

Walnut Creek District

K-State Research and Extension

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785-798-3921

Rush County
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LaCrosse, KS 67548
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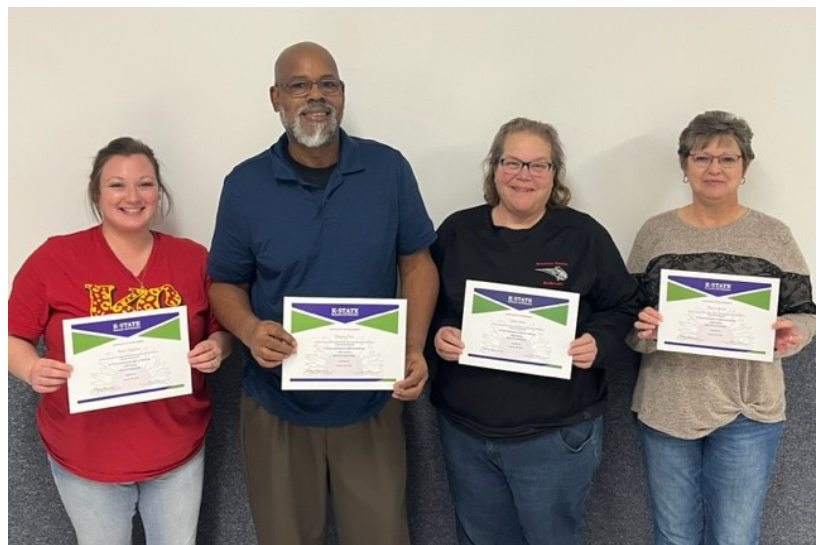
WALNUT CREEK DISTRICT MASTER GARDENERS

Extension Master Gardener program is a volunteer program that provides training in all aspects of horticulture. Master Gardener volunteers then share accurate, up-to-date and research-based information with the community through demonstration gardens, educational programming and individual horticulture help.

The Extension Master Gardener program is open to any Walnut Creek District (Lane, Ness, and Rush counties) residents, who has the time and desire to donate volunteer hours to the EMG program.

The Walnut Creek District Master Gardeners just completed their training in December. These individuals completed around 40 hours of classroom training taught by K-State Research and Extension specialists and agents from across the state of Kansas

This year Walnut Creek had the privilege of working with 6 individuals including: Kai Wilkerson (Dighton), Denise Borell (Dighton), Megan Shapland (Dighton), Greg Fox (Dighton), Jackie Casey (Ness City), Brittany Nichapor (Ness City). The picture above is from their “celebration” of completing the training. The picture includes Megan Shapland, Greg Fox, Jackie Casey, and Denise Borell. We are excited to see what these volunteers will be offering our counties in the near future!



In this issue:

- Master Gardeners
- Trainings
- Short Eared Calves
- Bull Season is Here
- Crop Talk
- Story Books
- Temper Tantum

Managing Stress for People Working in Agriculture

Agriculture workers, employees, and the family often work day and night and cannot always avoid stressful overwhelming situations, especially during a drought, low market prices, and other situations that are out of their control. At Walnut Creek District, we have resources for you that could provide you or someone you that needs assistance in managing and overcoming stress. Caring for your own health and wellness in your high-stress profession is often overlooked but is just as critical as caring for your operation. For further information, check out this publication, “Managing Stress: Tips and Resources”, available online at <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3568> or feel free to stop in at your local Extension Office.



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2023 Kansas Paraquat Training Information

All products featuring the new labeling with the active ingredient paraquat dichloride, such as Gramoxone, Firestorm, Helmquat, and Parazone will require the additional training in order to apply these products. Remember, if the new training requirement is listed on the label of the product you are using, then you **MUST** complete the training. This training is required every three years. Please be sure to make sure your training is current.

The newly labeled products state that “Product may **ONLY** be mixed, loaded or applied by a certified applicator who has successfully completed the paraquat-specific training before use. Application “under direct supervision” of a certified applicator is **NO LONGER** allowed. In Kansas, this means that everyone purchasing and using these products has to either obtain a private applicator license or a commercial applicator license.

The only training that meets the requirements is housed on the eXtension website and can be found by going to: <http://usparaquattraining.com>. If you don’t currently have an account you will need to create one before it will allow you to take the training. For in-person training materials, please visit <https://npsec.us/paraquat>

2023 Kansas Dicamba Training Information

You are required to have additional label-required dicamba training when applying the restricted use dicamba products: Engenia, XtendiMax or Tavium with Vaporgrip.

