

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION



WALNUT CREEK EXTENSION DISTRICT

OCTOBER 2023

Hello fall and hello to hopefully cooler temperatures! October is a busy time for Extension Offices as we are kicking off the new 4-H year and finishing up the past one with Achievement Banquets and events. Pay attention to what's happening across the district because temperatures might be getting cooler but the Walnut Creek Offices are not cooling off or slowing down!

Our Ag Tour is getting ready to take off to Fort Collins, CO in a few weeks – don't worry you still have time to register (call the LaCrosse office asap 785-222-2710). This is a great trip focused on learning and experiencing agriculture production in its various ways that you might not see in your backyard.

National 4-H week is happening this week, so please if you know of any youth 7-18 years old send them our way!!! Why 4-H? Because, 4-Hers are 5 times more likely to graduate college, 3 times more likely to be physically active, 2 times more likely to actively contribute to their communities plus the benefits of public speaking, running a meeting, plus more!

We will be welcoming a new FCW Extension Agent to our district next month! Please pay special attention to next month's newsletter for her introduction.

Our doors are always open and inviting, so if you are needing help plant bulbs, get a forage sample, or need a recipe please swing in and see us at any of our 3 locations!

www.walnutcreek.ksu.edu

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HEAD



HANDS



HEART



HEALTH

National 4-H Week is October 1-7, 2023

Walnut Creek District 4-H Wants You!

Come Join 4-H and learn about all the FUN things kids can do, to learn life skills and grow into Great Community Members!

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Volunteers are also needed to help Grow Great Kids!

4-H is a “learn by doing” youth education program for children 7 to 18. It promotes positive values, social responsibility, and lifelong learning. An affiliated program, Cloverbuds, is available for children 5 and 6. 4-H is not just for children in rural communities. The 4-H program is going strong in all 105 Kansas counties, including cities and suburban areas. 4-H clubs and projects reflect the diverse interests of young people throughout Kansas—caring for animals, cooking, rocketry, bicycling, community service, public speaking, gardening, leadership, natural resources, photography, and many other topics. On average, more than 10,000 adult leaders help more than 40,000 children each year have fun, hands-on learning opportunities through the 4-H program. Adult volunteers are the foundation of 4-H. They help children explore new things, develop real life skills, gain confidence and self-esteem, and be the best they can be. When you volunteer your time to help children explore, learn and grow, you are investing in them and in the future of your community. And you’ll probably find that you learn just as much from 4-H as they do! Volunteers can serve as club leaders, event judges, project leaders, host families for exchange students, fundraisers, camp counselors, chaperones or mentors. The amount of time you spend as a 4-H volunteer will vary according to your schedule and the needs of the program. A little of your time can make a big difference to a child. Becoming a 4-H volunteer is easy. Simply call the Extension office in your county to find out about local opportunities.



What Did 4-H Give YOU?

Bryce – Life long relationships and a whole lot larger network of people besides what was already around me.



4-H is more than Cows and Cookies



Kansas 4-H has more than 30 Project areas that are suitable for city kids or families that don't have the means to raise livestock or farm crops. 4-H is very focused on the Natural Resources, Communication, Expressive Arts, Leadership, Personal Development, Plant Science, Family Science, Engineering and Technology. Youth, Families and Volunteers all have a vast array of interests and 4-H probably has something for everyone.

Below are the 2023-2024 Kansas 4-H Projects for your selection.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beef Dairy Cattle Dairy Goats Dog Horse Meat Goats Pets Poultry Rabbits Sheep Swine Veterinary Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewing & Textile Design Shopping in Style Family Studies Fiber Arts Foods & Nutrition Health & Wellness Interior Design & Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entomology Agronomy Forestry Horticulture & Landscape Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Performing Arts Photography Visual Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Science Geology Shooting Sports Wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ag Mechanics Welding Building Block Engineering Astronomy Computer Science Electric & Renewable Energy Robotics Aerospace/Rocketry Small Engines Uncrewed Aircraft Systems Woodworking



Why Did YOU Join 4-H?

Addie B. – I was pretty little when I joined but my mom knew how beneficial it would be so she signed me up!

From there on I found my own love and excitement for it!!!

5 Things You Can Do Right Now To Build a Child's Confidence

Confidence is vitally important to a child's future happiness, health, and success. Confident children are better equipped to deal with peer pressure, responsibility, frustrations, challenges, and both positive and negative emotions. And what is the KEY factor in developing a child's confidence?

YOU! The child's parents and teachers.

In fact, you can make it fun!

Use these 5 research-based, effective strategies to start boosting the confidence of your children or students today.

1. Ensure they know your love is unconditional.

The way we see our kids (or the way our kids believe we see them) has a profound impact on the way they see themselves. Make it clear to your children that you love and care for them even when they make mistakes or poor decisions, and avoid harshly criticizing or shaming them.

2. Practice positive self-talk with them.

Both children and adults often engage in negative and damaging chatter with themselves: "I can't do this," or, "I'm terrible at _____," or, "What is wrong with me?"

3. Address them by their name.

Addressing children by name is a powerful and simple way to send the message that they're important, especially when paired with friendly eye contact.

4. Give them age-appropriate "special tasks" to help you out.

In addition to chores and classroom jobs, give children "special tasks" to help them feel useful, responsible, and competent. Using the word "special" gives children an even bigger confidence boost.

