Upcoming Programs

Make sure to check out the various programs mentioned in the newsletter this month. There are several Agriculture and 4-H programs scheduled for the next few months. Keep an eye out for registration deadlines and program locations. If you need more information about anything listed in the newsletter, please call the Extension Office.

Thank you, Fair Board!

The Thomas County Fair Board is one of our greatest supporters. The fair board graciously lets us use the 4-H building, gives us supplies, materials and premiums for a wonderful county fair experience and is currently building new facilities for use that will greatly benefit 4-H and other details that most of us aren’t even aware of. Please, consider sending a thank you note for the 2019 year and express an appreciation for the Board’s 2020 support. Part of that appreciation needs to be taking excellent care of the facility and grounds during our use. Remember to collect garbage in all of the rooms and dispose of it outside, sweep the floor and mop spilled beverages in the 4-H building. Please, consider leaving the site cleaner than when you arrived. Let’s not take the fair board for granted. Thank you, parents and 4-H leaders for a high quality 4-H program and have a great new year.
Soybean Management School
When/Where: January 13th in Smith Center, KS
This school will cover a number of issues facing soybean growers including: weed control, crop production practices, nutrient management, and soil fertility, insects, disease management, and market outlook. Register online here.

Cover Your Acres Conference
When/Where: January 14th & 15th in Oberlin, KS
A research based educational conference for producers and industry. It’s a conference for new ideas and updates in crop production practices relevant to the Central Plains. Register online.

Calving School
When/Where: January 16th in WaKeeney, KS
Come learn about the A-Zs of getting a healthy calf on hoof. Calf delivery and problem solving, pre/post weaning nutrition and vaccine handling will also be discussed. Register online or call 785-743-6361.

Kansas Agriculture Technologies Conference
When/Where: Jan. 16 & 17 in Junction City, KS
This event will provide engaging and informative presentations and discussions on the latest trends in precision agriculture. Registration is now open online.

No-Till On the Plains Conference
When/Where: January 28th & 29th in Wichita, KS
This conference is designed to provide education and networking on agricultural production systems that model nature. It features an expert line-up of soil health speakers and CCA CEUs are available. Registration can be found online.

Sorghum Management School
When/Where: January 29th in Scott City, KS
This school is being offered to provide in-depth training targeted for sorghum producers. The school is free to attend, but please pre-register online. We will work to ensure that CCA credits are available. Lunch will be provided thanks to the sponsors—Pioneer & John Deere.

Corn Management School
When/Where: February 3rd in Oakley, KS
This corn school is designed to provide corn producers with in-depth training targeted for corn producers. The school is free to attend, but please pre-register online. We will work to ensure that CCA credits are available. Lunch will be provided thanks to the sponsors—Pioneer & John Deere.

Winter Ranch Management Workshop
When/Where: Feb. 11th in Plainville, KS
Dr. Bob Weaber, a cow-calf specialist with K-State Research and Extension will be on hand to answer producers’ questions on beef cattle issues including animal health, nutrition, management, genetics and reproduction.

Women Managing the Farm Conference
When/Where: Feb. 13th & 14th in Manhattan, KS
Designed to keep women up-to-date on the latest advancements in agriculture and thriving within their rural communities. Attendees select from presentations covering many topics, including farm finances, relationships and health, agriculture and estate law, and many more. Register online.

Cattlemen’s Day
When/Where: March 6th in Manhattan, KS
The 107th annual Cattlemen’s Day will take place in Manhattan, KS on March 6, 2020. An update will be given, followed by afternoon breakout sessions. Contact the office for more information on registration closer to the event.
ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Since the 1980s there has been an explosion of sugar substitutes in the marketplace. These artificial or highly refined “natural” compounds are used frequently in beverages and processed foods to lower total calories (so-called “diet” foods and beverages) or decrease added sugar (as in “sugar-free” or “low-sugar” products). The number of products available for use at the table or in cooking and baking at home has also increased. While these compounds are touted as calorie-cutting weight loss aids and an option to people with diabetes looking for sweet choices while sticking to their diet, questions about efficacy and safety have dogged them from the start.

Non-Sugar Sweeteners: If a beverage or food tastes sweet but says it is low-calorie or sugar-free, chances are it contains a sugar substitute. “Sugar substitutes as a group are referred to by many names: artificial sweeteners, non-sugar sweeteners, low-calorie sweeteners, non-nutritive sweeteners, or high-intensity sweeteners,” says Alice H. Lichtenstein, DSc, director of the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging.

Most sugar substitutes are non-nutritive: they are not absorbed by the body or are used in very small quantities and therefore provide virtually no calories or nutrients. Some non-nutritive sweeteners are also called high-intensity sweeteners because they are from 100 to 20,000 times sweeter than sucrose. Because they are so sweet, only very small amounts are needed to achieve a level of sweetness similar to sugar, so the typical consumer is likely to consume only small amounts of these compounds at a time. Non-nutritive sweeteners can be found in “diet,” “low-calorie,” “reduced-calorie,” or “sugar-free” beverages, baked goods, puddings, jellies, candy, yogurts and ice creams, for example.

