.

“There is no one-size-fits-all approach to what we eat,” said Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee. “Every person has their own personal nutrition needs because of health goals, family backgrounds, bodies and taste.”

Blakeslee is encouraging consumers to be creative in choosing healthful foods during March, which is recognized by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as [National Nutrition Month](#).

The theme for this year is ‘Personalize Your Plate.’

“Consider foods that are nutrient-rich to get the most nutrition in every bite,” Blakeslee said. “Any kind of lifestyle change to incorporate healthy food choices will be beneficial in the long run. It doesn’t have to be bland, boring or even complicated. Make the changes to fit your personal plate.”

Blakeslee urges consumers to consult with a physician if they have health conditions that require specific nutritional needs.

“For some, the help of a registered dietitian can guide them in the right direction,” she said. “But the messages of eating more fruits and vegetables, switching to whole grains and choosing lean proteins still apply. Make one change at a time for best success and you may find some new foods that you enjoy.”

One benefit of consumers staying at home more over the past year is that they have been able to more easily plan and control the food and portion sizes they eat. But as more options for dining away from home begin to open up, Blakeslee said it is important to remain focused on your nutrition goals.

“Choose a restaurant that has many options and look for the healthier options,” she said. “If possible, order the lunch size or child size portions. Many restaurant portions are large, so split it with a friend or take half home for a lunch the next day. At work, packing your own meals and snacks can help get you through the day on your own terms.”

Blakeslee, who is also coordinator of [K-State’s Rapid Response Center](#) for food science, publishes a [monthly newsletter](#), called You Asked It!, that addresses many issues related to healthy eating and food safety.

More information on human nutrition also is available [online from K-State Research and Extension](#).





Project Meetings/Events

Dog Project– An informational meeting will be held March 2nd. Practice will begin March 9th. All meetings and practices will be held from 7-9pm at the 4-H Bldg. Masks and social distancing are recommended.



Horse project– Practices will be held two Thursdays a month for the next three months beginning March 4th. They will be held at the CCC Farm at 5:30pm. Riders will need to provide a negative Coggins test (within the last year) and will have to wear helmets per CCC policy.



Photography project– Shutterbugs events



- ♦ May 1st at 9:15am at Botanica Gardens in Wichita, KS with \$9 entry fee per person
- ♦ May 8th at Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City, KS with \$5 reg. fee for each of the first 5 members of a family. Age 5 and under are free.

Shotgun project– The coaches are gearing up for the upcoming shotgun season. Safety meetings and practices will be held later this spring. Watch for more information and make sure you're signed up for the shotgun project on 4-H Online.



Club Days

County Club Day will be held on March 5th at the Thomas County Extension Office. If you signed up for an event, be looking for an email with your scheduled presentation time. Since we are not offering model meetings at Club Day, the February attendance will count as 2 meetings. Also, don't forget to bring non-perishable food items with you to support the Colby Comets food drive.

Regional Club Day will be held virtually on March 26th. If you will be participating in Regional Club Day, your video submission will be due to Emily at the Extension Office by March 24th at 5:00pm.

Colby Comets is inviting you to participate in our Genesis Food Drive!



The Food Drive will take place during County Club Days. Help us make our goal of 250 items!

When: March 5, 2021
Where: Thomas County Extension Office



Scholarships

Kansas 4-H State Scholarship applications will be collected online. The deadline to complete applications and submit recommendation letters or references is March 1, 2021. For a copy of the application and a list of available scholarships, please visit the Kansas 4-H Youth Development [website](#).

Thomas County 4-H Council Scholarship applications can be found at the Extension Office. Applications are due by March 10th.



Horse Papers



Horse Identification papers are due to the Extension Office on May 1st. The form must be front and back only, not two separate pages and must have a standard-sized photo attached with all markings visible.

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](#).

Horse Panorama

Horse Panorama is a compilation of various contests related to the Horse Project. Contests include: quiz bowl, hippology, public speaking presentations, photography and educational posters. It will be held online in April this year and is open to both 4-H members and adults. For more information about rules, deadlines and registration, visit the [Horse Panorama website](#).

4-H Events & Spring Shows

Many counties are starting to think about their annual spring livestock shows. There are also several other 4-H events being announced. We will have a notebook of flyers available with more information.