You can access the training at:

BASF: (webinars, online training and face to face) engeniaherbicide.com/training.html

Bayer/Monsanto: (online training and face-to-face) <https://www.roundupreadyxtend.com/stewardship/Pages/default.aspx>

Syngenta: <https://www.syngenta-us.com/herbicides/tavium-application-stewardship>

The labels of these products state that prior to applying this product in the 2023 growing season, all applicators must complete dicamba or auxin-specific training on an annual basis.

The new labels state that these formulations are for retail sale to and use only be certified applicators. This means that everyone purchasing and using these products has to either obtain a private applicator license or a commercial applicator license.

K-State Soybean School – Registration is NOW Open

State Research and Extension will be offering a one-day Soybean School on February 22 at Great Plains Manufacturing, 1525 E. North Street in Salina, KS. The school will start at 8:30am with registration and conclude at 2:30pm with an optional tour of the Great Plains Manufacturing immediately following the last presenter.

This event will provide in-depth training targeted for soybean producers and key-stakeholders. Some topics that will be covered include crop production practices, soybean breeding update, Kansas Mesonet tools, insect and disease management, and market outlook.

There is no cost to attend and CCA credits have been applied for. Please register online at: <https://bit.ly/soyschool> or 877-577-6923

Short Eared Calves

Most already know what the title means and have dealt with it first hand, for others, it's the loss of the outermost ear because of frostbite. Being born (wet) on a freezing cold day (or night) and while the cow is hopefully licking and drying, the ears just got too cold for too long. Sometimes it's the tip of the ear and sometimes its half or more of the ear tissue. Severe cases can also have the same affect on the tail or the hooves, but the ears seem to be the first and most noticeable loss. February of 2022 had many days that were cold enough during calving to claim a bunch of ears and with the cold we went thru at the end of January 2023, there will be more culprits coming to market next fall as well.



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Consequently, when that same calf goes to the sale at weaning or after backgrounding, he or she gets sorted off the rest of the group and then sells at a discount--many don't understand why. We see calves sorted off for odd colors, horns, bulls (in a group of steers), blue eyes, sickness, etc., etc. and those aspects are obviously going to affect the value down the food chain. Yes, even the heifers (sisters) with the same short ears can grow up to be good functional cows, but the calves that are sold usually get discounted. The calves with short ears can typically grow, perform, and eventually be harvested, so why then do they get discounted so often and so hard?

A.J. Tarpoff DVM, our K-State Associate Professor and Beef Extension Veterinarian says that, unfortunately, there is not data out there to directly answer those questions given all the unique parameters surrounding "short eared" cattle. The reason for not having data is simple. Since the incidence is such a low percent of the population, it makes it extremely difficult to make a real comparison. How do we compare 2 or 3 to the rest of the 100hd group when half are steers and half are heifers? To make a solid case there is not enough statistical power.

There are legitimate reasons for discounts, but they may not always be what you think. In extension, we joke that the most common response to questions are, "well it depends." That is often the hard truth and this scenario is not any different.

1. Here are the real potential impacts of the circumstances surrounding frozen ears:
The biggest discount is directly related to not being able to implant or potentially re-implant the animal with a growth promoting implant at the feedlot. The flat of ear is the only legal location an implant can be administered. That loss in efficiency is easily a loss to the feeder estimated at as high as \$163 dollars, and could be higher given commodity and cattle prices. The feeding industry knows and uses implant technology regularly because they see the data and understand the economic returns.
2. Sickness risk: Purchasing these calves is gambling if the calf actually received colostrum soon after birth when they are born into less than desirable conditions. Another concern is that they got frostbite due to the fact they were already sick-leading to them not moving as much due to already being ill. Both of these circumstances don't yield well to their future performance.
 - a. USMARC data shows that the failure of passive transfer (colostrum intake) on calves to be three times more likely to get sick and a loss of gain equating to about 24lbs less in the feedlot.
 - b. Historical studies will show that prior illness estimates on feedlot performance is upwards to 35 lbs. reduction in weight gain (Ranch to Rail '93, Erickson et al 2011)

Most producers have a cow or two that have short ears. They function just as other cows and their ears have never hampered their performance or function. At the same time, these cows have never left the farm, been comingled at a sale barn, received an implant, or been fed in a feedlot. The affects of a feedlot being internal fat deposition or internal respiratory restrictions; as well as hot, dry, or dusty pens. Those environmental aspects can be hard on a healthy unaffected calf, let alone one that started life at a disadvantage. The short eared calves fed on the farm and processed at a local meat locker again, did not go thru a sale, been exposed to numerous bugs that comingled calves are routinely exposed to, or routinely put thru a chute for processing. The pens at 'home' are also not likely the same as a feedlot; providing a cooler surface, shade, and an easier diet. All aspects that reduce the stress on a calf that is potentially prone to distress.

