October 2021

Women in Ag Program

Please join us for a Thomas County Women in Agriculture program this month! We’ll have tours, presentations and fun! More details can be found on the flyer on page 7.

4-H Officer Training

Officer Training will be Monday, October 25, 2021 at 6:00 PM in the 4-H Building. We will start off with pizza and conversation then break up into groups for the training. Please RSVP to the Extension office with how many slices of pizza you would like ($2 for each slice – includes drink by noon on the day of the training – October 25th.) The October 4-H Council meeting will follow.

2021 Program Development Committee Elections

Watch for the ballot being emailed later this month.

The Thomas County Extension Council is responsible for conducting the Extension Program in Thomas County. Each year we elect new members to the Program Development Committees. It is these committees that design the Extension program for Thomas County.

Each Program Development Committee (PDC) consists of six members who serve a two year term. New members from each PDC are elected each year. The entire Extension Council is comprised of 24 members with six members represented from each of the Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H and Youth, and Community Vitality committees.

A ballot will be sent by email, but if more ballots are needed for members in your household, ballots will be available at the Extension office. After marking your ballot, please return it to the Extension Office by mail, by email, or by hand delivery. Ballots will not be accepted after 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 1st, 2021.

The results of our election will be announced at our annual meeting on Thursday, November 4, 2021. At this meeting, the Council shall elect from its own members, nine people to serve on the Executive Board, which consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and five other members. The Executive Board has the responsibility for the entire Extension Program in Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H and Youth and Community Vitality.

The problems and needs of people and their communities are in a constant state of change. Extension programs should reflect these changes. It is important, therefore, that the County Extension programs be given careful and continuous attention, so please take time to vote! All Thomas County citizens in your household, 18 years of age and older, are eligible to vote.
Spotted Lanternfly in Thomas County

Spotted lanternfly (SLF) is an invasive insect that has spread throughout Pennsylvania since its discovery in Berks County in 2014. The spotted lanternfly uses its piercing-sucking mouthpart to feed on sap from over 70 different plant species. It has a strong preference for economically important plants including grapevines, maple trees, black walnut, birch, willow, and other trees. The feeding damage significantly stresses the plants which can lead to decreased health and potentially death.

As SLF feeds, the insect excretes honeydew (a sugary substance) which can attract bees, wasps, and other insects. The honeydew also builds up and promotes the growth for sooty mold (fungi), which can cover the plant, forest understories, patio furniture, cars, and anything else found while feeding.

SLF is currently found in 34 counties in Pennsylvania, all of which are under a state-imposed quarantine. The quarantine is in place to stop the movement of SLF to new areas within or out of the current quarantine zone and to slow its spread within the quarantine. The quarantine affects vehicles and other conveyances, plant, wood, stone products, and outdoor household items.

Thomas County had a 4-H member find and correctly identify one of these insects in their entomology box. The Kansas Department of Agriculture conducted an investigation and have concluded that we do not have any other known Spotted lanternfly’s in our area.

If you think that you may have a spotted lanternfly at your residence please call the extension office at 785-460-4582 or catch it and bring it in!

We do have a handful of white ermine’s showing up in our area which are similar in presentation. See the pictures below to learn the differences!

White Ermine: White in color with black spots, has a yellow on body with a fluffy thorax
Extension Agent Opening

If you know someone looking for a position where they can help their community, please encourage them to apply!

Extension agents are community based faculty of Kansas State University who make a difference by connecting community needs with university resources. Agents are administratively responsible to the local extension director and the local extension board.

This position will provide primary leadership for the development and implementation of research-based educational programming related to family and consumer sciences. Programming will include but is not limited to: family life, nutrition, food safety, parenting, communication, financial management, leadership, and health.

You can find the application here.

Preserving Fall Tomatoes

As fall approaches, fall gardens will start to wind down. Tomato plants may still be producing tasty tomatoes, which can be enjoyed fresh. But if a frost or freeze has occurred while tomatoes are on the vine, do not can those tomatoes. Preserve them by freezing or dehydrating for later use.

These tomatoes may have a pH level greater than 4.6 and may have extra pathogens. The canning process time may not be enough to kill extra organisms. This could lead to a product that spoils and is unsafe to eat.

Over-ripe tomatoes are less acidic. The acidity level in tomatoes varies throughout the growing season. Tomatoes reach their highest acidity when they are still green and decrease in acidity until they reach their lowest acidity as they mature.

Source: https://bit.ly/2x6KwBw

Sorghum Syrup vs. Molasses

Sorghum syrup is made from sweet sorghum. This grain is grown in the gulf states, north to Wisconsin and west to Kansas, Iowa and Minnesota. Kentucky and Tennessee are the leading producers of sorghum syrup. It is about 10-14 feet tall and the syrup comes from the canes or stalks. It takes about eight gallons of sorghum juice to make one gallon of sorghum syrup.

