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Thomas County

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

March 2023

Volume: 177

Come work with us as a paid
Summer Intern!

Become an intern with the Thomas County Extension Office to help with agriculture questions, plan 4-H events, assist with fair, all while building your resume!

Go to www.thomas.k-state.edu/ for more information!

 Thomas County

Thomas County Extension is an equal opportunity employer.

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Do you know an individual that wants to start a career in Extension or would be a great candidate to work in our office? The Summer Internship Position is open for the 2023 season! Go to <https://www.thomas.k-state.edu/> to find the application and more information.

Check out the Agriculture Focus page to learn about preparing your lawn for the upcoming season.

It's time for Walk Kansas! Get your teams ready to go. Check out the Family and Consumer Science page for more information.



Our 4-H Pages have some important updates and information on them in this issue. We have a new required training for showing and selling livestock. We also have a new app that the office and clubs will be using to communicate on for 4-H.



K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Upcoming Events

March

1st—K-State Garden Hour Webinar
Series: Houseplants: Basics & Beyond—
Noon-1pm

[Click here to register!](#)

3rd—Cattlemen's Day— Manhattan
For more information, [click here!](#)

8th—Living Well Wednesday Webinar
Series: Stretching Your Food Budget

[Click here to register!](#)

15th—Morel Mushroom Identification Training—
Noon-1pm online

[Click here to register!](#)



16th—Morel Mushroom Identification Training— 6-7pm online

[Click here to register!](#)

22nd—Living Well Wednesday Webinar

Series: Nutrition and Skills to Get You Started on Family Meals



LIVING WELL WEDNESDAY
K-State Research and Extension Webinar Series

[Click here to register!](#)

26th—Walk Kansas begins

[Click here to register!](#)

April

5th—K-State Garden Hour Webinar
Series: Growing to New Heights with Vertical Gardening— Noon-1pm

[Click here to register!](#)

18th & 20th—Online Grant Writing Workshop- 1:30-4:30pm both days

[Click here to register!](#)



27th—YQCA Training for 4-H members—
6:30pm at the 4-H Building.

Call the Extension Office to register!

May

3rd—K-State Garden Hour Webinar

Series: Drought Tolerant Plants for a Challenging Kansas Landscape
Noon-1pm

[Click here to register!](#)

7th—GAPS Food Safety plan workshop
– 1:30-3:30pm online

[Click here to register!](#)

10th—President Linton Visit Colby- Join us in an open public forum and smaller breakout sessions to discuss how K-State Research and Extension can better serve Thomas County. More info to come.

23rd & 24th—FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training- 1-5pm online

[Click here to register!](#)

29th—Memorial Day: Extension Office Closed

June

4th—YQCA Training for 4-H members—
2pm at the Thomas County Office Complex

Call the Extension Office to register!

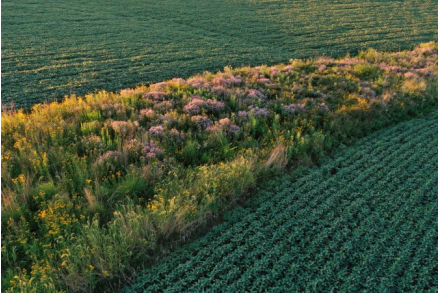
7th—K-State Garden Hour Webinar

Series: Drought Tolerant Lawns of Kansas—Warm Season Turfgrasses
Noon-1pm

[Click here to register!](#)

For more upcoming events visit our [website](#) or call the office at 785-460-4582!

Can you benefit from Prairie Strips?



Bringing insects into fields can benefit crops in many ways but it can be difficult to attract them to your fields as well as keep

them in the area once you have them established in the field.

Kansas State University assistant professor in entomology Tania Kim is researching the benefits of prairie strips in Kansas' climate to better utilize insects in agriculture.

Prairie strips, also known as conservation strips or floral enhancements, utilize forbs and grasses to draw insects to benefit the ecosystem around crops, and decrease pesticide use.

The strips are suggested to be planted around the border or along contour lines within the fields depending on the slope of the land.

"Iowa State University found numerous benefits of prairie strips including enhancing water quality, reducing soil erosion and increasing carbon sequestration," Kim said. "They have also looked at the benefits for wildlife, like birds, as well."

Michigan State is also joining the interest in prairie strips in looking at ways to bring pollinators to farm fields while supporting them in a sustainable way.

Kim is focusing on if the prairie strips would benefit drier landscapes in Kansas, specifically soybean crops.

"There could be that added benefit of increasing pollination, where wheat and corn doesn't necessarily need pollinators. But also, there are several beneficial insects that are brought in that can reduce pests in soybeans."

Kim also acknowledged that decomposers can also be attracted to the prairie strips such as ground beetles, dung beetles, and ants. These decomposers will not only feed on

other insects but can also feed on seeds of weeds to help with weed control.

Prairie strips may include high diversity mixtures of many forbs and perennial grasses.

