

Sunflower Extension District #6

October 2026

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



October 2026
Newsletter

www.sunflower.ksu.edu

Sunflower Extension District

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Karen Nelson's Retirement Message

38 years = 8 of them in the Sunflower District. Thank you for welcoming me to Kansas.

I have been so lucky to have this career. It is difficult for me to leave it behind.

Above all, I wanted to make a difference – in communities, in organizations, and for people with the opportunities I was fortunate to be able to provide.

I have so enjoyed spending the past eight years with all of you! The volunteers, 4-H Councils, Extension Board, Extension colleagues, individuals, and other organizations are special. It is an amazing place here in the NW corner of Kansas where I was so fortunate to land. We all have, in my opinion, unmatched opportunity to 'make the best better' because of our supportive communities.

The Community Foundations, Match Day, and local businesses support will continue to help you accomplish great things with 4-H and future efforts to benefit community.

I will be staying in Goodland and have several trips planned in the next few months. Travel is my happy place. I also like to spend time at home and I can't wait to see you out and about!

I hope it's true! "Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else." Fred Rogers.

With Thanks - Karen





Kim's Korner



Congratulations to all of our 4-H Participants for County and State Fair! We are so proud of each and every one of you!



Want communication right now and on your cell phone? Join the Band app for your County! (Only 4-H families are invited)



What do I do with all of these ribbons? Bring them back to Extension, we recycle!





Fall Garden Checklist

Though the growing season may soon be coming to a close, the fun in yard and garden work never *truly* ends. Between shutdown, cleanup, modification, preservation, and protection efforts, avid gardeners often find themselves “just sitting down” at the point when the growing season is about to return. Nevertheless, for those actually looking forward to and anticipating a little downtime in their gardening efforts during this “off season,” we’ve put together a few nifty little to-dos to help streamline your success.

Vegetable Garden fall checklist:

Remove debris. Unlike ornamental beds, vegetable gardens don’t apply to the “leave it lay” rule. While plant debris provides winter shelter for beneficial insects, it also helps protect garden pests such as squash bugs, squash vine borer, cucumber beetles, and more. Clear it out to reduce pest pressure in the year to come.

Test and amend your soil. Fall is the perfect time for vegetable garden soil amendments since it is the only time where heavy-duty amendments such as raw manure can be used. Doing so, the amendment will be given ample time to incorporate into the soil, “cooling off” to a point where it won’t burn growing plants. The long period before replanting will then also mitigate any pathogen contamination issues that can arise, so long as the amendment is applied at least 180 days before a harvest.

Mulch, or plant cover crops. Protect your amended soil with straw or plastic mulch to mitigate erosion from wind, rain, and snow. Alternatively, consider planting cover crops. These offer numerous benefits based on the crops selected, from erosion prevention to nitrogen fixing, to natural soil tilling. The most important thing to remember with them is to *never* let them go to seed. Know their exact growing schedule, keep a diligent eye on them, and be ready to take quick terminating action with a mower or tiller.

Flower Garden Fall Checklist:

Dig up tender warm-season bulbs. Dahlia lovers take note! They won’t survive the winter without your help. Any warm season bulbs in your garden should be removed from the soil in autumn, brushed free of soil, dried at a surface level, and then stored in sawdust or burlap in a cool (frost free) location.

Plant spring bulbs. If looking for a burst of color in the early spring, now’s your shot to make it happen! Plant spring bulbs like tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and crocus now. They’ll soak up the fall moisture establish their roots nicely for the season to come.

These are the ones that you actually do want to “let lay” until the spring –if you can make it happen without causing problems. Dropped leaves and dormant canes offer winter protection, nesting, and hibernation locations for ground bees and other beneficial insects, priming them to return to your garden in the year to come. Also of note, heavy mulching of perennials in the fall will help ensure they’re well insulated and protected from the cold in the winter to come.

Lawn Fall Checklist:

Overseed cool season lawns. September-October is the time to apply seed to cool season lawns if they need a bit of a revitalization. Make sure you soften any bare soil spots to ensure good seed-to-soil contact. Water the seeds in well, and then ensure adequate soil moisture is maintained until the new plants go dormant.