In the home, these special tasks can include helping with a pet or younger sibling as needed, being your cooking "assistant," or, for a very young child, simply dressing himself. In the classroom, kids can help make classroom decorations, water plants, erase the board, etc.

5. Join their play (and let them lead).

Joining in a child's play sends the message that he is important and worthy of your time.

During playtime, parents can allow children to initiate or choose the activity, as well as lead it. When parents engage in and appear to enjoy a child-led activity, the child feels valuable and accomplished.



The 4-H READING project allows

4-H members to read for
enjoyment and
enrichment.

What book will you read?

Reading takes you places and
so does 4-H!



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting books free of charge to children from birth to age five, through funding shared by Dolly Parton and local community partners in the United States. Thanks to Governor Kelly each county in the state of Kansas now has the opportunity for youth 0 to 5 years of age to participate. Ask where you can sign up.

Retaining Heifers



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To keep or not to keep? That is the question, or it will be later this fall when it comes time to wean or background calves. On the keep side: conditions are better than they were last year, cattle prices are poised to be good for a while (and that's vague for a reason), the national cow herd is the smallest it has been for decades and each producer can likely say the same thing after culling down to survive 2022 and the winter of 2023.

On the sell side, the reasons are similar but with a different train of thought. Conditions are better, but not great—some are better than others. Calf prices are wonderful, but with the added input costs and a smaller calf crop, the net returns are not as spectacular as we'd like to believe. A heifer calf that is added to the herd will be in the heart of production on the presumed down side of the cattle cycle. Her most valuable days may be as a heifer calf or on feed with an expected harvest date next summer.

Whether your glass is half full or half empty after reading the previous two paragraphs, there is a couple trains of thought on managing the same heifers. First, stay the course. If you are in the cattle business for the long haul—as in you'll see another cycle or two before deciding to let someone else calve out heifers, then do just that. Keep the same approximate amount or maybe a few more. The existing cow herd is probably culled down already and those remaining are going to be good for several more years.

OR—tell your significant other and a couple friends/neighbors to bring the trailers and load everything up. I say that in jest, that as an owner/operator, if you aren't there, the temptation to let a few back isn't there either.

If you are in expansion mode, there are still a couple options. Deciding how many to retain might be the biggest challenge. Letting nature sort them out, works well. In doing so, you keep twice as many as needed or maybe a majority of the heifers, then run the bull for 21 to 30 days or go one round of AI and sell the opens. The key is to keep the breeding window short to put selection pressure on the top end. Usually the oldest heifers, who are typically bigger, will survive. At the same time, we preach the adage to cull the open, ornery, old, and odd, so don't start with them either. Open and old isn't relevant on heifers, but bad attitudes and odd ducks sure are. They are prime candidates for the feedyard or freezer if you typically want to raise your own beef and not have a coronary when you see what the value of holding onto a couple steers is worth this year.

Black swans in the cattle industry can and do take flight when least expected. If you try the short season approach, there will be heifers to market this summer, so protect that investment with a put option or with a Livestock Risk Protection policy from RMA.

So, for most producers in the Walnut Creek Dist. the hope is to have enough grass and water to leave them out for awhile longer. Our immediate interest is getting wheat in the ground and fall crops off. So if you are sitting in a cab coving acres in front of the drill, making laps with the drill, or making passes with a combine—get out the calving book and make a list of heifers born in chronological order—if it isn't already—and go to the AgManager.info site to find decision tools to help guide the process.



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K-State Department of Agricultural Economics is looking forward to hosting the inaugural Kansas Landowner Conference. Offering a new conference tailored to folks who have agricultural land in Kansas, but do not reside on the property. The inaugural Kansas Landowner Conference is designed to be a resource where landowners will build networks and increase their knowledge in many aspects of land management. The conference will focus specifically on agricultural land market conditions, land lease management techniques, and property tax regulations. For more information go to <https://www.agmanager.info/Landowner>

Last of the Tomato Season

Autumn is upon us with chilly evenings and a slowdown in tomato harvesting. To snag the tastiest tomatoes, leave them on the vine for as long as possible. But be warned, if Jack Frost is coming to town, it's best to nab them before he does! If you spy green tomatoes that are full-sized and wearing a white, star-shaped badge on their bottoms, they've hit peak "mature green" status. Give them a gentle pluck and pop them in a paper bag to finish ripening. Ripe tomatoes deserve the VIP treatment! Place them on cosy cardboard trays with a newspaper between each layer. Keep the temperature at around 55 degrees F, if possible, and check for any rotten tomatoes regularly, removing them pronto. Savor the flavour!

Spring Flowering Bulbs

It's time to plant those spring flowering bulbs! The best time to plant spring flowering bulbs is in late September through October. It is an excellent time to plant bulbs such as crocus, tulips, and daffodils. These plants need to develop roots in the fall and must meet a chilling requirement over the winter in order to bloom in the spring. It is hard to start thinking about next year's flower bed but you will not regret it when you have a flower bed full of beautiful colors next spring!

K-State Garden Hour is hosted by K-State Research and Extension horticulture staff across the state of Kansas. We hope you'll join us on the first Wednesday of each month at noon for some horticultural refreshment and training. Sessions are recorded and posted here after each event.
<https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour/>