Dr. Tarpoff is the first to admit that "its anyone's guess on what the real discount should be compared to the unaffected cohort of sold calves. Is it \$0 in some instances, sure. Could a real discount be a couple hundred dollars on individuals, again the answer is yes. The animal is only worth as much as someone is willing to spend on it knowing the potential risk."

Bull Sale Season is Here

Kansas purebred breeders will be kicking off the 'sale season' in mid February and it will seemingly fly by. Dry conditions mean fewer cows and fewer cows means fewer bulls, but there have been lots of bulls going to market especially since the salvage bull price was (and is) this good. If you are in the market for a new bull, here are some points to ponder.

While there are a lot of methods and tools to sort thru catalogs with, the Expected Progeny Differences are the norm, but what do the numbers mean, what do they measure, and which ones are the most important to your operation? As technology and data increase, the traits being measured do as well.

To start the answer, it is important to understand how to EPD's are generated and which breeds can be compared. The IGS (International Genetic Solutions) website says its system brings in data from hundreds of thousands of cattle on an annual basis. This includes data from purebred, composite, and crossbred cattle of all major breed types relevant in the North America and Australia. As the amount of performance data collected increases and is compared to the corresponding DNA information collected, the system become increasingly accurate in its predictions of new cattle.

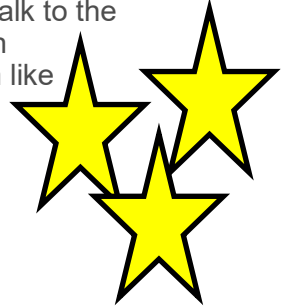
Many breeds are collaborating in the IGS Multi-Breed Genetic Evaluation, including: The American Simmental Assoc, American Gelbvieh Assoc, North American Limousin Foundation, Red Angus Assoc. of America, American Shorthorn Assoc., and American Chianina Assoc. American Salers Assoc., Braunvieh Assoc. of America as well as several breed associations from Canada. This vastly increases the data base that these numbers are pulled from and that is what helps improve the accuracy of the EPD's that we see in the sale catalogs.

The American Angus Association and the Hereford Association will use similar technology to derive their numbers, but the EPD's themselves are not equal or correlated to the breeds listed above that are using BOLT (Biometric Open Language Tools).

Most catalogs offer a simple explanation of the data and format that is used, if not, a web search for each breed association will give plenty of information, or contact the extension office and we will help walk thru the information as well.

The more difficult question is the one each producer needs to answer themselves, "what are the most important traits I need?" To that we need to analyze the herd -- cow size and where the resulting calves are headed -- terminal or maternal. Dr. Darrh Bullock with the University of Kentucky said at the Applied Repro Strategy meeting recently that "A lot of producers probably think of it as frame size, but we need to be thinking about mature cow weight. The industry stopped chasing frame and brought it down, but we're still making cattle bigger in terms of mature weight." Oklahoma State University studied cow weight vs. calf income in 2018. The concluded that an additional 100 lbs. of cow weight can get \$6-\$30 in additional calf value. The costs for that same 100 lbs. of cow weight added up to \$42. The costs were higher than the revenue. Much the same with milk. Dr. Bullock says milk production requires an additional 275 lbs. of dry matter intake to produce an additional 10 lbs. of weaned calf. To make that process simpler he says "use a selection index that properly incorporates the additional costs associated with increasing growth and milk." In the Angus breed, \$B for those that keep their own replacement heifers is not going to help, \$C (Dollars Cow) for combined values is gaining popularity and \$M (Maternal weaned calf value) is the cow focused index.

There are also lowly heritable traits and overlooked traits that make a big difference in the bottom line: fertility, disposition, feet and legs, and udder quality. Many times at bull sales the animals are in pens, clipped up, and videos taken, so we don't see how they react to crowds and ringmen shouting or get to see what their mother looks like, or depending on pen conditions and bedding-their feet. Work with and talk to the breeders ahead of time, everyone of them that I know like to 'talk cows' but, would be even prouder to show you their herd. The adage of buying bulls from someone that raises them like you do has never been more appropriate.





Upcoming program for livestock producers, hosted in Rush County at LaCrosse Livestock on the evening of **March 15** after the Mid KS Angus Breeders bull sale. Host partners are KFB, KLA, LaCrosse Livestock Market, and the WCED.