Give it a snack. Applied by mid-October, one last hit of high-nitrogen, low phosphorus and potassium, fertilizer will give your lawn the food it needs to survive well through winter – also helping it stay green a bit longer than the neighbor’s lawn. Be sure to follow label instructions for application rates and water in right away.

Following this checklist now, your garden will be set for a successful winter! Just remember, soil moisture still depletes throughout the winter, so stay on top of it. Also, if excessively cold temperatures show, further protection efforts may be required with the more finicky plants. Nevertheless, these steps will have plants in their best position for thriving in the coming growing season.

by Anthony Reardon, Horticulture Small Farms Agent, 2025



K-State health professional urges Kansans to schedule annual wellness exam

An annual wellness exam may include screening for vision, in addition to other health updates.

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Scheduling a physical with the doctor is an important step in addressing a health concern, but it's not enough. In fact, a Kansas State University health professional says all Americans need to be active in scheduling and following through with an annual wellness exam. "A physical usually is to identify a concern, maybe diagnose a disease, or when we think something is not right," said Elaine Johannes, the Kansas Health Foundation's Distinguished Professor of Community Health at Kansas State University. "We go in, we get checked and, thankfully, everything turns out okay." "A wellness exam," she continued, "should be done annually to make sure that we are as healthy as we can be. The doctor will look at certain indicators – or screenings – to make sure we are working well. If there is a problem, then the hope is that we would catch it early enough to treat it without invasive procedures."

When thinking of wellness checks, Johannes says, "we need to own those... We need to be active in our health."

People of all ages need to be active in scheduling an annual wellness exam, according to Johannes. The [National Institutes of Health](#) urges Americans to visit a health care provider regularly, even if you feel healthy. The purpose of the visits includes:

*Screen for medical issues. *Assess the risk for future medical problems. *Encourage a healthy lifestyle.

*Update vaccinations and other preventive care services. *Help you get to know your provider in case of illness.

NIH also has published guidelines for what a wellness exam should cover for men and women, in three age groups (18-39, 40-64, and over age 65).

"As we get older, [the list of screenings that we should have in our wellness checks](#) gets longer," Johannes said. "For example, if you're between the ages of 18-39, no matter if you identify as male or female, those lists may be 10 screenings, head to toe, inside and outside... But as we get older the screening list gets longer; the National Institutes of Health has a list of 15 things that are part of our overall health when we get over the age of 65."

For older adults, the wellness exam includes screening for diabetes, a colonoscopy, blood pressure, hypertension, cholesterol, osteoporosis, hearing, vision, mental health and more. Johannes suggests avoiding the temptation to "make excuses" for missing a wellness exam. She provides a list to help all people – and especially older adults – to make sure they get an annual wellness exam:

- Actually schedule the exam and prepare for it by knowing what concerns you may have, and what questions you want to ask the medical professional. Write questions down and make lists of medications to share with your provider.
- Make sure you feel comfortable having your data shared with the physician. Avoid feeling embarrassed about sharing a health concern; physicians are trained professionals who aren't there to judge you.
- Ask questions and speak out. A national report indicates that physicians spend an average of 18 minutes with patients. "Go into the appointment with the mindset that you and your physician are on the same 'team,' and that your active involvement is expected and appreciated," Johannes said. Be ready with questions so that you make efficient use of that time.
- If there's not enough time to adequately cover your questions, then follow up with the doctor, nurse or provider's office professional. Let them know if something new has come up, or ask a question again if you didn't understand the original answer.
- Advocate for yourself. Don't assume that someone else will follow up for you. If you don't understand lab results or other data, contact the doctor's office to find out what you need to know.

"There are a lot of reasons that people don't get wellness checks," Johannes said. "One of those is we believe we don't have time, or maybe you're not insured. Geographic distance is also a concern; Kansas is among many states that have shortages in health care providers, including primary care physicians, mental health professionals and dentists. A lack of providers, Johannes says, "impacts access to health care, especially in rural, frontier areas." "There are many barriers, but as a community and as a state, we should be talking about health care. Maybe we could plan for broadband and use tele-health; many screenings can be done through tele-health, or maybe a mobile clinic. There are workarounds to keep us healthy, active and working."

A longer discussion with Johannes regarding the importance of a yearly wellness exam is available on the weekly radio program, [Sound Living](#), produced by K-State Research and Extension.



