

Sunflower Extension District #6

February 2026

Go to www.sunflower.ksu.edu for more details on these programs.



February 2026
Online! Newsletter
www.sunflower.ksu.edu

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Sunflower Extension District

Goodland Office

813 Broadway
Room 301
Goodland, KS 67735
(785) 890-4880
Fax (785) 890-4879

Sharon Springs Office

118 N Gardner St.
P.O. Box 189
Sharon Springs, KS 67758
(785) 852-4285
Fax (785) 852-4284

St. Francis Office

212 E. Washington St.
P.O. Box 667
St. Francis, KS 67756
(785) 332-3171

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www.ksre.ksu.edu

County Club Days in the District

Cheyenne County

Club Days

March 9, 2026

Entries due:

February 20, 2026

Sherman County

4-H Days & Talent Night

March 22, 2026

Project Talks/ Demonstrations Talent

* Educational Posters

Registration Forms Due:

February 23, 2026

Wallace County

Club Days

March 23, 2026

Entries due:

March 9, 2026





Even in winter, gardens need water

Yards may need another shot of moisture even after recent rain and snow to alleviate stress in lawns and gardens, said Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini. “A good, deep watering with moisture reaching at least a foot down into the soil is much better than several light sprinklings that just wet the top portions of the soil,” Domenghini said. “A deep watering will ensure that the majority of roots have access to water.” Domenghini urged homeowners to test the moisture content in their yard’s soil by pushing a metal rod or wooden dowel into the ground. “Dry soil is much harder to push through than wet,” she said. Measure how far down the implement goes to determine the amount of moisture is in the soil. “Although all perennial plants benefit from moist soils before winter, it is especially important for newly planted

or over-seeded lawns, as well as newly transplanted trees and shrubs due to their limited root systems,” Domenghini said. “Even trees and shrubs planted within the last 2-3 years are more sensitive to drought than a well-established plant. Evergreens are more at risk because moisture is lost from the foliage.” Domenghini shared a few tips for watering common areas of the yard: Trees and shrubs planted within the last year. Drill a small hole in a five-gallon bucket near the bottom, then fill the bucket and let the water dribble out slowly next to the tree. Refill the bucket once so that you apply 10 gallons. Slow-release bags with micropores can be purchased as an alternative to using a bucket. Larger trees planted 2-3 years prior may require more water. Domenghini said watering once a month if conditions are dry and warm should be enough to help landscapes through the winter.

Large trees. Using a soaker hose, circle the trunk one-half the distance to the dripline, or the outermost reach of branches. On smaller trees, you may need to circle the tree several times so that tree roots will be watered.

Newly established bed or foundation plantings. Hook the beginning and end of a soaker hose to a Y-adaptor to equalize pressure, which encourages more uniform watering.

Fall planted or overseeded lawns. Use an overhead sprinkler. Watering to a depth of 12 inches is more difficult; try to reach at least six inches deep.



K-State Garden Hour Webinar: Honey Bee Colony Management and Key Floral Resources in Kansas



Honey bee behavior is influenced by the seasons and the availability of flowering plants. Beekeepers must perform various tasks throughout the year to raise healthy and productive colonies. Join Ryan Engel, Golden Prairie District Horticulture Agent, to learn more about standard beekeeping management practices and essential food sources for honey bees in Kansas.

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at noon to 1 p.m. Central Time

Register for this free webinar and to view archived webinars at:
<https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour/>



Save the Date:

Forage/Cover Crop Meeting

When: February 5th in the a.m.

Where: Sharon Springs, CAB building

Weed Management School

When: February 16th @ 1:30 p.m. M.T.

Where: Goodland, 4-H Building

Local Food Producer Workshop

When: February 27th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT

Where: Oakley, Buffalo Bill Cultural Center

A Winter Guide to Keeping Lice in Check

Although most healthy cattle can manage lice burdens without intervention, some animals will develop heavy burdens which may require insecticide intervention. Lice populations are most active from December through to March with numbers naturally declining as we move into the warmer summer months.

Lice can be divided into two broad groups based on their feeding biology. Biting lice (also called chewing lice) feed on hair, skin and/or skin secretions. This feeding activity causes irritation and animals can often be seen scratching and rubbing which can cause significant damage to facilities and fences. Noticeable patchy hair loss may occur in animals with high lice burdens which will increase animal stress as they battle to insulate, leaving them susceptible to frostbite. Sucking lice are blood feeders with specialized mouthparts which tap directly into blood vessels similarly to mosquitoes. Severe infestations can result in anemia and production losses, especially in calves. Infestations of sucking lice can also cause rubbing, scratching and increased self-licking. In addition to production losses, lice feeding also results in hide damage, reducing leather quality.

