



# River Valley District

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K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

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## LET'S GET WALKING WITH WALK KANSAS

Are you ready to make a change to improve your health? Walk Kansas is a great way to motivate yourself, and five of your closest friends. Walk Kansas is a program that challenges you to get up and move. Starting on March 19<sup>th</sup> and running through May 13<sup>th</sup> you and your teammates participate in the physical activity of your choice. Your exercise time is then converted to miles to help move your team through the team challenge you choose. There are three challenge options. The first one encourages team members to reach the minimum physical activity goal of 2 1/2 hours of moderate/vigorous physical activity per week. If every member met that goal, your team would move 423 miles or the distance across the state. Maybe your team would like a little more of a challenge. You might decide to take a diagonal trip across the state from Troy to Elkhart. This would mean that each member needs to get 4 hours of physical activity per week in order to make the 750 mile trip. You may already be doing a good job of being physically active and want a reason to pick up your pace. If that's the case then you and your teammates should consider challenge three. With this challenge your physical activity moves you around the perimeter of the state. That means each team member will need to contribute 6 hours of physical activity each week in order to make the 1,200 mile journey.



Your physical activity doesn't have to be walking. It can be whatever you can do to challenge and improve yourself. You can report all activity you do at a moderate and vigorous level as long as the activity is performed for at least ten consecutive minutes. Strength training exercises count also. If you wear an activity tracker you can count any steps you take after you reach 6,000 for that day. You get 15 minutes of activity for 2,000 steps you take above and beyond the first 6,000.

Teams consist of 6 members. You can register and report on line or you can contact your local River Valley District Office to get a paper enrollment packet if you prefer. The cost for the program is \$6.00 and you and your teammates will receive a weekly newsletter with healthy living and eating tips. Registration opened February 27<sup>th</sup> and will continue until March 13<sup>th</sup>. This could be your chance to make 2017 the year of change for improving your health!

## WALKING AFTER MEALS BENEFITS DIABETICS

After-meal activity may benefit those with type 2 diabetes according to a recent New Zealand study. Researchers there found that volunteers with diabetes who took a 10 minute walk after each meal saw their post-meal blood sugar levels drop 12 percent more than those who took one 30 minutes strolling walk. Controlling after meal blood sugar spikes can reduce the risk of heart disease and the need for higher doses of insulin.

*Consumer Reports On Health Feb 2017*

## REDUCING ADDED SUGAR

Many people worry about the amount of fat in their diet but research has shown that what we really need to be concerned with is added sugar. Sugar occurs naturally in many foods like fruits, vegetables, and milk, but it is added to many other food items. Over time this sugar intake can cause weight gain and have negative health effects.

The new nutrition labels that will start to appear later this year will tell you how much added sugar a food item has, but until then the best place to look is the ingredient list. The ingredients appear in order from the greatest concentration to the least. Try to select foods that do not have a form of sugar listed in the top five ingredients.

Sweetness is something that our bodies learn to crave so it can take a while to learn to live with foods that have lower sugar content. To be successful it is best to start reducing your sugar intake gradually. Maybe add less to your coffee every week until you can drink it without. You will be amazed at what a difference limiting sugar can make in your diet.

## PREVENTING CANCER BY CONTROLLING YOUR DIET

Most of us have been touched by cancer in one way or another. This year alone, more than 1.68 million men and women will be diagnosed with this devastating disease. While genetics plays a strong role in your cancer risk, lifestyle changes and early detection can help prevent nearly half of all cancer deaths.

Follow these guidelines to help reduce your cancer risk with your diet.

- Maintain a healthy weight. The connection between cancer and obesity can vary depending on the type of cancer, but the connection can be as high as 40 percent for some cancers. It is especially high for those cancers of the digestive system like esophageal, colon, and endometrial.
- Reduce your intake of calories from solid fats and added sugars. These foods tend to be high in calories and low in nutrients thus leaving little room for healthier food options.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. They are naturally nutrient rich.
- Limit alcohol. Evidence suggests that all types of alcoholic drinks can increase your risk of a number of cancers including mouth, throat, voice box, esophageal, liver, breast, colon, and rectal. Alcoholic drinks should be limited to no more than one drink daily for women and two for men.