Why choose sorghum syrup over molasses? It has similar quality and consistency to molasses. It is sugar, so it still provides carbohydrates. The nutrient iron is one unique benefit to consuming sorghum syrup. According to the USDA Food Data Central database, sorghum syrup has 3.8mg/100g and molasses has 4.72 mg/100g. Calcium and potassium are also in these syrups.

Here are some tips to substitute sorghum syrup in your recipes from the National Sweet Sorghum Producers & Processors Association.
October is a month of change in many ways. Fall has begun, weather is cooling down, the leaves are changing, and 4-H is not immune to its influence. October also marks the beginning of the new 4-H year and the opening of member enrollment. Where can youth and parents start if they are interested in enrolling in 4-H and want to learn more about what 4-H has to offer? The following are some questions and answers that can help any prospective members or parents learn more about America’s largest youth development organization.

**What is 4-H?**
4-H is one of America’s oldest and largest youth development organizations. It is a volunteer-led, informal education program administered through local county extension offices, state land-grant universities and the USDA. It features nearly 6 million members, rural, suburban, AND urban, throughout all 50 states and some foreign countries.

**What does 4-H offer?**
- Leadership opportunities for youth at the local and state level.
- Recognition for work and achievement through fairs, scholarships, awards, and more.
- Opportunity to participate in county, regional, state, and national events, including camps, educational programing, leadership positions, and conferences.
- Decision-making skills and opportunities through participation in club meetings, community service, and project work.

**What makes 4-H different from other youth development organizations?**
- **Self-determination** — Youth decide what projects they want to participate in, as well as how their clubs operate and support members and the community they live in. 4-H is the only youth development organization where members actually decide how it operates.
- **Experiential learning** — Members actively participate in their interest areas. Want to learn about insects? Start a bug collection in the entomology project. Like to work with your hands? Build a rocket in rocketry or a table in woodworking projects. Learn to bake your favorite pie in foods and nutrition project. Interested in something that isn’t an official project? No problem! Enter the Self-Determined project and come up with your own unique creation.
- **Research-based support from local, state and national experts** — 4-H is administered in Kansas through K-State Research and Extension, giving 4-H members, volunteers, and leaders access to the latest data in research and youth development.

**Why 4-H?**
A better question might be “Why not 4-H?”
A recent study of 4-H’ers across Kansas showed some positive results in areas of decision making, leadership, communication, and citizenship.
- 95% are comfortable making their own decisions
- 89% don’t succumb to peer pressure
- 96% reported they can make a difference through community service
- 95% reported an increased effort to allow everyone to have a voice.

Who wouldn’t want youths to be better leaders, citizens, communicators, and make better decisions? So I ask again, why not 4-H?

**Joining 4-H**
If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining 4-H, contact the Thomas County K-State Research and Extension office at 785-460-4582. You can also learn more about joining and the different clubs in Thomas County by going to our website. Feel free to contact Club Leaders to get a feel for how you might fit into that club.

You can also Follow us on Facebook @Thomas County Extension/4-H.

**Please note:** 4-H Online Registration is open to re-enroll. It has been updated to the 2.0 version. If you have any issues with re-enrollment please contact the office and we can assist you.
48 Hours of 4-H

Join us this fall in seeing just how much we can give back to our communities! The weekend after National 4-H Week is the perfect opportunity to setup a service project and join the 48 Hours of 4-H Service Challenge, October 9-10, 2021. Register your projects online and then follow up with a report so Kansas 4-H will see all the great work that happened across the state.

Achievement Banquet

The Achievement Banquet will be held on November 19th in the 4-H building at 6:30pm. This event will showcase the winners of the 2021 Fair and the achievements of 4-H members from this past year.

Shooting Sports Projects

4-H members who are enrolling in the various shooting sports disciplines must enroll via 4-H Online in a timely manner so they will receive full educational benefit of the sport. 4-H members must be 8 years old before Jan. 1 of 2022 to participate in shooting sports. The deadline to enroll in the BB, Air Pistol, and Air Rifle projects is coming soon. Stay tuned for more information.

Shooting Sports Survey

As the Archery and Shotgun seasons end and the BB, Air Rifle and Air Pistol seasons begin, the Extension Office would like your feedback. Please complete the short survey regarding your experiences with the shooting sports project.