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee did an extensive review of the research findings for aspartame, one of the most common sugar substitutes, and concluded that at current intake levels there appear to be no health concerns. “It is common for consumers to have concerns about the safety of sugar substitutes,” says Lichtenstein. “This is fed, in part, by a considerable amount of information on the web, not all of which is fact based.”

Looking at the body of research to date, sugar substitutes (in reasonable quantities) appear to be a safe alternative to added sugars. Consuming added sugars (in particular sugar-sweetened beverages) is strongly associated with a number of negative health effects, including diabetes and heart disease. Switching from products with added sugars to those sweetened with sugar substitutes can help reduce added sugar intake, but the truly healthy choice is to cut back on sweet-tasting foods in general. Drinking mostly water and getting one’s sweet fix from juicy, delicious, nutrient-packed fruits is truly a “sweet” choice.

Sugar substitutes are regulated as food additives, which means they must undergo premarket review and approval by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before being used in a food or beverage sold in the United States. Scientists must determine that each substance meets the safety standard of “reasonable certainty of no harm” under the intended conditions of its use.

During premarket review, the FDA establishes an acceptable daily intake (ADI) level for sugar substitutes approved as food additives. An ADI is the amount of a substance that is considered safe to consume each day over the course of a person’s lifetime. Even high consumers of sugar substitutes are unlikely to exceed these ADIs.


ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

I am hoping to initiate an Alzheimer’s support group, but the Kansas Alzheimer’s Association requires two support group leaders. I am trained a group facilitator, but I have to have a partner before I can begin a local support group. If interested please call the Extension Office for more information at (785) 460-4582.
Scholarship
Kansas 4-H State Scholarship applications are due to the Extension Office by 5pm on January 23rd. Please make sure each application includes all of the necessary documentation as required. For a copy of the application and a list of available scholarships, please visit the Kansas 4-H Youth Development website.

Beef Weigh-In
Beef weigh-in will be held February 1st from 9:00am to 11:30am at the Colby Livestock Barn. Make-up day will be February 8th, if necessary. Each market steer/heifer is required to have an ear tag at the county fair. Breeding animals are not required to have tags at our fair. Please note: Our tags are NOT acceptable at the Kansas State Fair. If you have an animal you would like to nominate for the State Fair, please let the Extension Office know so we can get an EID tag for that animal! Also, if you’d like to volunteer to help with weigh-in, please let us know.

New this year: We will be charging for advertising at weigh-ins. In previous years, money was taken out of premiums for each animal sold in order to pay for the County Fair Livestock Advertisement in the newspaper. We are collecting the advertising money in advance this year due to software changes. Ear tags will cost $3.00 each, and we will collect $5.00 per animal to be sold in addition to the tags. For example, if a member weighs/tags 3 steers, he/she will pay $9.00 for tags + $5.00 for advertising (because only one steer can be sold per member) for a total of $14.00. Please bring cash or check to purchase your tags and pay for advertising.

Junior Producer Days
Junior producer days are held to provide educational material and hands-on experiences for youth, parents, and leaders. Junior Beef Producer Day will be held Saturday, February 29th with early registration due February 7th. Junior Sheep Producer Day will be held Saturday, March 14th with early registration due February 21st. An optional YQCA training will be held at the end of these events as well. Visit the Youth Livestock website for more information and to register.

Kansas 4-H Dog Judges’ Certification & Training
This event will be held January 24-26 in Manhattan, Kansas. Participants will learn about the four dog phases of showmanship, obedience, agility and rally obedience of the Kansas 4-H Dog Care and Training Project in one weekend. This is a good opportunity for potential/current judges, local project leaders and older 4-H members to observe the training to learn new knowledge and to better understand how they will be judged at invitational shows and the Kansas State Fair 4-H Dog Show. Registration is due January 13th online.

Horse Panorama
The 2020 4-H Horse Panorama has been scheduled for January 24-26 at Rock Springs 4-H Center. Horse Panorama is a compilation of various contests related to the Horse Project. Contests include: quiz bowl, hippology, photography, public speaking presentations, and educational posters. Registration deadline is January 15th. Contest rules and a tentative schedule for Horse Panorama are posted to the Kansas 4-H website.

Western KS District Sheep School
A Sheep School will be held in Jetmore, KS on January 29th. For more information, contact DeWayne Craghead, Hodgeman County Extension Agent at 620-357-8321 or dcraghea@ksu.edu.

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.

County Club Days
County Club Day will be held on March 6th at Sacred Heart School. 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. More information involving registration will be given in future newsletters, so stay tuned!
Citizenship in Action
Citizenship in Action is for Kansas youth to learn how the state legislative process works and how their voice and participation in decision-making can make a difference in their communities. Delegates will tour the Capitol, get tips on how to meet and talk with their legislators, and discuss how youth can have a greater impact in their communities. This event will be held February 16-17 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka, KS. It is open to all youth 13-18 years old as of January 1, 2020. Registration is due January 15th on the CVent website.