## THE NEXT SUPER FOOD



Kale has been one of the latest super foods and now its cousins which include bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, and cauliflower are starting to steal its show. This fami-

ly of vegetables, called crucifers, are rich in vitamins and minerals as well as containing unique disease fighting compounds. This vegetable family is the most common dietary source of glucosinolates. These are natural chemicals that give the veggies their pungent flavor and break down into cancer-protecting compounds.

A study in the *Annals of Oncology* found that just one serving per week over a two year period lowered the risk of breast, colon, and oral cancer by 17 percent; esophageal cancer by 28 percent; and kidney cancer by 32 percent. Each type of vegetable has different anticancer compounds so it's best to eat a variety.

This vegetable family also contains large amounts of vision protecting carotenoids as well as fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins C, E, and K. Some of these nutrients may contribute to the cancer-fighting ability, but they may also be part of the reason crucifers help control inflammation and protect against heart disease.

Work a variety of these vegetables into your daily diet.

*Consumer Reports On Health Feb 2017*

## FIXING FUNKY FOODS

Each year more than 20,000 new foods appear in the grocery store. Sometimes it can be overwhelming to try some of the new things that appear. It can also put a dent in your budget if you try things that your family doesn't like. Fixing Funky Foods is a program that looks at some of the newer foods that have appeared and ways to prepare them. Many of them aren't new at all, just new to the mainstream American diet. We will look at foods like quinoa, couscous, jicama, and more.

**The lessons will be offered March 7th:**

**10:00 am - Washington Extension meeting room**

**2:00 pm - Clay Center Extension meeting room**

**It will also be offered March 9<sup>th</sup>:**

**10:00 am - Concordia Courthouse meeting room**

**2:00 pm - Belleville Extension meeting room**

## LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK?

Although many Americans do it, there's a better way to live than paycheck to paycheck. Learning how to save money is one of the first steps to getting where you want to be in life. With a little willpower and determination, anyone can do it. Plus, once you start, it gets easier and easier.

First, what's your motivation to quit living paycheck to paycheck? Why are you wanting to save money? Are you just tired of the hassle of never having enough money to do/buy what you want? Are you wanting to buy a house? Different vehicle? Pay off debt? Save for retirement? Think through your motivation and what has to happen (or change) in order to reach your goal.

This step can be really hard to do if you've no idea where your money is going....So start tracking your spending. Once you know where your money is actually going, you're on your way to making some changes. An easy way to track your spending is to save every receipt---and that means track every penny that leaves your pocket. The \$1 spent on coffee on the way to work, the money you give your teen for gas; write down every expense. A handy---and easy reminder---is to keep this tracking list on your refrigerator. At the end of the week, circle every expense that satisfied a "want" but not a "need". Analyze. What would have happened if you wouldn't have spent that money? Is there a better way the money could have been spent? By being honest with yourself, you'll soon see where your money is going. This will also help you evaluate just how important your goals are. Are they worth the sacrifice it will take to achieve them? It takes being very honest with yourself and with everyone in the family who has a part in spending that money. You'll want to get others involved in this saving idea too. If the entire family agrees on a savings goal, you'll be much more likely to achieve it.

There's lots of money management advice out there. A very reputable website (and free) is Kansas Saves (<http://www.KansasSaves.org>) This financial management site offers information to help overhaul your finances, save enough to replace an aging car, build an emergency fund, add to a retirement account....and stop living paycheck to paycheck!