National 4-H Week

Sunday, Oct. 4 – Saturday, Oct. 10, 2026

DAY 1

GO GREEN

Monday, Oct. 5

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 programs being Beyond Ready. Let's paint the nation GREEN, on Monday, October 5!



**OCTOBER 1 OPEN
ENROLLMENT BEGINS!**

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

DAY 2

THANKFUL THURSDAY

Thursday, Oct. 8

On Thursday of National 4-H Week, help us shine a light on all the mentors, educators, and volunteers who are making positive impact on you people's lives in 4-H. Share who you're thankful for and celebrate how they are making a difference on Thursday, October 8!



Share your 'Thankful' story on social, tag others in your 4-H community, tag National 4-H and use: [#4HBeyondReady](#) [#National4HWeek](#)

Interested in the KSU Horticulture Newsletter??

To have the KSU Horticulture Newsletter emailed to you, subscribe by sending an e-mail message to hortsupport@ksu.edu listing your e-mail address in the message.

The KSU Horticulture Newsletter is also available online at: <http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/>



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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>



***Congratulations to of the District Youth who participated
in the static events at the Kansas State Fair!***

Sherman County

Gracelyn Coon – Visual Arts
Austin Davis – Welding
Elly Evert - Photography* Rocketry
Krista Evert - Photography * Foods
Sophie Evert – Photography * Rocketry
Waylon Heiter - Photography
Weston Heiter - Photography
Witton Heiter – Visual Arts
Katelyn Hill - Visual Arts
Gage Linin – Foods * Photography
Garth Linin – Foods * Photography
Joshua McKenzie – Shooting Sports; Storage Case
Rorie Martin - Foods* Recycled Clothing *
Clothing; Garment *Food Educational Exhibit *
Shopping in Style Display
Rylea Martin –Recycled Clothing * Foods * Food
Educational Exhibit * Shopping in Style Display *
Clothing; Outfit
Coletin Schritter – Photography
Haisley Short – Foods * Shopping in Style Display
Hayden Short - Photography * Sewing & Textile *
Foods
Hensley Short - Fiber Arts; quilted article * Foods
* Educational Exhibit Foods * Sewing & Textile
Hudson Short—Foods
Benjamin Thomas- Small engine with generator
Kaisley WasseMiller – Ceramics
Eastin Wolf - Photography

Wallace County

Bane Fischer– Photography
Blaise Fischer– Photography
Loghan Riedel- Photography
Payton Riedel- Photography * Visual Arts
Joseph Riedel– Photography
Tiffany Riedel- Photography
Myriah McQuillan- Photography * Visual
Arts
Addilyn Kreger– Photography * Fiber Arts
Leah Kreger- Photography *Fiber Arts
Annabelle Myers– Visual Arts

Cheyenne County

Bella Bandel– Photography * Visual Arts
Brady Holzwarth– Photography
Dillon Keller- Photography
Carsten Ludowese- Photography * Foods
Coltynn Ludowese– Photography * Foods
Reagan Milne- Photography
Sierra Milne- Photography
Ellie Shay– Photography
Ronan Shay- Photography
Ryder Shay– Foods * Photography
Garth Linin – Photography
William Simmonds– Photography



**Beyond
Ready**



Sunflower District

October

2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1. 4-H Enrollment Opens	2. KJLS	3. KJLS
4. KJLS National 4-H Week 	5. National 4-H Week SH-4-H Council 7:00 PM MT 4-H Bldg	6. National 4-H Week	7. National 4-H Week Sunflower Board Mtg. College 5:30-7:30 PM MT	8. National 4-H Week	9. National 4-H Week	10. National 4-H Week
11.	12. Extension Closed	13.	14.	15.	16. Record Books & Officer Books Due to the Extension Office	17.
18.	19. WA-4-H Council 6:30 PM MT Ext Office	20.	21. WA- Record Book & Officer Book Judging	22.	23. SH- Record Book & Officer Book Judging	24.
25.	26. CN- Record Book & Officer Book Judging	27. Sherman County PDC Mtg TBD Assembly Room Extension Office	28.	29. 	30. 	31. Halloween

Sunflower Extension District #6

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