Agenda is developing with topics to include Cover Crop inclusion and utilization into wheat/sorghum rotations, stretching your feed resources/limit feeding cows into spring, and a legislative update from Topeka.

Be watching for more information later this month.



Crop Talk

Webinar Series

Focused on crop production in northwest and north central Kansas

- February 7** **Spring Annual Forages To Fill the Gap in Cattle Feed**
John Holman, K-State Agronomist at Garden City
- February 14** **Climate Smart Agriculture, What's All the Buzz?**
Peter Tomlinson, K-State Environmental Quality
Agronomist
- February 21** **Alternative Weed Control Research from Kansas**
Sarah Lancaster, K-State Extension Weed Specialist
- February 28** **Corn Tillers: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.**
Rachel Veenstra, K-State Crop Science Agronomist

Held from 12:00 – 1:00 pm CT

Register to attend at www.northwest.ksu.edu/events



Webinars will be broadcast via zoom and YouTube
Links for joining will be sent after registration

**Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Credits have been applied for
1 per session**

If you have questions, please contact your local Extension agent or the K-State
Northwest Research and Extension Center at 785-462-6281.

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Walk Kansas program

This eight-week challenge focuses on physical activity and healthy eating is beginning soon!



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Research shows that two-thirds of chronic diseases – diabetes, heart disease, arthritis and others -- can be prevented by lifestyle changes.

So, each year about this time, Sharolyn Jackson gets pretty excited about a program that rallies thousands of Kansans and their friends to have a little fun and improve their mental and physical health.

Jackson is the state leader of K-State Research and Extension’s popular Walk Kansas program, a team-based challenge that encourages people to walk, jog, run, bike, swim or do whatever they need to do to live more healthfully. The program routinely draws more than 5,000 participants.

“Walk Kansas was founded on the principle that if teams of six people would meet the minimum guidelines for physical activity over eight weeks, they could collectively and virtually walk across the state of Kansas, which is 423 miles,” Jackson said.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week – or about 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

The 2023 Walk Kansas program kicks off on March 26 and will run eight weeks through May 20. More information and registration is available online beginning Mar 1. The cost per person is \$10; t-shirts can be purchased for a separate charge.

“It’s a very adaptable program,” Jackson said. As a team, if you participate in Walk Kansas, you can choose between different challenges. There is also a solo challenge for those who don’t have a team, or just prefer to take on the challenge themselves. Participants do not have to live in Kansas to be on a team or to do the solo challenge.

In addition to tracking their minutes of activity – which are then translated into “miles” of activity – participants are asked to report the number of cups of fruits and vegetables and water they consume weekly. Participants are also encouraged to add in some type of strength exercise.

“We also offer tips and instruction through our weekly newsletters and the Walk Kansas website,” Jackson said.

From April 2 through May 14 – Weeks 2 through 7 of Walk Kansas – Jackson said organizers will offer a weekly webinar on healthy eating, focusing on the Mediterranean diet. The course is called ‘Med Instead of Meds,’ to reflect the goal to help participants learn ways to potentially replace medications with healthy eating.

“Walk Kansas, holistically, really is a chronic disease prevention program, or a way to delay the onset of chronic disease,” Jackson said. “For those already with a chronic disease, they can learn ways to manage it better through physical activity and healthy eating.

“We often think about (diseases) that might be genetic, or it’s just your family history. But the reality is that two-thirds of chronic diseases can be prevented or delayed by these lifestyle changes.”

For more information about the Walk Kansas program contact Carissa Kline, Family and Community Wellness Agent in the Walnut Creek District at 620-397-2806 or carissakline@ksu.edu.





Strength Training Program for Older Adults

Strength training is no longer just for bodybuilders. Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is an eight-week, evidence-based strength training program designed for older adults who want to improve their quality of life and stay active. Classes are held in familiar settings such as senior centers and church halls, not the gym. The exercises are easy to learn, safe and effective. No need to wear special clothes—just comfortable, loose-fitting pants and shirt, along with sturdy, closed-toe walking shoes.

What are the benefits?

Strength training:

- Increases muscle strength
- Improves balance
- Enhances flexibility
- Strengthens bones
- Relieves arthritis
- Helps control weight
- Lifts depression
- Reduces stress
- Reduces risks for heart disease

Here's what we do

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes include:

- Warm-up exercises
- Eight strengthening exercises, with or without hand and ankle weights
- Cool-down stretches

Over the course of the program, you will increase your strength and improve your balance. After the eight weeks are over, you can continue the strength training program in the comfort of your home or with a group.