## GOOD SAVINGS HABITS START AT HOME!

Good savings habits start at home. Whether you're budgeting, saving, making retirement decisions, or assessing work-place benefits, [share the choices you make with your children](#), no matter their age. Allow children to help find ways to save! Child age-appropriate activities may include:

- Cutting out coupons.
- Looking for price differences at the store.
- Helping choose a vacation spot.
- Helping to cook at home, rather than dining out.
- Helping to choose a free entertainment activity (park, library, family walk, dance party with the whole family)

## INCREASING THE POSITIVES IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Have you ever noticed how your thoughts have a way of affecting your feelings and your actions? While we all want our relationships to be mostly positive, sometimes things don't go that way. If your partner does something in the morning that upsets you, you may not feel comfortable bringing it up. Instead, you let it smolder inside and by the end of the day, when you see your partner again, you are in no mood to talk and totally avoid your partner. Your partner can't see inside your head and has no idea what upset you.

Negative behavior like this happens in every relationship.

When it happens frequently over time, couples end up feeling as if the whole relationship is negative. However, if there are more positive behaviors than negative, an occasional negative experience doesn't matter as much. Some researchers have said a



healthy and stable relationship requires five positive experiences to cancel out every negative experience. This means for every 'insult', there has to be five 'compliments'.

This isn't 'Pollyanna' thinking. Positive thinking doesn't mean you ignore your problems. All relationships experience some conflict and negativity at some point. How you deal with the conflict, though, can be influenced by whether you are thinking negatively or positively. If you can bring up positive thoughts about your partner and the relationship while in the middle of a conflict, you'll be more likely to work through the conflict.

The following suggestions may give you a 'jumpstart' to making your relationship have more positives than negatives:

- \*List 3 things that you like about your partner.
- \*List 3 activities you enjoy doing with your partner.
- \*List 3 things your partner does that makes you feel cared for and supported.
- \*List 3 things you could do to help your partner feel more loved and supported.

Make it a habit to share at least one positive thought about your partner or your relationship with him/her each and every day.

## SOOTHING A CRYING BABY

It's easy to get frustrated and angry when nothing you do seems to calm a crying baby. But, remember whatever you do, never shake a baby! If you shake a baby, you can cause permanent brain damage or death. Babies have large heavy heads and weak neck muscles. When a baby is shaken, the movement bounces the brain back and forth in the skull, rupturing and tearing blood vessels, nerves and healthy tissue. While many shaken babies die, others who survive have permanent damage including blindness, hearing loss, seizures, developmental delays, speech and learning difficulties, and paralysis. All these conditions last a lifetime!

When a baby keeps crying, first check to make sure he/she is not hungry or wearing a dirty diaper. Check to make there is nothing pinching the baby. Undress the baby and check for red marks. If the baby keeps crying, try swaddling or wrapping the baby up snugly. This is comforting and helps babies feel secure. Hold the baby against your chest. Most babies feel more comfortable if you hold them close. Rock the baby. You can do this in a rocking chair or by swaying your body back and forth. Most babies enjoy stroller or car rides. The motion seems to soothe them.

Other methods to soothe a crying baby include: giving baby a warm, relaxing bath; giving baby a gentle massage on his/her arms, legs, toes and tummy. Play a cd with pleasant gentle sounds. Soft piano music or ocean sounds seem to work well.

If nothing works, the baby continues to cry, and you're becoming overly frustrated, take a break. See if another adult can relieve you. If all else fails, put the baby down safely in a crib and let him or her cry for short periods (10-15 minutes).

## UPCOMING RVD CHILD CARE PROVIDER CLASSES

**Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Cloud County Courthouse meeting room, Concordia. "Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom", part 3, Reading, Books for Learning and Vocabulary; 3 KDHE approved CEU's.**

Information on reading, books for learning, building vocabulary, and strategies for reading to children in an early childhood classroom will be discussed. Information on dialogic reading will be shared as well as ideas for using books for learning and ways to build young children's vocabulary.



## CHILD CARE CLASSES CONT.

**Monday, March 13, 2017, 6:30 p.m., Faith United Presbyterian Church, Clifton, KS. "Better Brains for Babies".** Between conception and age 5, the basic foundations of brain development are established. With healthy brain development rooted mostly in a young child's everyday experiences, it's important that the child's environment be secure, nurturing, and enriching.