Identifying which lice type you have can be important as it may direct your insecticide choice. As a general rule, biting lice have large, dome shaped heads while sucking lice have more narrow, tapered heads (Figure 1). This is the most predominant lice species impacting cattle and is commonly found on adult animals especially along the back line of the animal and around the wither area. Four species of sucking lice impact cattle in the US, three of which are not common on the Great Plains region [little blue cattle louse (*Solenopotes capillatus*), shortnosed cattle louse (*Haematopinus eurysternus*), cattle tail louse (*Haematopinus quadripertusus*)]. The fourth species of sucking lice, [longnosed cattle louse (*Linognathus vituli*, Figure 2)] can transmit *Theileria orientalis*, infection causing the disease theileriosis which can cause significant mortality, milk reduction and reduction in calf gains. This species can reach high numbers on calves but is found infrequently on adults. Special attention should be paid to the dewlap, neck and shoulders, as this is a preferred feeding site. By maintaining vigilant management and biosecurity, producers can protect their herds and flocks from lice, ensuring healthier and more productive livestock year-round.



Figure 1: Sucking lice with long tapered head (left), note the red blood meal in the abdomen. Biting lice with domed shaped head (right).



Figure 2: Longnosed cattle louse is a competent vector for *T. orientalis* (Photo credit: Kansas State University Research and Extension).

Lice are host specific, meaning that the cattle lice are not shared with sheep, pigs or horses and visa-versa, but multiple species of lice can infest the same animal. As wingless insects, lice require direct body contact to move from animal to animal. Inspect new animals entering the herd to avoid lice introductions. Economic threshold for lice infestations is ten lice per square inch. To do this, part the hair of the animal and if more than ten lice are found per square inch, animals should be treated. Good lighting can help as lice are often light in contrast to the darker fur. If treating individual animals, keep treated animals separate until the treatment course has been completed to ensure they don't transfer lice to untreated individuals. Tough egg casings protect the developing lice (also called nits) from insecticides, requiring that treatment be given twice, usually two to three weeks apart. This will kill any nymph lice emerging from the eggs before they are able to reach sexual maturity and lay eggs.

Several pyrethroid based pour-ons are available which effectively control both sucking and chewing lice. Those that also contain diflubenzuron, an insect growth regulator, need only be applied once as it targets the egg stage as well as emerged lice. Macrocytic lactone products (moxidectin, ivermectin, eprinomectin etc.) are available as both pour-ons and injectables and provide extra coverage for nematodes. While a pour-on will target both sucking and chewing lice, injectables will only control sucking lice since biting lice do not feed on blood. Spinosad pour-ons offer a third chemical class for rotation, but similar to pyrethroids will require a second application to be effective. Although organophosphate chemicals will effectively kill lice, these are mainly available as spray or dust applications which may not be as practical to use in winter. If using duster or self-application oiler, put it in a place which animals will frequent often.

Do not use the same chemical group year after year, instead use a single chemical group for a year (pyrethroid, spinosad or macrocytic lactone) before moving onto the next chemical group the following year. This rotation will allow you to not use the same chemical group more than once every three years, slowing the rate of insecticide resistance. Always check withdrawal periods and apply insecticides according to the manufacturer's label.

By Cassandra Olds, extension livestock entomologist



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension
Walnut Creek District

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LIEAP can help pay your home heating bills!

Applications accepted
**Jan. 20, 2026—
March 31, 2026**

Applications **must** be received by DCF
by **5 p.m. on March 31, 2026.**

Qualifying households must:

- **not exceed household income limits**
- **be personally responsible** for the heating fuel costs payable either to the landlord, utility company, or a fuel vendor



Learn more about LIEAP
and apply online at
LIEAP.dcf.ks.gov.

INCOME GUIDELINES

Persons living at address	Maximum gross monthly income
1	\$ 1,956
2	\$ 2,644
3	\$ 3,331
4	\$ 4,019
5	\$ 4,706
6	\$ 5,394
7	\$ 6,081
8	\$ 6,769
each additional	\$ 688

Funding provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Community Services - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

For more information or assistance in applying contact
Kristen Schmidt, Family and Community Wellness Agent, at
785-798-3921.



Wallace County Beef Weigh-In

Sunday, February 1, 2026,
from 2:00 - 4:00 PM MT
Smoky River Ranch

4-H members must be enrolled in the project prior to the weigh-in date, or the project will show in open class.

Sherman County Beef Weigh-In

Saturday, February 28, 2026,
from 9:00 - 10:00 AM MT
4-H Barn

(weather permitting)

For any questions about the beef project, please contact:

Clay Schilling

Beef Superintendent Leader
@ (785) 694-4589

4-H members must be enrolled in the project prior to the weigh-in date, or the project will show in open class.

