Walk Kansas Finale

All Walk Kansas participants are invited to attend the Walk Kansas Finale on Thursday, May 27, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the 4-H Building.

Calendar of Events

Did you know, we have a calendar of events on our website? This calendar has both Extension and 4-H events listed for your convenience.

Thomas County Fair Shirts

The theme for the 2021 Thomas County Fair is “Fairadise.” This year, the 4-H Council is selling Fair-themed shirts to help fund 4-H materials needed throughout the year. There are three colors available and they are $12 each. If you would like to place an order, you can contact any 4-H member or the Extension Office. Orders are due May 24th.
What Color Mulch Do Tomatoes Prefer? Red, Of Course

Colored mulches can help increase production of some garden crops.

You may not think of tomatoes as a fickle fruit, but Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham says that the popular garden crop can, indeed, be picky.

Upham noted that colored plastic mulches have gained favor over the more traditional black plastic mulch because they seem to increase the production of marketable fruit. Plastic mulches have long been known to promote earlier fruiting, increased yields and weed control.

“With tomatoes, the color of choice has been red (mulch),” Upham said.

When the season’s weather is ‘perfect’ for growing tomatoes, Upham said there may be no difference in production when using various plastic mulches. But when growing conditions are less than favorable, gardeners may experience up to a 20% increase in their tomato crop when using red mulch – though, on average, the increase is more like 12%.

For best results, Upham suggests home gardeners lay a drip irrigation line near the center of where the mulch will lay, because “the plastic will prevent rainwater or overhead irrigation from reaching the plants.”

Additional steps include:

• Use a hoe to construct trenches for the outer six inches of the plastic mulch. “This allows the center of the bed to be undisturbed, with the edges of the mulch draping down into the trench,” Upham said.

• Fill the trenches to cover the edges of the mulch. “This will prevent wind from catching and blowing the mulch,” according to Upham.

Fertilizing Cole Crops

In this week’s Horticulture Newsletter from K-State Research and Extension, Upham also shared tips for fertilizing such cole crops as cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower.

If those crops made it through recent cold snaps, they will need a fertilizer boost, he said. “These plants need to mature before summer heat arrives, so they must grow quickly while the weather is cool,” Upham said. “A side dressing of fertilizer about three weeks after transplanting helps these plants grow rapidly.”

Upham suggests using fertilizers high in nitrogen, such as nitrate of soda or blood meal at the rate of one-third cup per 10 feet of row. Fertilizer must be watered in, unless timely rains do the job for you.

More information on fertilizing cole crops is available in a fact sheet available from K-State Research and Extension.

Sharpening Your Mower’s Blade

Upham also has advice for kicking off lawn-mowing season.

“Remember that a dull lawn mower blade gives the lawn a whitish cast,” he said. “A dull blade does not cut cleanly but rather shreds the ends of the leaf blades. The shredded ends dry out, giving the lawn that whitish look.”

He added that a sharp blade is even more important when turf starts putting up seeds next month. “The seed head stems are much tougher than the grass blades and more likely to shred,” he said.

Under normal use, mower blades should be sharpened every 10 hours of use.

Upham and his colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.
Super foods that support bone health

K-State specialists discuss foods and activities to keep bones strong

We know “the toe bone’s connected to the foot bone,” and so on, but how do we keep those bones strong throughout life? Fortunately, some foods and activities help with that.

“When we think of nutrients supporting bone health, our first thought is calcium – and rightly so,” said K-State Research and Extension state nutrition specialist Sandy Procter. “Calcium is a key component to healthy bones, but it isn’t the only one. Because a number of vitamins and minerals team up for strong bones, it makes sense to consider the top foods that tout a variety of bone-strengthening nutrients.”

Procter, who is a registered dietician, listed these foods that support bone health:

- Dairy products, including milk, cheese and yogurt. These foods also supply phosphorus, another important nutrient needed for bone health.
- Seafood. Canned seafood products, including salmon, sardines and shrimp are good options, as they have an even higher calcium content than fresh or frozen.
- Leafy greens, especially spinach, bok choy, collard and turnip greens.
- Legumes, seeds, almonds and tofu.