**Monday, April 3, 2017, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Cloud County Courthouse meeting room, Concordia. "Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom", part 4, Emergent Writing and Environmental Print, 2 KDHE approved CEU's.**

This training provides information on emergent writing and the development of fine motor skills, a precursor to writing. Common stages of emergent writing development and ways to support children's early writing development will be shared. A variety of ways to embed writing into classroom routines and use environmental print promote print awareness and alphabet knowledge will be discussed.

**To ensure adequate handout materials are available, pre-registration is required by calling the RVD Extension office in Concordia one week prior to the scheduled class. Although these classes are planned to help child care providers achieve certification requirements, the classes are open to the public as well.**

## STAY STRONG, STAY HEALTHY!

One of the best ways to keep your body and mind functioning at their very best is by exercising. **KSU River Valley Extension will be offering "Stay Strong, Stay Healthy!" at Cuba's City Building on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9 to 10 a.m. beginning March 29. The strength training classes will meet for 8 weeks with the last class being May 19.**

The strength training class will include warm-up and cool-down exercises as well as strengthening exercises. Designed for males and females 60 and older, the classes will help participants increase muscle strength, improve their balance, enhance flexibility, reduce the risk of heart disease, build stronger bones, reduce depression and stress as well as help with weight control.

Registration information is available at RVD's Extension office in Belleville or by calling any of the RVD Extension offices by Monday, March 27. There is a fee of \$20 for SSSH to cover the cost of supplies. Persons wanting more information are also encouraged to attend an informational meeting and demonstration during Cuba's Rock-a-Thon on Thursday morning, March 23 at 10:00 a.m.

## KEYS TO EMBRACING AGING

Aging is a process that affects each and every one uniquely. This program emphasizes keys to help you grow old gracefully, successfully, and with increased longevity, based primarily on findings from centenarian studies and those who participated. Middle aged adults are facing increasing changes and challenges associated with their own aging process. Older adults will benefit because it is never too late to adapt healthy lifestyle behaviors. The program provides tools to help a person take responsibility for their own health.

Deanna Turner will present the program on:

**April 4 at 2pm, Concordia Courthouse Meeting Room**

**April 6 at 10am, Washington Extension Office**

**April 11 at 2pm, Belleville Public Library, Extension Spring Tea,**

## MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT PLAN G

A couple years ago more supplement insurance companies started selling and promoting Supplement Plan G. It is similar to a Plan F except that the Medicare beneficiary must pay the Part B annual deductible which is \$183 in 2017.

The expenses under Medicare Part B are the physician charges whether you are in or out of the hospital, durable medical equipment, ambulance, and outpatient hospital charges. With a Plan G a Medicare beneficiary pays the first \$183 of the expenses under Medicare Part B.

Be an informed consumer. Look on your Medicare Supplement Insurance card and see what lettered supplement plan that you have.

## LOW COST LEGAL SERVICES

Kansas Legal Services, a statewide non-profit corporation, is devoted to helping low income Kansans meet their basic needs through the provision of important legal and mediation services.

The Manhattan Office of Kansas Legal Services Serves Clay, Gear, Pottawatomie, and Riley County located at:

104 S. 4th St., 2nd Floor

Manhattan, KS 66502

Phone: 785-537-2943

Paul Shipp, Managing Attorney

Salina Office of Kansas Legal Services Serves Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, McPherson, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic, Rice, and Saline County located at:

2302 Planet Avenue

Salina, KS 67401

Phone: 785-825-8147

Candace Bridgess, Managing Attorney

Seneca Office of Kansas Legal Services Serves Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Marshall, Nemaha, and Washington County located at:

203 N. 8th St.

Seneca, KS 66538

Phone: 785-336-6016

Paul Shipp, Managing Attorney

You can apply for legal assistance either by phone 1-800-723-6953 or by **completing an online application available at: [www.kansaslegalservices.org](http://www.kansaslegalservices.org)** Individuals seeking legal assistance should first apply. The field offices can't answer any questions or give legal advice until they have an application on file.