Photography Shutterbugs Events

- Shutterbugs at Big Creek—October 30th at the Ag. Research Center in Hays, KS
- Shutterbugs at Old Jefferson Town—November 6th in Oskaloosa, KS

Entomology Project

The 2021 Kansas 4-H Insect Spectacular occurred on June 21st, 23rd, and 25th. This year there were three webinar sessions each lasting about an hour. Recordings for all three sessions in 2021 as well as the recordings from the 2020 Insect Spectacular are available on the Kansas 4-H website. Also, save the dates for the 2022 Insect Spectacular. They have been set for June 17th and 18th.

KYLF

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum will be held November 20-21 at Rock Springs. This event is for youth ages 14-18 before January 1, 2022. It will feature workshops, consulting groups, inspirational speakers, Youth Council Elections, and opportunities to learn and have fun. Registration is due November 1st and should be available online soon.

Project Leader Training Series

A Kansas 4-H Volunteer Project Leader Training Series is scheduled for fall 2021! All sessions are free and will be recorded. Sessions begin at 6:30pm. Topics include: Personal Development: Public Speaking; STEM: Rocketry; FCS: Textile Science; Animal Science: Livestock; Service Learning; Creative Arts—Visual Arts: Barn Quilts; Financial Literacy; and Ag & Natural Resources: Wildlife. For more information and to register, go to the 4-H website.

Dog Conference & Quiz Bowl

The 2021 State 4-H Dog Conference and Quiz Bowl will be held at Rock Springs on October 23-24. The theme this year is “Survivin’ and Thrivin’ with 4-H K9s” and includes educational sessions, speakers, and skill-a-thon. For more information, visit the Dog Events page.
Volunteers

It’s that time again and we need your help!! The enrollment date for adult volunteers is the same as that for 4-H members, October 1st. Returning volunteers will need to re-enroll on 4-H Online and verify their information just like returning 4-H members. If you are a new volunteer, please contact the office so we can get the forms and instructions to you. Call Joanna at (785) 460-4582 or email joannajohnson@ksu.edu.

***If you know someone who would be a great resource for our 4-H members to learn from, (friend, community member, etc.) please contact the office. We are always looking for new project leaders and volunteers.***

Club Attendance

For the 2021-2022 year, 4-H members wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to attend 6 club meetings between the months of August 2021 and July 2022. Members must attend meetings for the club they are enrolled in on 4-H Online. Business must be conducted at the meeting in order for the meeting to qualify for attendance. College students who enroll in 4-H for their final year must still attend 6 meetings either in person or by technology such as Skype or Zoom.

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.” Club leaders or a designated club member should send attendance sign-in sheets to Joanna after each meeting to ensure timely record-keeping. Sign-in sheets can be dropped off at the office or emailed to joannajohnson@ksu.edu.

Resource Guide

The Extension Office would like to create a Resource Guide of helpful information for 4-H families. If you have suggestions of something we can add, please let us know. This could be something you wish you knew when you were a new family or something you still don’t know much about. Help us help you!

Schedules & Calendars

A new 4-H year begins October 1, and with that our 4-H community club leaders and project program leaders are developing their schedule of events and activities. Please contact the Thomas County Extension Office at 785-460-4582 with the dates and locations of your meetings and events. Our office has a calendar posted on our website for your convenience. If you have a meeting or event you would like us to add, or if you make changes to regularly scheduled meetings, please let us know. This will help us keep an updated calendar and will help ensure you get the dates you need for the 4-H Building without scheduling conflicts.

This is a reminder that we get use of the building without a fee through the Thomas County Fair Board, so we need to appreciate their gracious offer. There are times when that building is rented to the public and that revenue is used for maintenance expenses.

This is also a good time to remind 4-H leaders that the building needs to be cleaned after each use, even if that means someone before you did a poor job of cleaning. Having our 4-H members clean the building after each use teaches responsible behavior. Leaving the building cleaner when we leave than when we arrive shows our appreciation and mature attitude.

A thank you note to the Fair Board for their support during the fair and for the use of the building would be a great way to show appreciation. The Extension staff wish you a great new 4-H year. Thank you!
Thomas County
Women in Agriculture

October 23rd and 30th
8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Registration: $20/person

This program is to help women in Thomas County feel comfortable learning about agriculture in a group, asking questions, and expanding their knowledge in our agriculture industry.

Presentations By:
Farmers Bank & Trust
Kansas Farm Management Association
Thomas County Farm Bureau

Tours At:
Nutrien Ag Solutions
CCC Farm
Frahm Farmland
McCarty Farm

To register please call the Extension Office at 785-460-4582 or stop by and pay the registration fee to ensure your spot by Friday, October 15th. Only 30 spots available.
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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 Emily Bennigsdorf at 785-460-4582.