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Thomas County

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

January 2024

Volume: 186

WE'RE HIRING!

Thomas County
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Extension Agent

www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/careers

APPLICATION DEADLINE
February 7, 2024

K-STATE | Thomas County
Research and Extension

Kansas State University is an equal opportunity employer.

Laurel Despain
4-H & Youth Development
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We're Hiring!

The Thomas County Extension Office is looking for a motivated individual to join our team as an Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Please help us spread the word and contact our office if you or someone you know may be interested. For more details about the position and applying, click [here](#).

4-H Pizza Fundraiser — Gambino's Pizza

Sales for our annual fundraiser started in December and will run through January 15th. Payment is due at the time of sale and all orders/payments are due to the extension office by January 15th. Prizes will be awarded to the top 3 sellers. Pizza making day will be Saturday, February 3rd. Pizza will be made at 9:00 AM in the 4-H Building.

Scholarships

The Kansas 4-H Foundation and Thomas County 4-H Council have scholarships available for high school seniors. Check out the 4-H Tidbits page to learn more!



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Upcoming Events

January

 **16th & 17th—Cover Your Acres**— in Oberlin
Winter Conference

[Register here!](#)

17th-18th—Soil Health U- in Salina

[Register here!](#)

18th--Kansas Corn & Soybean School- in Garden City

[Register here!](#)



22nd-24th—No-Till on the Plains- in Wichita

[Register here!](#)

23rd--Soil Fertility Schools- in Smith Center and Ellsworth

[Register here!](#)

24th--Local Food Virtual Town Hall

[Register here!](#)

24th--Cow-Calf Production Clinic- in Hays

[Register here!](#)

25th--Soil Fertility Schools- in Goodland and Jennings



[Register here!](#)

25th--Developing Low Input/High Efficiency Production Systems- in Liberal

[Register here!](#)

25th-26th--KARTA Ag Tech Conference- in Manhattan

[Register here!](#)

29th--Cow-Calf Production Clinic- in Larned

[Register here!](#)



February

5th & 8th—FSMA Produce Safety Grower Training- 5-9pm online both days. This training is for produce growers in Kansas and Missouri and other regulatory or support personnel.

[Register here!](#)

6th--Swine Profitability Conference— Hosted at the Stanley Stout Center in Manhattan, KS

[Register here!](#)

6th-7th--High Plains No-Till- in Burlington, CO

[Register here!](#)

9th--Local Food Producer Workshop- in Olathe, KS and virtually

[Register here!](#)



10th--Local Food Producer Workshop- in Hutchinson

[Register here!](#)

13th--Alfalfa Winter School- in Great Bend

[Register here!](#)

14th--Living Well Wednesday webinar: Women's Health and Functional Medicine

[Register here!](#)

14th-16th—Women Managing the Farm Conference- Held in Manhattan, the theme for the 20th annual conference is "Rise".



[Register here!](#)

21st-22nd-- Farming Evolution- in Holyoke, CO

[Register here!](#)

Crop Talk Online Series— Stay tuned for more information!

For a complete listing of upcoming events, please visit our website: thomas.k-state.edu.



Preparing for Winter Weather Extremes

It is hard to prepare for extreme winter weather when December in Kansas may be one of the warmest on record. However, variability seems to be a characteristic of our weather lately and a drop in temperature with or without above normal precipitation could create some very stressful conditions for livestock. Animals adapt to colder weather as we go through the fall into winter, but if there is an abrupt change, without acclimation, the stress is compounded. Planning ahead can lessen some of the challenges.

Many of us are all too aware of the impact wind has on what it takes to keep warm in the winter. Wind speed along with temperature, humidity, and solar radiation have been combined into an animal comfort index that can be used to classify the level of weather-related stress for cattle. The K-State Mesonet now provides both current conditions and a 7-day forecast of the [Animal Comfort Index](#) that producers can use for planning.