Call toll-free 1-800-723-6953 (Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and talk with an Intake Specialist. You will find out if you are eligible for legal assistance. Kansas Legal Services gives free or low cost civil legal advice and representation for persons whose incomes make them eligible.

After filling out an Online Application, you will be contacted by an Intake Specialist within two business days. He or she will talk with you to figure out if you are eligible for services. Kansas Legal Services handles cases in these areas of the law: consumer, employment, family, juvenile, health, housing, income maintenance, and individual rights law.

## HEALTH INSURANCE...

### ARE WE THERE YET?

Find out the latest information on health insurance by attending: **Health Insurance...Are We there Yet?**

This program will be presented on Tuesday, May 2 by Cindy Hermes, Director of Public Outreach, Kansas Insurance Department. It will be presented in Two Locations- 1:30pm, Concordia-Courthouse Basement Meeting Room 5:30pm, Clay Center-Apollo Towers Dining Room, 330 West Court

Cindy will provide an update on health insurance. She will have a question and answer session so bring your questions to this informative public meeting.

## LIEAP APPLICATIONS ARE

### AVAILABLE

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit. The application period is available through Friday, March 31. Applications are available at the North Central -Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging by calling 800-432-0043 or apply on-line at: [www.lieap.dcf.ks.gov](http://www.lieap.dcf.ks.gov)

## MEDICARE PART D LATE ENROLLMENT PENALTY

You will have a late enrollment penalty if you did not sign up for Medicare Part D when first eligible to do so, or if you went more than 63 days without drug coverage that was at least as good as Medicare Part D coverage (this is known as creditable coverage). After you join a Medicare drug plan, the plan will tell you if you owe a penalty and what your premium will be. This amount is added to your monthly Part D premium. The Part D late enrollment penalty (LEP) is 1% of the national base beneficiary premium (\$35.63 in 2017) for every month you did not have Part D or certain other types of drug coverage while eligible for Part D. You'll generally have to pay the penalty for as long as you have Part D coverage.

### Calculating the Penalty

The national premium for 2017 is \$35.63, 1% of that is 35.63 cents. Multiply this amount times the number of months you should have had Part D or creditable coverage and didn't. The national base beneficiary premium can change yearly. The amount is printed annually in the *Medicare & You* booklet you receive from Medicare in the fall.

### Appealing a Penalty

It is always the beneficiary's right to appeal an LEP, but the appeal is unlikely to be successful if the appeal is because the individual did not know that they were supposed to have prescription drug coverage.

People can appeal this LEP if they believe that it was assessed by mistake, such as if:

1. They were covered by creditable drug coverage while eligible for Medicare.
2. They received inadequate information about whether their drug coverage was creditable.

To appeal, complete the appeal form received from the plan, attaching any evidence to supporting the appeal. Evidence can be a letter from an employer or former employer stating that a beneficiary had creditable coverage during the time that they were eligible for Medicare but not enrolled in a Part D plan. Then mail everything to the address on the appeal form. This address should be for MAXIMUS Federal Services, which is the company contracted by Medicare to handle these appeals.

The appeal deadline is 60 days from the date the letter notifying the beneficiary of the penalty. A decision from MAXIMUS can be expected within about 90 days. If the appeal is successful, the plan has to pay back the LEP payments made by the individual while the appeal was pending.

**Sources:** *Dear Marci; Medicare Rights Center and Medicare & You, a publication of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.*

North Central-Flint Hills, Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

## CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Being a caregiver is stressful. Burnout often is a result. It is important for a caregiver to remain healthy in order to care for their loved one. Realize your limitations and take care of yourself in order to be an effective caregiver. Try these tips to help with burnout.