“Other foods and beverages are fortified with calcium and play an important role in our total intake. Breakfast cereals, juices and nut- or seed-based milks often have calcium added during processing, as well as vitamin D. That’s important,” Procter said, “because you cannot absorb the calcium you eat without enough vitamin D.”

Your body makes vitamin D when the sun shines directly on your skin and it only takes 10-15 minutes of sunlight a couple of times a week to get what you need, said Sharolyn Jackson, K-State Research and Extension family and consumer sciences specialist. As we age, our skin gets thinner and less efficient at synthesizing vitamin D from sunlight.

“Research continues to evolve on how much vitamin D we need and for many of us, a supplement is a good idea,” said Jackson, who coordinates the statewide Walk Kansas program.

Other minerals, like magnesium and potassium, help keep bones healthy. Magnesium helps with your body’s vitamin D balance and potassium aids in reducing calcium loss from bones. Good sources include spinach and other dark greens, potatoes, sweet potatoes, bananas, legumes, nuts, seeds and whole grains.

Protein is another key nutrient for bone health at all stages of life. Most people, but not everyone, get enough. Older adults don’t always eat enough protein. If you are considering eating more protein, consider plant sources too, like nuts and beans. They offer calcium as well as protein.

What’s at stake?

“Bone is living tissue, just like muscle, and key bone-building years for your body is when your skeleton is growing – typically through your mid-20s,” she said. “What is built in those years must last a lifetime. After age 35, we gradually lose bone as a part of the natural aging process.”

Bone in our bodies is constantly being broken down and replaced. Osteoporosis is a bone disease that happens when the creation of new bone is unable to keep up with the loss of old bone. The word “osteoporosis” is from the Greek terms for “porous bones.”

“It’s a silent disease. You can’t feel your bones weakening,” Jackson said. “The first signs may be stooped or humped posture, you get shorter, or a bone breaks. With osteoporosis, bones can become so brittle that a fall or even something small like coughing or bending can cause a fracture.”

Women, older adults (risk increases with age), and people who are white or of Asian descent are among those at the greatest risk. So are those with a family history of osteoporosis and having a small body frame. Hormone levels, diet, long-term use of some medications and medical conditions can also play a role.

“It’s important to be aware of personal risk factors, but it’s also important to do what you can to reduce your risk,” Jackson said. “Healthy eating and regular exercise are essential for keeping your bones healthy and maintaining your quality of life.”

Weight-bearing exercise is best for prevention, including brisk walking, hiking, jogging, marching, climbing stairs, weight training, dancing, yoga, and tennis. Even gardening can be weight bearing if you carry a water can or tools or walk in the yard. Jumping, stomping and hopping also work as they jar your bones a little, sending a message that they need to get stronger.

“So, have a little fun and act like a child again,” Jackson said.

More information about human nutrition is available on the K-State Extension Food, Nutrition, Dietetics and Health website.

Almonds and dairy products are among two foods that support bone health.
**4-H Events & Spring Shows**

Many counties are hosting 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
  - Kick Off Horse Show in Colby
  - CCC Classic
- Swine Across Kansas Series
- Flint Hills Farm to Fashion Camp
- Rabbit Show
- Bring Your 4-H Projects to Life—Monthly Project Series. May Project is Plant Science.
- Tractor Safety Courses
- Babysitting Clinic in Oakley, KS
- Photography Shutterbugs at Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City, KS
- Super 4-H Saturday in Hays

**Thomas County Project Meetings**

**Shotgun project**—Safety meetings will be held May 16th and May 23rd at 1pm at the Colby Trap Club. Practices will begin June 6th and will continue on Sundays through the summer.

**Horse project**—Practices are being held at the CCC Farm. The next practice will be May 6th at 5:30pm. Summer practice schedule will be discussed that day. 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. Masks and social distancing are recommended.

**Discovery Days**

4-H Discovery Days is for young people ages 13-18 before January 1, 2021 and will be delivered virtually this year. The event will be held on June 1st-4th. Discovery Days offers speakers, content sessions with other youth, and a career panel. Registration is $35 and is due May 15th. For more information and a schedule of events, see the 4-H [website](#).

