We’re Hiring!

The Thomas County Extension Office is currently accepting applications for a new Family and Community Wellness Extension Agent. Extension Agents are professional educators who serve as a link between Kansas State University and communities across Kansas. Individuals in this position will lead dynamic individual, family, and community wellness extension programs. Programming may include strengthening families and individuals, building community capacity, family and community health and wellness and local volunteer development.

For more information and to apply, please visit the K-State Research and Extension Current Job Openings website. Application deadline is February 16th.

Beef Weigh-In

Beef weigh-in will be held Saturday, February 19th from 9:00am to 11:30am at Colby Community College Farm. Tags are $3.00 each, and we will be collecting $5.00 per animal to be sold to pay for post-Fair advertising. Please bring cash or check to pay for your tags and advertising. Each market steer/heifer is required to have an ear tag at the county fair and state fair. Breeding animals are not required to have a tag at our fair.

Walk Kansas is Almost Here!

Get your teams together now! The KSRE Walk Kansas health initiative will be held March 27—May 21, 2022.

The goal of Walk Kansas is to help teams of six people be more active, make better nutrition choices, and walk away stress. For many, it’s a great way to get motivated to lead a healthier life.

Sign up and Walk Kansas!
Upcoming Events

**February**

1st-2nd—High Plains No-Till Conference  
– Burlington, CO  
For more information, [Click here!](#)

2nd—K-State Garden Hour Webinar Series:  
Indoor Seed Starting– Noon-1pm  
[Click here to register!](#)

3rd—Kansas Corn School (virtual)– 6pm-8pm via Zoom  
[Click here to register!](#)

7th—Crop Talk Webinar Series: Manure and your Soil Fertility Program– Noon-1pm  
[Click here to register!](#)

8th—Kansas Soybean School– 8am-1pm in Oakley  
[Click here](#) to pre-register by January 14th!

9th—Living Well Wednesday Webinar Series: The Five Languages of Appreciation  
– 12:15-1pm  
[Click here to register!](#)

10th—Carbon Program 101– Noon-2pm in Brewster  
Register by calling 785-460-4582

10th-11th—Women Managing the Farm Conference–  
Manhattan, KS  
[Click here to register!](#)

14th—Crop Talk Webinar Series– Noon-1pm

15th—Weed Management School– 9am-Noon at City Limits in Colby  
[Click here to register!](#)

21st—Crop Talk Webinar Series:  
Managing Soil Fertility During Record High Fertilizer Prices– Noon-1pm

23rd—Living Well Wednesday Webinar Series– 12:15-1pm

23rd—KSRE Women in Ag: Risk Management Skills- Beef Cow/Calf Risk Management & Cattle Marketing– 5:30pm-8:30pm  
Call the Thomas County Extension Office for information: 785-460-4582.

28th—Crop Talk Webinar Series: Growing Nitrogen with Cover Crops– Noon-1pm

**March**

2nd—K-State Garden Hour Webinar Series: Landscape Design 101– Noon-1pm  
[Click here to register!](#)

7th—Crop Talk Webinar Series: Climate Update and Kansas Mesonet– Noon-1pm

9th—Living Well Wednesday Webinar Series:  
Preparing Your Finances for Times of Disaster– 12:15-1pm  
[Click here to register!](#)

23rd—Living Well Wednesday Webinar Series– 12:15-1pm

27th—Walk Kansas begins

For more upcoming events visit our webpage!
Winter Livestock Waterers

As temperatures fluctuate in North West Kansas, we are starting to see those colder nights making an appearance. Livestock producers know good and well how important water is for their animals which is making the thought of winter weather a little more difficult to accept. Now is the perfect time to double check the watering systems that are set up for your animals.

Having access to water that is clean and drinkable will make a large difference in your herd throughout the upcoming months. On a Cattle Chat podcast, veterinarian and BCI director Brad White, was talking about cattle herds during the cooler months, “Cattle will typically drink about 1 gallon of water per day for every 100 pounds of weight they are able to maintain.” Keep in mind that lactating cows will consume more water than dry cows.

Goats need two to three gallons of water daily. However, goats may get by on only about a half-gallon a day or less while grazing lush green grass. In addition, a lactating doe requires more than two to three gallons of water, depending on how much she is getting from grass, hay and how much milk she is producing. Sheep will consume anywhere from ½ to 5 gallons of water per day, depending upon their physiological state, the content of water in their feed, and environmental conditions. Requirements increase greatly during late gestation and lactation. Water intake is positively correlated to feed intake.

Clean water is vital to keep your herd condition up and your animals healthy. This is also a great time to consider what size of tank you will have to keep the water flowing without it freezing this winter. This may mean looking into a frost-free watering system to help make your life easier on those chilly mornings.

“Investing in a freezeproof waterer can be expensive but the savings in time and labor of breaking ice may be well worth it,” White said. If you have free flowing water, cattle and other livestock are likely to drink more throughout the day which will help them maintain their body condition. Even if you invest in a frost-free system, veterinarians still urge producers to clean them periodically.

Livestock waterers can get filled and cluttered with items that could prevent the water from being clean or block the flowing system. Hay and alfalfa debris, feed, other saliva and dirt throughout the winter can cause problems in the tanks.

White suggests that if you have cattle drinking from a well to have it tested periodically to make sure it is safe at all times.
**Bake for Family Fun Month**
Since it’s cold outside, warm up by baking with your family!

The Home Baking Association promotes family baking as a way to spend time together. From toddlers to grandparents, baking can cross generations to build stronger family bonds.

During February, weekly lessons are available with recipes, activities and more. At the end of February, learn about sharing with others the baking successes you created. Baking for others is a great way to improve wellbeing, reduce stress and more.

