

# K-STATE

Research and Extension

## Sunflower Extension District #6

### October 2025

Go to [www.sunflower.ksu.edu](http://www.sunflower.ksu.edu) for more details on these programs.



October 2025



Newsletter

[www.sunflower.ksu.edu](http://www.sunflower.ksu.edu)

#### Sunflower Extension District

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### Inside Your Newsletter...

Mulch rings help to promote healthy trees, Asparagus and Rhubarb in the Fall ..... Horticulture Production page

Navigating investment opportunities amid high cattle prices..... Ag & Natural Resources page

Living Well Wednesday, Tips for Preventing Falls..... Family & Consumer page

### K-State Research & Extension Appreciation Awards 2024

Marsha Zimbelman accepting  
for the United Methodist Thrift  
Store awarded by Amy  
Hendricks in Cheyenne County



Peg Hennick awarded by  
ReNae Mann In Wallace  
County



Amy Sederstrom awarded by  
Josh Dechant in Sherman  
County



### Thank You Jeanne!!!!

*Thank you Jeanne Falk Jones for your work in the Sunflower Extension District as the Multi-County Agronomist. We are lucky you will still be working in the NW area in a different way with your new position ...*

*Jeanne Falk Jones was promoted to the position of Northwest Area Agronomist, effective August 31, 2025 and will no longer be working as the Sunflower District Multi-County Agronomist. She will be based out of the K-State Northwest Research - Extension Center in Colby.*



### Mulch rings help to promote healthy trees

Homeowners who are looking for ways to promote healthy, growing trees in their yard are well-advised to remember this axiom: A ring is a tree's best friend. Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini said a mulch ring is a circular border surrounding the base of a tree. When planting a new tree, she recommends including a mulch ring that covers the soil beneath the tree canopy. "One benefit of using a mulch ring around trees in a lawn area is to prevent maintenance equipment from coming too close and damaging the trunk," she said. "Also, plants grown directly beneath the tree canopy compete for water and nutrients, so a mulch ring keeps that soil covered without creating competition for the tree." Domenghini suggests using organic mulch, "for the same reasons it is selected for planter beds," she said. Those reasons include conserving and extending available water, protecting from soil erosion, and reducing competition by suppressing weeds. "The mulch ring around trees in a lawn should be at least 3-6 feet in diameter depending on the overall size of the tree," Domenghini said. "Ideally, the mulch ring should extend to the drip line of the tree, which means the ground beneath the entire canopy of the tree should be covered." The mulch ring should include a 4–6-inch diameter circle of bare soil at the center so that mulch is not right up next to the trunk, to prevent rotting. The mulch should be 2-4 inches deep and re-applied annually. "If mulch is applied too deep (more than four inches), the mulch can actually restrict oxygen from the soil and negatively affect the tree's root development," Domenghini said.

### Asparagus and Rhubarb in the Fall



Asparagus and rhubarb need to be maintained even though harvesting is finished. Add water as needed to prevent plants from drying out. Control weeds by using mulch and cultivation. Wait to fertilize until early spring. Asparagus foliage can be left intact or removed when it turns brown.



### Navigating investment opportunities amid high cattle prices



Just like people, no two cattle operations are the same. But with recent record-breaking cattle market prices, faculty with Kansas State University's Beef Cattle Institute are offering insight on how cow-calf producers might best capitalize on the market's momentum. "Eliminating as much debt as possible is crucial," K-State veterinarian Todd Gunderson said. "Operating debt-free is a significant blessing for ranchers when possible." Record keeping, while not directly profitable, can play a major role in identifying ways to improve margins. "Investing just a few hundred dollars in a disciplined record-keeping approach can provide valuable insights into operational performance," K-State agricultural economist Dustin Pendell said. K-State veterinarian Brad White echoed the value of good records, adding that they are often the foundation for more informed and profitable decision-making. Beef cattle nutritionist Phillip Lancaster said producers should also consider alternatives to traditional haying systems, especially as equipment continues to depreciate quickly and the cost of new machinery rises. "Ranchers often want to invest in new tractors and hay equipment when the real opportunity lies beneath their feet," Lancaster said. "Every acre of grazing land represents a potential efficiency gain." Lancaster encouraged producers to maximize forage utilization as a way to reduce operational costs. "When a cow can effectively graze versus me spending time and resources harvesting feed, we're talking about significant economic advantages," he said. K-State veterinarian Bob Larson emphasized the relationship between improving forage utilization and economic efficiency, encouraging producers to look at long-term investments in such cost-saving strategies as cross-fencing and water improvements. Building on that, veterinarian Scott Fritz suggested facilities as another area where investment can lead to long-term gains in safety and efficiency. "Sometimes those old working facilities are flat-out dangerous for employees and animals," Fritz said. "If you're hurt, you take away from the labor you have, and if it's a one-man operation, that's a significant loss in day-to-day management." More on this topic — including monitoring calves on feed and managing risk — is available on the latest episode of the K-State BCI Cattle Chat Podcast.

*By Chevy-Lynn Vaske, K-State Research and Extension news service*

### Attention New Sheep and Goat Producers!

Kelsey Bentley, KSU Animal Scientist and Small Ruminant Extension Specialist has recently published a new Lambing Resources for Beginning Sheep Producers and Kidding Resources for Beginning Goat Producers. Both publications can be accessed through the KSRE Bookstore or call (785-332-3171) or email ([rmelcher@ksu.edu](mailto:rmelcher@ksu.edu)) for a copy.