"You want perennial plants that will flower throughout the season... a mixture so that they provide season-long floral resources for those insects," Kim said.

While it may be a time investment for the prairie strips to be established, there is potential for increased pest suppression, which means less insecticide being sprayed, Kim added.

"If your crop relies on pollination, I think there's that added benefit, so you don't have to bring in honeybees. You can rely on the wild bees," she said.

Some management is required to maintain plant health and growth such as mowing and required prescribed burns.

Celebrate National Ag Day!

Open your calendar to March 21 and write down National Ag Day! This is a day to celebrate everyone in agriculture and how agriculture is in all of our lives each day.

The goal of this day is to:

- Learn about the production of food, fiber and renewable resources.
- Understand the role of agriculture in our economy.
- Appreciate the importance of safe, abundant and affordable agricultural products.
- Learn about the many career opportunities in agriculture.

Speaking of careers, there are options! They range from agribusiness, to communications, to park management, to food science and many more.





Walk Kansas 2023

March 26–May 20

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

Offered again this year:

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

This year's colors are dark lavender and heather blue lagoon.

New this year:

US Route 56 virtual trail!

This journey actually begins in New Mexico, but it won't take long before you reach Kansas to enjoy your trek across the state.

Med Instead of Meds –

6-week virtual learning series focused on the Mediterranean-style eating pattern. Learn the 7 Simple Steps to eating the Med Way. Each session will explore 1-2 simple steps, a mindfulness skill, and introduce Med Way recipes.

National Nutrition Month



The [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) supports the annual focus of National Nutrition Month®. The goal is to educate consumers about making informed

food choices along with improving physical activity.

For the March 2023 campaign, the theme is “**Fuel for the Future.**” Eating with sustainability in mind is a tasty way to nourish ourselves during every phase of life and protect the environment.

There are tools to help spread the message of choosing nutritious foods and boosting a variety of flavors. This includes social media posts and many tip sheets, activities, and more. See the [National Nutrition Month®](#) website for details.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Corned Beef!

To start, what does the term “corning” mean? It is a form of dry-curing beef brisket with “corns” of salt. These corns are not actual corn, but refer to the size of the salt crystals. Originally, this was a way to preserve beef during the winter months and through the season of Lent.

Today, corned beef can be found throughout the year. It is traditionally served with cabbage on St. Patrick's Day but also as tasty meat for sandwiches.

You can buy corned beef that is ready to cook. It is in a salt brine with spices. Use a long, moist cooking method either in the oven, on top of the stove or a slow cooker. It should be “forktender” with an internal temperature of 160°F. It will likely have a pink color after cooking because of the nitrites used in the curing process. Cut into slices against the grain.

Learn more about preparing corned beef [here!](#)





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 Day

County Club Day will be held on March 10th. 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. Contact the Extension Office by 5pm on March 3rd to sign up.

Also, plan to add Regional Club Day to your calendar. It will be held March 24th at Brewster School.

Dog Club Meetings

Pawsome Paws, the Thomas County 4-H Dog Club, began their spring practices on February 28th. However, it's not too late to join! Meetings will be held on Tuesdays at 7pm at the 4-H Building. Kids will need to bring a copy of vaccine records as all dogs are required to have a current Distemper/Parvo (DHLP), Kennel Cough (Bordetella), and Rabies vaccine before the dog can come to practice. Angie will keep a copy of the vaccine record and the 4-H member will keep the original. Please note, there have been a few changes in Agility which will be covered at practice. For more information, please contact Angie Harris at 785-443-2797.



Small Animal Weigh-In

DATE CHANGE!

Small animal weigh-in will now be held on **Saturday, April 29th from 9am-12pm** at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Ear tags are \$3 each and advertising fees have been covered by Adams Bank & Trust this year. Weather date (if necessary) will be May 6th. Please have your livestock ready and if you will be out of town please make arrangements beforehand.

We need volunteers to help unload, load, and move the animals during weigh-in. Please contact the office if you are able to help!

Archery Project

The Archery Project is getting ready to begin their season. Members must attend one of the two safety meetings. They will be held March 12th and March 19th at 6pm in the 4-H Building.

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.

KS Equine Webinar Series

This series gives 4-H members, volunteers, and parents skill and knowledge about horses and the industry in KS. Webinars will be hosted live the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Central Standard Time. For more information and registration click [here](#).

Horse Level Testing

In years past, 4-H members needed to complete Horse Level Testing in order to compete at the District and State levels. There will no longer be District Shows or a Levels testing requirement to compete at the State level. To be eligible, you must exhibit a properly identified horse at a horse show in a class group and be qualified to exhibit in any class in that group. For more information, visit the 4-H Horse [website](#) or call the Extension Office.