Ambassador Training
The 2020 Kansas 4-H Ambassador Training will be February 21-22 at Rock Springs 4-H Center. It is open to all county 4-H ambassadors, interested teens in the 8th-12th grades and Extension staff. The theme is “4-H Ambassadors– Under Construction.” There will be six youth workshops and a keynote speaker. Registration is due February 7th, 2020 on the CVent system. More information will be posted soon.

Kansas 4-H Day with Wildcat Women’s Basketball
The annual Kansas 4-H Day with Wildcat Women's Basketball game vs. University of Kansas will be held on Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. More information will be shared soon.

Shooting Sports Certification Training
If you or someone you know might be interested in becoming a Shooting Sports Instructor, please let the office know. We are always looking for more help. Disciplines include: BB, archery, pistol, rifle, and shotgun. Instructors must attend the Certification Training that will be held March 27-29.

Discovery Days
Discovery Days offers classes and tours about 4-H projects, careers, hobbies, community service and more! It will be held May 27-29 on the K-State Campus. Registration opens March 1st online.

Save the Date
The Great Northwest Rock Springs Camp will be held from June 1st - June 4th, 2020. This camp is for ages 7-12. Start planning your summer now by saving the date!

Campference
This event is focused on “betweenagers,” youth ages 12-14 and will be held June 22-25, 2020 at Rock Springs 4-H Center. Participants will experience the feel of a conference, while enjoying the “camp” activities Rock Springs 4-H Center has to offer. If you are interested in being part of Campference, please register early! Space is limited and fills quickly. Keep an eye out for more information.

Achievement Banquet
On November 22nd, we had another successful Achievement Banquet to celebrate many 4-Her’s and their accomplishments from this past year. If anyone would like a copy of the Banquet Awards Listing, please contact the Extension Office. Also, we still have some prizes for members to pick up.

Club Attendance
For the 2019-2020 year, 4-Her’s wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to attend 6 club meetings between the months of August 2019 and July 2020. 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. 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 4HOnline. If you have questions, call Joanna at (785) 460-4582 or email joannajohnson@ksu.edu.
4-H Tidbits

2020 4-H CALENDAR

Happy 2020 everyone! Here are a few requests:

Be sure to let the Extension Office know of any club or project date/time/site schedules as well as changes to the regular schedules. The Extension Office will assist in getting the word out about changes so frustrated parents aren’t left adrift wondering or sitting in front of a locked door. The fair board needs to know scheduling requests and changes in regard to use of the 4-H building, which is a very reasonable expectation. Also, we have new members that are still learning about 4-H so the more we can help them in this transition time, the better quality of experience they will have.

Parents, please be proactive in finding out dates, times, sites as needed by contacting your 4-H leaders. This is especially important if a meeting or practice has been missed. Keep in mind that our leaders are busy people offering their time and efforts to make Thomas County 4-H a great place for our children to learn life skills.

This is what the Extension Office knows at this point:

AH 4H Club meets 1st Monday — 4H Bldg — 7:00 pm
SV 4H Club meets 2nd Sunday — 4H Bldg — 5:00 pm OR 2nd Monday — 4H Bldg — 7:00 pm. Meetings alternate each month.
BPG 4H Club meets 2nd Monday — Henry Hall, Brewster — 7:30 pm
GEM 4H Club meets 2nd Monday — Gem Community Bldg, Gem — 7:30 pm
CC 4H Club meets 3rd Monday — 4H Bldg — 6:30 pm
4H Council meets 4th Monday — Extension Office — 6:30 pm
BB Practice meets Thursdays — 4H Bldg — 6:00 pm, except during Colby Public School holidays
AR/AP Practice meets Sundays — 4H Bldg — 4:00 pm, except during Colby Public School holidays
Dog Practice meets Tues — 4H Bldg — 7:00 pm. Starting date TBD.

If you see an inaccuracy in time, date or site that needs to be updated, please contact the Extension Office.

Also, please keep the Extension Office updated on changes as the updates occur. This can be done by email, phone call (460-4582) or cell phone text to Sheryl (785-821-2670.)

This is more than a request. It is a need and mandate. Please assist in our attempts at better communication with everyone involved with 4-H.

Thank you, and have a great new year.
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<td><strong>Soybean School in Smith Center</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cover Your Acres Winter Conference</strong></td>
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<td><strong>State 4-H Scholarship app. due to Ext. Office</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Beef Weigh-In</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SS = Shooting Sports</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gem = Gem 4-H</strong></td>
<td><strong>CC = Colby Comets</strong></td>
<td><strong>SV = Solomon Valley</strong></td>
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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 Sheryl Carson at 785-460-4582.