- Rely on your friends and family for support. Talking with other people helps. Maintain your relationships with your friends. Talk on the phone or go out to coffee.
- Participate in a support group.
- Try to eat a healthy diet and exercise daily. You might go on a walk with a friend. Take the dog on a walk. It helps to get out of the house. Get enough sleep to recharge for the next day.
- Work with other family members to rotate your caregiving responsibilities. Make them aware that you need some help. Accept help if someone offers assistance. Sometimes having specific responsibilities that a person can do helps. Make a to do list and be ready in case someone offers. People want to help, but they may not know what to do.
- Find some time to yourself for reflection, meditation, and/or prayer. Watch a sunset. Read your favorite book.
- Continue your hobbies to relax and rejuvenate.
- Discover ways that work for you to de-stress and be a loving caregiver.

For more information, sign up for the next class of *Powerful Tools for Caregivers*. Pat Gerhardt and Deanna Turner are currently teaching a class in Concordia.

## TRANSITION PLANNING: 12 STEPS TO KEEP THE FAMILY FARMING

For many, the downturn in the farm economy will bring about the end of an era. Some aging farm families will simply choose to retire rather than erode their hard earned equity while others may have no choice but to transition from farming to some other line of work. Regardless of the reason, the transition requires a great deal of planning to be successful. Most farm families want to rush first to the attorney or an auctioneer for an estate or transition plan, when in fact this should be one of the last steps. K-State Research & Extension has a great resource called *Transition Planning: 12 Steps to Keep the Family Farming*. Stop by any Extension office and ask for bulletin MF3074. This bulletin will guide families through a communication process that helps determine their best strategies for a successful transition.

## PLANTING RHUBARB

Tired of planting only annual vegetable plants in your garden, try adding in some perennial vegetables. One perennial vegetable that can handle our hot summers and our cold winters is Rhubarb. Rhubarb can be tricky to grow in Kansas.

Rhubarb is very susceptible to crown rot and is subject to “wet feet.” This means rhubarb needs to be planted in a well-drained soil so water does not stay around the roots. You don’t want the roots sitting in water as this will increase the chance of crown rot happening. One way to help prevent crown rot is by amending your soil. One way to amend your soil is to add organic matter, which will increase the drainage of your soil.

If this is your first time planting rhubarb, you will want to take a soil test of area where you are planning to plant. Rhubarb grows best in a soil with a pH below 7.0. Soil testing should be done every couple of years, especially if have amended your soil or if you are looking to plant something new.

The best time to plant rhubarb is mid-March to early April. Rhubarb is propagated from crowns that contain one or two buds. When planting you want to space the crowns 2 to 3 feet apart in the row with 4 to 5 feet between each row. The crown should be planted shallow, about ½ to 1 inch below the soil surface. Firm up the soil around the crown, but make sure there isn’t a depression that will hold water, as this will cause crown rot. A few recommended varieties that grow well in Kansas are Canada Red, Crimson Red, McDonald and Valentine. Rhubarb needs to be rejuvenated about every 5 to 10 years. You should rejuvenate your plants by digging up and dividing the crowns into sections that contain one or two buds. A potato fork can be used to dig up the crowns and a cleaver or axe can be used to cut the crowns. You want to divide your plants in mid-March to early April just as if you were planting new plants.

Newly transplanted rhubarb should not be harvested in the first year, so the plant can recover from the transplant process. Only a few stalks should be harvested in the second year to allow the plant to build up its energy reserves. Once the plant is three years or older harvest season can last about 8 weeks. You want to harvest the largest and best stalks by pulling them slightly to the side, so they break away from the plant. When harvesting never harvest more than one-third of the leaf stalks at one time. You want to make sure the plant has enough foliage to keep the energy reserves up to keep producing more rhubarb. Remember with rhubarb only the leaf stalk (petiole) is eaten as the leaf blade contains oxalic acid, which is poisonous.

To help rhubarb over winter you can add a layer of mulch. Mulch is great for preventing weed growth and reducing moisture loss. However, you should pull away the mulch in the spring to allow the soil to warm up and encourage the plant to start growing. Rhubarb is a great perennial plant to add into your garden if you are looking to add a change to your garden.