Learn more at www.homebaking.org/bake-for-family-fun/.

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**February is American Heart Month**

American Heart Month is during the month of February to remind everyone to focus on their heart and cardiovascular health. For 2022, the focus is on hypertension, or high blood pressure. This is the leading cause of heart disease and stroke.

For tools to help educate about controlling hypertension, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has put together a toolkit of resources for clinical providers, public health professionals, and patients.

Educational resources can be found at www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/american_heart_month.htm.

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**A Winning Plan for Bowl Game Party Food**

Football fans are excited to see who will be in this year’s Big Game. Start planning now for your gameday party and remember these food safety tips for a touchdown!

**Keep it clean**—Wash your hands often. Keep prep tools and surfaces clean to reduce cross contamination.

**Cook to the right temperature**—A food thermometer will prevent food safety penalties leading to foodborne illness. Three temperature rules include:
- 165°F for all poultry
- 160°F for ground meat
- 145°F for steaks, roasts, and chops

**Watch the clock**—Like the quarterback watches the game clock, you keep time on how long perishable food sits at room temperature. Don’t get a delay of game penalty for leaving food out for more than two hours!

**Serve at the right temperature**—keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Foods held between 40-140°F can allow bacteria to grow and you could get ejected from the game!
4-H Scholarships
The Kansas 4-H Foundation partners with Kansas 4-H to offer over 50 different scholarships to help fund higher education for 4-H youth who are high school seniors or older. For a copy of the application and a list of available scholarships, please visit the Kansas 4-H Youth Development website. All applications, additional documentation and reference letters must be submitted online no later than March 1.

The Thomas County 4-H Council Scholarship is open to Thomas County high school seniors enrolled in 4-H. Applications are available at the Extension Office and must be turned in by March 15th.

County Club Days
County Club Day will be held on March 11th at the Extension Office & 4-H Building. Now is the time to start thinking about how you might like to participate. Activities include demonstrations, project talks, dancing, music and dramatics, reading, etc. In order to participate, sign-up with your club leader or contact the Extension Office. More information involving registration will sent to everyone soon, so stay tuned!

Junior Producer Days
Junior producer days are held to provide educational material and hands-on experiences for youth, parents, leaders, and extension agents. Junior Beef Producer Day will be held Saturday, March 5th and early registration ends February 11th. Junior Sheep Producer Day will be held Saturday, March 19th with early registration due February 25th. For more information and to register, click here.

Spring Shows
Many counties are starting to think about their annual spring shows. Check with the Extension Office periodically to learn about upcoming Livestock, Horse and Dog shows.

Spring Weigh-In
Small animal weigh-in will be held Thursday, May 5th from 4-7pm at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Weather date (if necessary) will be May 12th.

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.

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.

Insect Art Contest
The Kansas State Pesticide Safety and IPM program is hosting an insect-themed art contest for Kansas 4-H members and art students. Visit their website for complete rules and an entry form. This year the artwork needs to fit into the contest theme of “The Benefits of Insects.” The goal is to explore why insects benefit us as a society and why they are important, and create an art piece that captures that information. Selected artwork will be used to promote why insects are important and to create other educational items. Artists that have art selected will receive a certificate and a prize to recognize their achievement. Winners will be selected from four age categories from kindergarten to high school.
Dog Club Meetings

Pawsome Paws, the Thomas County 4-H Dog Club, will begin their spring practices on Tuesday, February 8th. Meetings will be held on Tuesdays at 7pm at the 4-H Building. For more information, please contact Angie Harris at 785-443-2797.

Scott Lake Camp

An introductory camp is being planned for young campers ages 7-9. This event will not be our usual camping trip at Camp Lakeside, but an event planned and run by local Extension Agents instead. Each county is allowed 10 campers and 2 counselors (14+ years old). We will be keeping a sign-up sheet at the office opening on March 11th.

Rock Springs Ranch 4-H Camp

Camp enrollment is open now. However, several changes have occurred. In the past, Thomas County has attended camp with the Great Northwest Camp Group. Due to recent changes at Rock Springs Ranch, that group is no longer together. In 2022, Rock Springs is offering flexible camp session opportunities. 4-H members can attend any session during the summer, not just a specific one. They are also offering Open Enrollment, allowing non-4-H members to attend. For more information on session dates, pricing rates and new leadership opportunities, please visit the Rock Springs Ranch website.

Discovery Days

Discovery Days offers in-depth training through educational sessions from content and youth development experts. Members will learn new ideas, techniques, and skills they can use personally and in their 4-H clubs and communities. It will be held June 1-3 on the K-State Campus. Registration is coming soon.

Shooting Sports

Volunteers Needed

Do you or someone you know have a love and knowledge of firearms, shooting sports and youth? If so, boy do we have a place for you! We are looking for volunteers to assist our current 4-H shooting sports coaches, especially in the area of BB gun and air pistol/air rifle.

All coaching positions require certification. Certification involves a 3-day training March 25-27 at Rock Springs 4-H Ranch.

To be a viable program, 4-H shooting sports requires certified coaches and a certified coordinator. No coaches, no coordinator, no program. Have coordinator but no coaches = no program. Have coaches but no coordinator = no program. If you know anyone who would be interested in helping with this program, please contact the Thomas County Extension office.

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.

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

The enrollment date for adult volunteers is the same as that for 4-H members, October 1st. This year, new and returning volunteers need to complete the Volunteer Application/Renewal on 4-H Online. If you have questions, call Joanna at (785) 460-4582 or email joannajohnson@ksu.edu.
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**Notes:**
- SS = Shooting Sports
- AH = Abilene Hustlers
- BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem
- Gem = Gem 4-H
- 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.