YQCA Training Required for all Livestock Participants

The Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) certification training will be required for 4-H members ages 8-18 to be able to show and sell their livestock this year for fair. 7 year-olds are encouraged to attend, but will not become certified. **Species that require certification include beef, hogs, sheep, goats, poultry and rabbits.** This training focuses on food safety, animal well-being, and life skill development. The office will be hosting two in-person dates for members to receive their certificate. If they cannot attend either in-person date they are able to complete the training online. Both dates will be held in the Thomas County Office Complex Board Room. The first training will be **Thursday, April 27th at 6:30pm and the second will be Sunday, June 4th at 2:00pm.** The training will be \$3/ participant in-person or \$12 online. All certificates of completion are due to the office by **July 6th.** For questions and to register, please call the Extension Office at 785-460-4582.

Club Attendance

New for the 2022-2023 year, 4-H members wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to **attend 5 club meetings between the months of August 2022 and July 2023 and complete the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) training each year.** 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 their club's page on the BAND App.

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.

2023 Fair Livestock Weights

Please be aware of the weights, as some have changed from 2022. Livestock weights for the 2023 Thomas County Fair are as follows:

Beef- 1000-1800

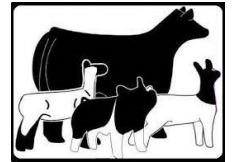
Swine- 225-350

Sheep- 100-160

Goats- 50-125

Animal Science Webinar Series

The Animal Science Webinar Series is designed to give Kansas 4-H members an opportunity to learn more about the livestock industry, career opportunities and good animal husbandry practices. Webinars will be shared monthly, the third Monday of the month. To view previous recordings, visit the 4-H [website](#).



Spring Shows are Coming!

The Extension Office receives information about livestock spring shows regularly throughout the late winter and early spring months. To help get this information out to our 4-H members please check the Thomas County 4-H BAND group to see what shows are coming up around our area. We will be uploading new flyers every Friday in the afternoon.

BAND App



This is a friendly reminder for 4-H members, leaders, and parents to download and stay up to date with the BAND app. BAND is a mobile application used to facilitate group communication. You can find announcements, reminders, calendars, photos, files, and more on the application. There are groups for each club, 4-H Council and Thomas County 4-H. You can join the county group at [this link](#). If you want to join a group or need help downloading/navigating the app, please contact the Extension Office.



Insect Spectacular



The Kansas 4-H Insect Spectacular, a two-day state-wide entomology workshop, will be held June 16-17, 2023 in Manhattan, Kansas. Classes will include basic pinning, basic and advanced identification, insect photography, and much more. Registration and full information will be available later this spring.

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 “Insect Superheroes.” The goal is to explore why real-life insects can be considered superheroes. 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. Entries should be postmarked by April 14th.

Project Goals

With reenrollment complete, youth have selected their projects and now it is time to set their 2023 goals.

- **Action:** What are you going to do?
- **Result:** What are you going to accomplish?
- **Timeline:** When are you going to complete the action?

A well-written goal combines all three of the above points! Project goals should be set by the end of January. The Kansas 4-H Program has a guide for [Setting Project Goals](#) for free online.



Scott Lake Camp

An introductory camp is being planned for young campers ages 7-9. This event will be back at our usual Camp Lakeside, with improvements from the last time we attended. Each county is allowed 10 campers and 2 counselors (14+ years old). Registration is \$110 and we will be keeping a sign-up sheet at the office starting March 10th.

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 2023, 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 7-9 on the K-State Campus. Registration is coming soon.

Project Leaders

With a new 4-H year comes the need for project leaders. 4-H programs cannot thrive without dedicated leaders! Project leaders **work closely with 4-H members, leaders, and parents within the local club or at the county level on a specific project.** If you or anyone you know might be interested in becoming a project leader, please direct them to the Extension Office. We have a great library of [resources](#) to assist them and there are also trainings available.

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 6pm	3 Cattlemen's Day	4
5 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 3pm	6 AH—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm BPG—Meeting @ Henry Hall 7pm GEM—Meeting @ Gem Comm. Bldg. 7pm	7 PP—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	8 Living Well Wednesday	9 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 6pm Fairboard Mtg. @ 8pm	10 County Club Day Scott Lake Camp registration opens	11 Junior Swine Producer Day
12 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 3pm Archery--Safety Meeting @6pm	13 SV— Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	14 PP—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	15 Thomas Co 4-H Scholarship due! Morel Mushroom ID Training	16 Morel Mushroom ID Training SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 6pm	17	18 Junior Meat Goat Producer Day
19 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 3pm Archery--Safety Meeting @6pm	20 4-H Equine Webinar Series	21 PP—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	22 Living Well Wednesday	23 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 6pm	24 Regional Club Day	25
26 Walk Kansas begins SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 3pm	27  4-H Council Mtg. Animal Science Webinar Series	28 PP—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	29	30 SS—Practice @ 4-H Bldg. 6pm	31	
					PP = Pawsome Paws SS = Shooting Sports AH = Abilene Hustlers	BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H SV = Solomon Valley



K-STATE

Research and Extension

Thomas County Office Complex

350 South Range Ave. Suite 16

Colby, Kansas 67701

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.