Weights will be available on-site, and a trained instructor will help you learn and do these exercises safely.



Classes will be starting soon! Look for more information to come about sign-ups!

For more information contact Carissa Kline, Family and Community Wellness Agent
620-397-2806 or carissakline@ksu.edu

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 for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact, Carissa Kline, at 620-397-2806 or carissakline@ksu.edu. Requests received after the event sign up 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.

Supporting Young Children's Coping with Storybooks

With all the parenting information out there and the constant pressure to be the “perfect” parent, it seems as if many parents have lost track of one very important piece of the parenting puzzle: raising happy kids. Parents, teachers and caregivers play an important role in young children’s emotional development in addition to helping them cope. Using children’s literature in an interactive way, adults can help children heal. A parent or close adult can support children in understanding these feelings and teach children strategies to foster resilience. It is important for these adults to also understand their own feelings and stress as children are watching and learning from adult responses too.

One effective way to support children’s understanding and use of positive coping strategies is storybook reading. Storybook reading is a great way to connect with children after stressful events. In response to flooding and severe blizzards that impacted many Nebraskan communities in 2019, the University of Nebraska Learning Child team developed a storybook reading program to help caregivers (e.g., parents, early childhood teachers) support children after a stressful event.

How Does Storybook Reading Support Children’s Resilience and Coping?

1. **Shared Language.** Shared reading improves children’s vocabulary. When caregivers engage children in a book about coping, emotions, or facing a difficult situation, they are helping them learn new ways to talk about their own feelings. This creates a shared language to name and talk about how each person is feeling.
2. Children can often see themselves reflected in the story. This helps them realize they are not alone and that they are not the first to go through a difficult experience. Reading with a caring adult also reinforces the idea that they are valued and that their feelings are valid.



How Can Caregivers Use Storybook Reading to Support Children?

1. Find books that are age-appropriate. Some books talk about feelings in a way that younger children are not developmentally ready to understand. Other books use simplified language or represent feelings in different ways that younger children may be able to understand better.
2. Find Books that are engaging and that children can relate to. Children will see themselves reflected in some characters or storylines more than others.

Here are some examples:

A Terrible Thing Happened by Margaret M. Holmes - This story explains the types of emotions kids face after a traumatic event and the way they can find help.

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae – This story helps readers learn about their own unique strengths and see strengths in others.

Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes – This story addresses worrying and anxiety in a positive and child friendly manner.

The Goodbye Book by Todd Parr – Goodbyes are never easy. This colorful and unique storybook helps children think about the different emotions they may feel when saying goodbye to a loved one.



1. **Stay calm.** It helps the out-of-control child to see you in control. If you get angry, your child will learn to do the same thing. Stay calm and think about what is happening.
2. **Help your child get calm.** There are many ways to help children calm down and learn how to calm themselves down. Learn what works best for your child. For example:
 - **Step back from him/her.** If children are not a danger to themselves or others, step back and let them finish. Don't ignore them, but don't participate either. You can say, "I cannot talk to you when you are crying and screaming. When you are finished, we can talk about it."
 - **Talk gently.** Stay close and talk "low and slow." Be soothing and understanding. You can say, "It's OK. I know. You will be all right. I am here", to empathize with your child's feelings.
 - **Hold them gently (while talking gently).** Hold them with gentle arms until they are quiet. Although, some children need space to work out their feelings with their bodies, others feel safe when held.
3. **Do not give children what they want to get them to stop yelling and screaming.** They will learn to have a tantrum to get their way. Wait until they have finished or help them calm down.
4. **Give a choice and a consequence.** Sometimes you may be in a situation where you cannot let a tantrum happen, like at a family event. In this case, give your child a choice. For example, "Either take some deep breaths and calm down, or you can scream in your room." Clear, simple and constant limits help the child know that someone is there to support him or her, even when they are having a difficult moment.

What's Happening in Walnut Creek District 4-H:

4-H Club Days will be held in Ness County at the Ness City High School on Saturday, February 18th. Come out and support our 4-H youth as they perform their Public Speaking and Talent.

NW 4-H Super Saturday Judging Event – Saturday, March 25th at Colby Community College Student Center, Crops, Entomology, Horticulture, Life Skills, Photography and Livestock Judging.

After School 4-H has been happening in LaCrosse – with 33 young kids, Paper Palooza we have been learning about Paper airplanes, paper rockets and ways we can be creative with paper.

Look at the Walnut Creek District 4-H Page and participate in the Spring Break Classes Poll. This will help us decide on some fun learning opportunities that will take place during our Spring Break timeframe.