# Living Well Wednesday Fall 2025 Series

**September 17**

One Pill Can Kill: Opioid Crisis in Our Communities

**October 15**

Scam Smarts: Staying Safe in a Scamming World

**November 19**

The Buzz on Energy Drinks: Unpacking the Truth

All sessions start at 12:10pm CST.  
Sessions will be recorded for later viewing.  
Sign up at [bit.ly/41E7kqJ](https://bit.ly/41E7kqJ)

**LIVING WELL  
WEDNESDAY**  
K-State Research and Extension Webinar Series

**K-STATE** | Family and Consumer  
Research and Extension Sciences

## Tips for Preventing Falls

More than 1 in 4 older Kansans will experience a fall in any given year. Although they can be prevented. One in Five older adults who fall will experience a serious injury, such as broken bones or a traumatic brain injury. She notes that 88% of emergency room visits for hip fractures are due to a fall. Often, we are seeing things contributing to falls that we can address ourselves.

If we're feeling dizzy or not right, then we need to go to the doctor and perhaps review our medications and possible side effects. Or maybe we're losing body strength or balance, and then there are things around your house that you can change.

Around the home, older adults and their loved ones should consider such tripping hazards as throw rugs, furniture, dark areas around the yard, uneven cement, extension cords and more. It's a good idea to do a home safety checklist.

Grip bars can aid in getting in and out of the shower which are among the assistive equipment available. Solar-powered lighting in the yard is also a benefit when needing to be outside after dark.

But, one of the best fall prevention ideas is a good balance and exercise program. There are several exercise programs that are continuing to exercise at least 2 times a week in the Sunflower Extension District. If you need contacts, call 785-852-4285.



## OCTOBER 1 OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS!

<https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in>

**The 4-H year begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year.**

- Members live in towns, in the country, and on farms. 4-H is open to youth regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Kansas 4-H Youth Development has a policy for open enrollment. Eligible youth may enroll in Kansas 4-H Youth Development programs at any time of the year.
- Youth wanting to join must be 7 years old and not older than 18 as of December 31 of the New 4-H Year in order to be eligible for 4-H. 4-H members who are selected as winners in late summer or fall, and who turn 19 before January 1, cannot compete in state or national contests, awards, or recognition programs.
- Youth ages 5—6 years old as of December 31 of the New 4-H Year are eligible to participate in the Cloverbuds project which is offered through the 4-H clubs. Cloverbud members are encouraged to attend Cloverbud county-wide project meetings where available.



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension



**Beyond  
Ready**

### Re-enrollment for Returning 4-H Member



**Are you a continuing 4-H member?**  
Are you planning to show in your local county fair in the 4-H Division?

**Re-enroll by December 1** each year to be eligible to show in the 4-H division at the county fair!

**Wallace County kids** your annual fee will be paid by the 4-H Council if enrolled by December 1st

**Sherman County kids** you can pay by credit card online or pay by check or cash at the Sherman Co. Extension Office.

**Cheyenne County kids** your annual fee will be paid by the 4-H Council if enrolled by December 1st



## 2025 Kansas 4-H Leadership Weekend

Submitted by Beth Hinshaw

The Kansas 4-H Leadership Weekend will be November 22-23 at Rock Springs 4-H Ranch and consists of the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum and the Kansas Volunteer Leader Forum.



KYLF is for youth ages 14-18 before January 1, 2026, and KVF is for all Kansas 4-H Volunteers. KYLF will feature leadership workshops, Youth Council Elections, and opportunities to learn and have fun. The Kansas 4-H Volunteer Leader Forum will feature workshops and information to help volunteers be more effective and learn from each other. This Forum for adults is organized by the Kansas Association of 4-H Volunteers.

Registration will open in September. Again, this year, participants in both forums will register through the same system. Registration deadline is October 15, 2025, for both events. There will also be an option for coming in on Friday evening and having breakfast Saturday morning for those coming from a distance.

**NATIONAL 4-H WEEK**  
**OCTOBER 5-11**



**Day 1 - Beyond Ready:  
Go Green**

**Monday, October 6, 2025**

On Monday of National 4-H Week, **Go GREEN** and show your 4-H state spirit! A simple, cohesive way for youth, professionals, volunteers, alumni & supporters across the country to celebrate their 4-H program being *Beyond Ready*. Wear a green hat, clothing, face paint - anything green goes. Let's paint the nation **GREEN**, on Monday, October 6!

Share your Go Green moment on social and tag National 4-H, your State 4-H program, and use **#4HBeyondReady #National4HWeek**



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

**New 4-H policy Guide:** <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/policy-guide/Kansas%204-H%20Policy%20Handbook%202023.pdf>

# Sunflower District

## October

### 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1.  4-H Open Enrollment Opens	2.	3.  KJLS	4.  KJLS
5.  KJLS  National 4-H Week	6.  National 4-H Week	7.  National 4-H Week	8.  National 4-H Week	9.  National 4-H Week	10.  National 4-H Week	11.  National 4-H Week
12.	13.  Columbus Day Extension Closed	14.	15.	16.  Due date for Project reports, Forms, & Books	17.	18.  Shooting Sports Training
19.  Shooting Sports Training	20.	21.	22.	23.  Record Books & Officer Books Due to the Extension Office	24.	25.  Cheyenne County Day Camp
26.	27.  Record Book Judging	28.	29.	30.	31.   <b>Halloween</b>	



**Sunflower Extension District #6**  
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### **Sunflower Extension District #6 Offices**

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