During extreme cold, cattle need more energy just to maintain body heat. Windbreaks are a key tool in helping livestock cope with cold stress and reduce the amount of energy, and in effect cost, to maintain weight. Some of the best windbreaks are multiple rows of established trees, but they take years to develop and serve a fixed location. If building a portable windbreak or a windbreak fence, the most effective for wind protection is 75 to 80% solid to reduce wind speed but prevent snow drifting. An opening of 4 to 6" at the base will promote drying and drainage. The science and concepts of windbreaks are well established and are covered in greater detail in the links at the end of this article.

Bedding is another tool to help livestock manage cold stress. Bedding provides insulation from mud and frozen ground and helps keep cattle clean. Shelter and bedded areas only calves can access will help young calves better cope with the winter weather. Bulls can be overlooked during the winter months however frostbite of the scrotum can cause anywhere from short-term to permanent damage to sperm production. Windbreaks and bedding are great tools to protect your investment in bulls and their genetics.

Drought has impacted forage availability in parts of the state and may make it harder to find sources of bedding. If needed, unrolling large round bales of good quality feed can do double duty as feed and bedding for a short-term solution. Feedlot calves that received bedding (4 lbs per head per day) during a particularly cold January gained 3.33 lbs per day compared to 2.25 lbs/day for un-bedded calves. For young or already stressed calves, bedding may minimize negative health impacts from the combined stressors.

When cold stress occurs, feeding cattle late in the day can help cattle cope with night-time temperature declines as the heat of fermentation in the rumen will peak about 6 hours after consumption. The companion article, [Cold Stress in Cattle](#), describes when and how to adapt diets for cold stress.

Cattle may move from grazing various crop residue fields to other sites during the winter months. It may be appropriate to stage some emergency feed supplies near these locations in case deep snow would prevent access to these areas for a time.

Planning in advance for extreme weather will minimize stress on livestock and people. Plan for the worst but hope for the best.

Windbreak Resources:

- [Planning and Planting a five-row windbreak](#)
- [Windbreak fences](#)
- [Portable Windbreak Fences](#)

NDSU Field to Fork Webinars



North Dakota State University Extension will again host the Field to Fork Wednesday Weekly Webinar series starting in February.

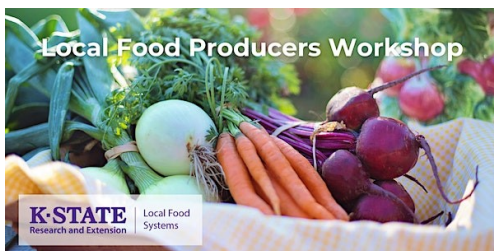
This ninth annual program is a multidisciplinary, multi-state effort that provides research-based information. Experts from across the region will provide information about growing, preserving and preparing specialty-crop fruits and vegetables safely.

The webinar series will begin on February 21st. Each webinar will be held online via Zoom from 2-3pm on Wednesdays through May 1st. Presentations will be recorded and archived for later viewing, in case participants are unable to attend. The webinars are free of charge, but registration is required.

For more information and to register, [visit the Field to Fork website](#).

Local Food Producer Workshops

Join these workshops to learn more about how to sell high quality, safe and healthy food to benefit your local community. This is also a great opportunity to connect with other producers. Four workshops will be held in-person around the state. The session on February 9th in Olathe, also has a virtual option available. To see the agendas for each location and to register, [click here](#).



Living Well Wednesday Returns

The Living Well Wednesday virtual learning series has returned for the winter/spring 2024 season. The topic for February is “Women’s Health and Functional Medicine” and the topic for March is “Navigating Diets, Supplements and Women’s Health in a Confusing World.” The webinars will be offered the second Wednesday of the month from 12:10-1pm. There is no charge to participate, but registration is required.

To register and to view previously recorded webinars, visit the [Living Well Wednesday website](#).

Can You Store Food in the Snow?



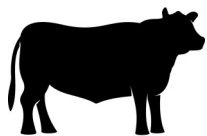
While storing food outside in the snow may work in a pinch, long term storage is not advised.