**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.
Geology Field Trips

Three field trips are planned for geology project members and their families in June. The first one will be south of Quinter in Gove County on June 12th. The second one will be in Southeast Kansas at Big Brutus on June 19th. The third will be in South Central Kansas in Cassoday on June 26th. Registration is now open. More information can be found on the 4-H 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.

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. The 2021 date has not been set yet, so stay tuned.

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.”

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.
4-H COUNTY CLUB DAY RESULTS
March 5, 2021

PROJECT TALKS
**Junior Project Talk (Ages 7 to 9)
Kyle Bremenkamp– Blue  
Bryer Reid– Blue
**Intermediate Project Talk (Ages 10 to 13)
Alyssa Bremenkamp– Blue  
Elijah Gabel– Blue

DEMONSTRATIONS & ILLUSTRATED TALKS
**Junior Demonstration/Illustrated Talk (Ages 7 to 9)
Brasen Fikan– Blue  
Max Juenemann– Blue  
Joseph Schrick– Blue
**Intermediate Demo./Illustrated Talk (Ages 10 to 13)
Ella Fikan– Blue  
Brynlee Reid– Blue
**Senior Demo./Illustrated Talk (Ages 14 and older)
Jakob Koon– Blue  
Blayne Reid– Blue

VOCAL SOLO
**Intermediate Vocal Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Reagan Frantz– Blue
**Senior Vocal Solo (Ages 14 to 18)
Lakin Denny– Blue

VOCAL ENSEMBLE
**Intermediate Vocal Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Lakin, Claire, Jack & Kruze Denny– Blue

INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
**Junior Instrumental Solo (Ages 7 to 9)
Aleha Gabel (violin)– Blue  
Koulter Plummer (ukulele)– Blue
**Intermediate Instrumental Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Alyssa Bremenkamp (guitar)– Blue  
Elijah Gabel (cello)– Blue

PIANO SOLO
**Junior Piano Solo (Ages 7 to 9)
Clover Frantz– Blue  
Aleha Gabel– Red  
Hattie Plummer– Red
**Intermediate Piano Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Ella Fikan– Blue  
Reagan Frantz– Red  
Elijah Gabel– Blue
**Senior Piano Solo (Ages 14 and older)
Jacob Gardner– Blue  
Allison Zimmerman– Blue

DANCE-SQUARE, LINE OR FOLK
**Junior Dance (Ages 7 to 9)
Aleha Gabel– Blue

SKITS
Fikan Family– Blue

4-H REGIONAL CLUB DAY RESULTS

PROJECT TALKS
**Junior Project Talk (Ages 7 to 9)
Aleha Gabel– Blue
**Intermediate Project Talk (Ages 10 to 13)
Alyssa Bremenkamp– Blue

DEMONSTRATIONS & ILLUSTRATED TALKS
**Junior Demonstration/Illustrated Talk (Ages 7 to 9)
Max Juenemann– Blue  
Joseph Schrick– Blue
**Intermediate Demo./Illustrated Talk (Ages 10 to 13)
Ella Fikan– Blue  
Brynlee Reid– Blue
**Senior Demo./Illustrated Talk (Ages 14 and older)
Jakob Koon– Blue  
Blayne Reid– Blue

VOCAL SOLO
**Intermediate Vocal Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Reagan Frantz– Blue
**Senior Vocal Solo (Ages 14 to 18)
Lakin Denny– Blue

INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
**Junior Instrumental Solo (Ages 7 to 9)
Koulter Plummer (ukulele)– Red
**Intermediate Instrumental Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Elijah Gabel (cello)– Blue

PIANO SOLO
**Junior Piano Solo (Ages 7 to 9)
Koulter Plummer– Blue
**Intermediate Piano Solo (Ages 10 to 13)
Elijah Gabel– Blue
**Senior Piano Solo (Ages 14 and older)
Allison Zimmerman– Blue

DANCE-SQUARE, LINE OR FOLK
**Junior Dance (Ages 7 to 9)
Aleha Gabel– Blue
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Mother's Day

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.