Cheyenne County Beef Weigh-In

Sunday, March 1, 2026,
from 4:00 - 5:00 PM CT
Sale Barn

Superintendents ask that ALL Beef please plan on attending.
(Market and Breeding)

4-H members must be enrolled in the project prior to the weigh-in date, or the project will show in open class.



PLEASE JOIN US
FOR A
BENEFIT DINNER & AUCTION
IN HONOR OF THE

Johnson Family

SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 7

CHEYENNE
COUNTY
FAIRGROUNDS

5:30PM
CENTRAL
TIME

FREE-WILL
DONATION
AT THE DOOR

FUN FOR
THE WHOLE
FAMILY

FOOD, MUSIC, RAFFLE, LIVE AUCTION, & GAMES FOR THE KIDS

MEAL INCLUDES:
Pulled Pork Sandwich
Potato Salad
Baked Beans

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO
TO THE JOHNSON FAMILY.

CONTACTS

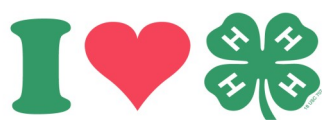
Abby Rose (970) 309 6788
Brie Gienger (785) 772 5173
Larry Hobbs (303) 968 9585





Kansas 4-H Day with K-State Women's Basketball

Join other 4-H families and supporters from across Kansas to cheer on the K-State Women's Basketball team on Sunday, March 1, 2026 at 1:00pm in the game against Iowa State. Packet pickup will be from 10:00am-12:30pm that day with the doors to Bramlage opening at Noon. You will receive a ticket to the K-State vs. Iowa State Women's Basketball Game and a \$10 meal voucher to use at the game. Packages with t-shirts are also available. Registration is due by February 8.



Record Books Going On To State

Congratulations to all that made it on to State with their Project Record Books from the Sunflower Extension District!!!!

Cheyenne County

Harmony Wilson—Performing Arts

Sherman County

Rylea Martin—Foods & Nutrition

Sarah Nemechek—Horse

Wallace County

Jensen Vandike—Beef

Addison Aldridge—Leadership

Well Done Kids!!!

4-H Scholarships

Kansas State 4-H Scholarships applications are online and must be submitted online.

March 1, 2026, by 11:59 PM CT is the deadline to complete the 4-H Scholarship application, recommendation letters, and references.

4-H Scholarship Link:

<https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/awards-and-recognition/scholarships.html>

Local Scholarships

The JR Leader Applications can be found at [USD 352](#)

JR Leader Applications are due to the Extension Office by April 4, 2026



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<http://www.facebook.com/sunflowerextensiondistrictcheyennecounty4h>

<http://www.facebook.com/sunflowerwallace>

<https://www.facebook.com/sunflowerextensiondistrictshermancounty4h/>

New 4-H Policy Guide: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/policy-guide/docs/Kansas%204-H%20Policy%20Handbook%202025%20FINAL.pdf>

Cloverbud Policy Guide: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/policy-guide/docs/Policy%20Book-%20Cloverbuds%20Kansas%204-H.pdf>



Sunflower Ext. District

February 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1. WA- Beef Weigh-In 2:00-4:00 PM MT	2.	3.	4. Foods 3:30 - 5:00 PM MT SH 4-H Bldg.	5.	6.	7.
8. SH- Creative Tables Wheat Ridge 1:30 PM MT	9.	10.	11..	12.	13.	14. 
15. 	16.  Extension Closed	17.	18.	19.	20. CN- Club Day Entries Due	21. Horse Panorama Feb. 21 -22 Rock Springs
22. Horse Panorama Feb. 21 -22 Rock Springs	23. SH- 4-H Days & Talent Night Registration Due to the Extension Office	24.	25.	26.	27.	28. SH- Beef Weigh-In 9:00-10:00 AM MT

Sunflower Extension District #6

Goodland Office
813 Broadway, Room 301
Goodland, KS 67735

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Manhattan, KS 66502

Sunflower Extension District #6 Offices

www.sunflower.ksu.edu

Goodland Office

Karen Nelson

4-H Youth Development Agent/Director
karennelson@ksu.edu

Erin Alfaro

Agent Assistant, Office Professional
ekalfaro@ksu.edu

Sharon Springs Office

Melinda Daily

Family & Consumer Science Agent
mdaily@ksu.edu

Wendy Benisch

Office Professional
wbenisch@ksu.edu

St. Francis Office

Rheanna Melcher

Ag & Natural Resources Agent
rmelcher@ksu.edu

Linda Elfers

Agent Assistant
lelfers@ksu.edu

K-State Research and Extension is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to physical, vision or hearing disability, or a dietary restriction please contact Karen Nelson at (785)890-4880. Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.