Placing food in the snow will not necessarily protect it. Frozen food can thaw when exposed to the sun’s rays even when the temperature is very cold. Food may become too warm and foodborne bacteria could grow. The outside temperature can vary hour by hour and the temperature outside will not protect refrigerated and frozen food. Additionally, perishable items could be exposed to unsanitary conditions or to animals. Animals may harbor bacteria or disease; never consume food that has come in contact with an animal.

Power outages and other disasters can happen any time of the year. Find more information about Disasters and Power Outages on the [K-State Research and Extension Food Safety website](#).



Beef Weigh-In



Beef weigh-in will be held February 17th from 9:00am to 11:30am at the CCC Farm. Make-up day will be February 24th if necessary. Tags are \$3 each. Please bring cash or check to purchase your tags. 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 tags at our fair.

Dog Judge Training & Re-Certification

The 2024 Kansas 4-H Dog Judges Training and Recertification will be held in Leavenworth on January 26-28, 2024. If you are a parent or someone who wants to help our 4-H youth with the Dog Project, please consider taking the training. New judges are always needed. Registration deadline is January 15th.



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 18-19 in Topeka, KS. It is open to all youth 13-18 years old as of January 1, 2023. Registration is due January 26th on the [4-H website](#).

County Club Day

County Club Day will be held on March 22nd at Colby Community College. 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!

Please note that due to limited entries and participation from the surrounding counties in recent years, Regional Club Day has been cancelled indefinitely.

Junior Producer Days

Junior producer days are held to provide educational material and hands-on experiences for youth, parents, leaders, and extension agents. Click [here](#) for the flyers, more information, and registration.

2024 Junior Beef Producer Day

Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024
Cost: \$20/person
Registration Deadline: February 12



2024 Junior Sheep Producer Day

Date: Saturday, March 16, 2024
Cost: \$20/person
Registration Deadline: February 26



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 and additional documentation must be submitted online no later than **March 1**. Thomas County 4-H Council Scholarships are 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**.





4-H Camp 2023

Ready, set, register! 2024 4-H camp sessions at [Rock Springs Ranch](#) are now available for registration. This includes half week, full week, Leaders in Training (LIT), and Counselors in Training (CIT) sessions. A full list of session dates and costs for Summer Camp 2024 and additional details can be found [here](#).

Project Goals

With reenrollment complete, youth have selected their projects and now it is time to set their 2024 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.

ZBooks—Online Record Keeping



Speaking of goals, this would be a great time to create an account with ZBooks to begin working on your record books for 2024! ZBooks is an online record keeping platform that is extremely user friendly and designed specifically for Kansas 4-H Project Record Books. Features of Zbooks include mobile friendly, internet based, unlimited entries, permanent records that roll over year to year, and step-by-step tutorials! There is even a section specific for setting goals for the upcoming 4-H year. Visit [here](#) for instructions on registering for an account, creating member profiles, new project reports, etc.

Club Attendance

For the 2023-2024 year program year, 4-H members wishing to participate in the livestock auction are required to **attend 5 club meetings between the months of August 2023 and July 2024 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.

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, in their 4-H clubs, and communities. It will be held June 5-7 on the K-State Campus. Registration is coming soon.

Project Leaders & Volunteers

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.

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.



January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 AH—Meeting @ 4-H Bldg. 7pm	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Fairboard Mtg. @ 8pm	12	13
14	15 BPG—Meeting @ Henry Hall 7:00pm GEM—Meeting @ Gem Comm. Bldg. 7pm Reg. due for Dog Judges Training	16 <i>Cover Your Acres</i> Winter Conference	17	18  	19	20
21	22 4-H Council Mtg. 	23 Soil Fertility Schools in Smith Center & Ellsworth 	24 Local Food Virtual Town Hall Cow-Calf Production Clinic in Hays	25 Soil Fertility Schools in Goodland & Jennings Developing Low Input/High Efficiency Production Systems- in Liberal 	26 Reg. due for Citizenship in Action	27
28	29 Cow-Calf Production Clinic in Larned.	30	31			
					PP = Pawsome Paws SS = Shooting Sports AH = Abilene Hustlers	BPG = Brewster Prairie Gem Gem = Gem 4-H SV = Solomon Valley



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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 is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.