## TIME TO PLANT POTATOES

St. Patrick’s Day will be here before we know it, so it’s time to get seed potatoes in the ground. Actually, any time from mid-to-late March is fine for planting potatoes. Be sure to buy seed potatoes, not the ones bought for cooking. Seed potatoes are certified disease free and have plenty of starch to sprout quickly as the soil temperature gets warm enough. Most seed potatoes can be cut into four pieces. Each seed piece should be between 1.5 and 2 ounces to insure there is enough energy for germination. Each pound of potatoes should yield 8 to 10 seed pieces.

Cut the seed potatoes 2 to 3 days before planting so the freshly cut surfaces have a chance to suberize, or toughen, and form a protective coating. Storing seed in a warm location during suberization will speed up the process. Plant each seed piece about 1 to 2 inches deep and 8 to 12 inches apart in rows. It is often mid to late April before new plants poke their way through the soil. As the potatoes grow, pull soil up to the base of the plants. New potatoes are borne above the planted seed piece, and we don’t want sunlight hitting the new potatoes. Potatoes exposed to sunlight will turn green and produce a poisonous substance called solanine. Keeping the potatoes covered with soil will prevent this from happening. These are just a few tips to help your potato crop be more successful.

## TRACTOR AND MACHINERY SAFETY

Federal Law requires youth ages 14 and 15 to participate in a Hazardous Occupations Training and become certified in order to work for hire for anyone other than their parents. Youth must pass a safe tractor and machinery operation program to be certified. To meet this requirement the RVED will conduct a district-wide Hazardous Occupations Training/tractor and machinery safety training in May. The training provides trainees with knowledge of tractor, machinery, and other farm hazards to reduce the farm accident rate. It also provides sufficient information to pass a written examination and an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to pass a safe tractor driving examination.

**The training will be: Saturday, May 13, 2017 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at CTI in Concordia.**

Youth must pre-register at any RVED office by Monday, May 1st. Cost of the course is \$20 and includes materials and refreshments. You must provide, name, address, date of birth, and contact information as well as pay the fee at registration time.

**Youth must complete assignments before coming to class, must attend the entire day, and then must complete a driving requirement in order to receive certification.**

Alternative tractor safety trainings in Kansas can be found listed on this site: <http://www.bae.ksu.edu/extension/fs/khot/> Contact John Forshee with any questions.

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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT  
“2017 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Mar. 3	9:30-2pm	Grain Marketing Strategies for 2017	Linn-Wholmoor American Legion
Mar. 3	10-3pm	Cattlemen’s Day 2017	Manhattan-Weber Hall-1424 Claflin Road
Mar. 4		K-State Sheep Producer Day	Manhattan-K-State Sheep & Goat Center-2117 Denison Ave
Mar. 7	10am	Fixing Funky Foods	Washington– Extension Office Meeting Room
Mar. 7	2pm	Fixing Funky Foods	Clay Center-Extension Office Meeting Room
Mar. 8	6pm	Farm Profit Conference	Washington-First National Bank Basement
Mar. 8	6:30pm	Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom	Concordia-Courthouse Meeting Room
Mar. 9	10:00am	Fixing Funky Foods	Concordia-Courthouse Meeting Room
Mar. 9	2pm	Fixing Funky Foods	Belleville-Extension Office Meeting Room
Mar. 13	6:30pm	Better Brains for Babies	Clifton-Faith United Presbyterian Church
Mar. 19-May 13		Walk Kansas	Statewide Program
Mar. 29-May19	9-10am	Strength Training (Wednesday & Friday mornings)	Cuba-Cuba City Hall
April 3	6:30pm	Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom	Concordia-Courthouse Meeting Room
April 4	2pm	Keys to Embracing Aging	Concordia-Courthouse Meeting Room
April 6	10am	Keys to Embracing Aging	Washington-Extension Office Meeting Room
April 11	2pm	Keys to Embracing Aging	Belleville-Public Library-Extension Spring Tea
May 13	8:30-4:30pm	Tractor and Machinery Safety Training	Concordia-CTI

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact John Forshee, Director, River Valley Extension District # 4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335.