Check with the Extension Office periodically to learn about upcoming events including:

- Livestock, Horse and Dog shows
- Judging contests
- Educational workshops
- Animal clinics for Poultry and Rabbits

Swine Across Kansas Series

From east to west, Extension staff are collaborating to present a series of workshops educating youth about their swine project and swine production in general. The first session in the series, "Ask Before You Buy" will include information about what you should know before purchasing your next show pig. Meet with livestock judges and show pig producers about insider tips on selecting the best pig for your barn. Before you go out to those swine sales, be sure you are prepared by knowing what to look for and what to expect! The first session will be held March 7th at 2pm via Zoom. Sign up for this free webinar [here](#).



Kansas Junior Producer Days

The 2021 junior producer days will be hosted as a virtual series during the course of a week. Presentations will be provided a couple of days during the week, with the final sessions and discussion being on Saturday morning. All of the sessions will be recorded and shared with those who register. **Junior Meat Goat Producer Week** will be held March 15-20. All youth, parents, leaders and extension agents are invited to participate in these educational experiences. K-State faculty members, graduate students, veterinarians, extension agents, guest speakers and specialists will speak about youth livestock project management. Participation is free this year. However, all attendees, including youth and adults, still need to register [online](#) by March 8th.



Discovery Days

4-H Discovery Days will be delivered virtually in 2021. The event will be held on June 1st-4th. Discovery Days offers classes and tours about 4-H projects, careers, hobbies, community service and more!

Save the Date



Great Northwest Rock Springs Camp will be held from June 9th - June 12th, 2021. This camp is for ages 7-12. Camper and counselor

registration forms are available at the Extension Office and are due April 9th. However, please get your forms in as soon as possible. If camp requires reduced numbers, attendance will be based on a first-come, first-served basis.

Camp Lakeside will be held June 9th-10th in Scott City. This camp is for ages 7-9.

***These camps overlap this year, so we may not be able to send 4-H members to both camps. Also, if you are interested in being a chaperone or helping with transportation, please let us know!*

Campference

This event is focused on “betweenagers,” youth ages 12-14 and will be held June 27-30, 2021. This event is normally held at Rock Springs Ranch. However, it was held virtually in 2020. Keep an eye out for more information on this year’s event.

Fair Livestock Auction

The livestock auction during the 2021 Thomas County Fair will be held on July 29th. Animals will be released on July 31st. While this seems far away, many lockers are already full for butcher dates through October. Please call the lockers for more information or to book a date for yourself or potential buyers.

ZD’s Meatz in Oakley: 785-672-9003

Ben-Lee Processing in Atwood: 785-626-3732

Grinnell Locker: 785-824-3400

Insect Art Contest

The Pesticide Safety and Integrated Pest Management Program is hosting an insect-themed



art contest for Kansas 4-Her’s and art students. This year the artwork needs to fit into the contest theme of “Exploring Pollinators.” The goal is to explore what pollinators do and why they are important and create an art piece that captures that information. More information on the rules, prizes, how the entries will be used, and how to submit an entry can be found at: <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/pesticides-ipm/> or you can e-mail fmiller@ksu.edu to have the rules e-mailed to you. Submit entries by April 16th.

Club Attendance

For the 2020-2021 year, 4-Her’s wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to attend 6 club meetings between the months of August 2020 and July 2021. Members must attend meetings for the club they are enrolled in on 4HOnline. Business must be conducted at the meeting in order for the meeting to qualify for attendance. February attendance will count twice.

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.”

Volunteers

New and returning volunteers need to complete the Volunteer Application/Renewal on 4HOnline. If you have questions, call Joanna at (785) 460-4582 or email joannajohnson@ksu.edu.

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 AH—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	2 Dog project info. meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	3	4 Horse project practice @ CCC Barn 5:30pm	5 Thomas County 4-H Club Day @ Ext. Office 5:30pm	6
7 Swine Across Kansas Series: Ask Before You Buy @ 2pm via Zoom	8 BPG—Meeting @ Henry Hall 7:30pm GEM—Meeting @ Gem Comm. Bldg. 7pm SV— Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	9 Dog project practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	10 Thomas County 4-H Scholarship application due	11 Fairboard Mtg. @ 8pm	12	13
14 Daylight Saving Time Begins 	15 Junior Meat Goat Producer Week CC—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg.6:30pm	16 Dog project practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	17 St. Patrick's Day 	18 Horse project practice @ CCC Barn 5:30pm	19	20 First Day of Spring 
21	22 4-H Council Mtg. 6:30pm 	23 Dog project practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	24 Regional Club Day entries due to Emily	25	26 Regional 4-H Club Day (virtual)	27
28	29	30 Dog project practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	31			
					SS = Shooting Sports AH = Abilene Hustlers	BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H CC = Colby Comets 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>

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.