



River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

rivervalley.ksu.edu

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Extension District

K-STATE
Research and Extension

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opportunity provider and employer.

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COVID UPDATE

K-State Research and Extension and the River Valley Extension District are continuing to be attentive of the pandemic and its impact on our communities.

Our staff is still working in the four Extension Offices around the District, but our doors are locked to limit exposure. Please call your local Extension Office to discuss options for assistance. Face coverings are required by anyone entering our Extension Offices.

At this time, all Extension programming is highly encouraged to be held on virtual platforms. Face-to-face will be limited to those meetings and events that have a strong strategic and/or educational reasoning. All face-to-face meetings/events must go through strategic planning process before being allowed to be held in the River Valley Extension District.

If you are planning to attend a meeting or event in the near future, watch for updates on our Facebook page (River Valley Extension District), through our email subscription service (<https://river-valley-extension.mailchimpsites.com/>), or by contacting our offices. We appreciate your understanding and patience during this time. If you have any questions regarding this latest protocol, please contact any of our Extension Offices.

Women in Agriculture Farm Management Educational Series



Thursdays

February 11th – March 25th

5:00 pm–9:00 pm

KSDS East Building Meeting Room
124 W 7th Street Washington, KS 66968

We will be following KSRE Covid restrictions with the possibility of adapting the series to zoom meetings.

Who: Women in the agriculture industry who would like to advance their business and management skills to become more involved in a farming or ranching operation.

What: This seven-session course is limited to 15 participants.

When: Classes are held each Thursday afternoon February 11th to March 25th from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Dinner will be provided each session.

Where: KSDS East Building Meeting Room, 124 W 7th Street, WS

Cost: \$50.00

Contact the River Valley Extension Washington Office to RSVP

Phone: 785-325-2121

K-STATE River Valley
Research and Extension District



Search: Women In Ag

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 Kelsey Hutchins, River Valley Extension District. Phone 785-325-2121. Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Session One - February 11th

- What type of gal are you?

- Telling Your Ag Story

Session Two - February 18th

- Precision Ag

- Cover Crops

- Horticulture Production

- Marketing and Risk Management

Session Three - February 25th

- EPD Basics

- Livestock Risk Management

- Livestock Photography

Session Four - March 4th

- Quick Books for Farm Record-keeping

Session Five - March 11th

- Beef Nutrition

- Sheep & Goat Basics

Session Six - March 18th

- RVED Lease Survey

- Crop Insurance

- FSA Programs

Session Seven - March 25th

- Global Ag Economy

- Farm Succession



K-STATE
Research and Extension

River Valley
District

VIRTUAL LEASE SURVEY MEETING

Join us as we go over the
results of the 2020 Survey

JANUARY 4TH
AT 7PM VIA ZOOM
REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE

www.rivervalley.k-state.edu



CLAY CENTER 785-632-2868
CONCORDIA 785-243-8185
BELLEVILLE 785-527-5084
WASHINGTON 785-325-2121

K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact Rebecca Zach or Brett Melton two weeks prior to the start of the event at Belleville or Concordia office. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Kansas State University/Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

LIVING WELL TOGETHER VIRTUAL PROGRAM SERIES

A virtual learning series will be hosted by K-State Research and Extension, Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) agents in the Northeast Kansas region. "Living Well Together" is a virtual program series that will touch on a wide variety of essential skills that empower you and your family to live, work, and thrive.

This program series will begin January 7th and go thru March 25th. Programs will be on Thursday evenings at 6:45 p.m. Programs are free, however pre-registration is required. If you are unable to attend, programs will be recorded.

The series will feature Extension professionals sharing information in their area of expertise. Watch the River Valley District Facebook page for weekly information about how to register for weekly sessions or contact one of the River Valley District offices for more information.

FARMERS MARKET REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

Farmers' markets are growing across the state and continue to be an important source of fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy and other value added agricultural products from small towns to large metropolitan areas. In 2019, 57 farmers' markets were registered with the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Central Registration of Farmers' Markets.

To support Kansas farmer's markets, six workshops are generally held throughout the state in February.

In 2021, these workshops will be retitled "Direct to Consumer" and will largely be held virtually, with some limited in-person offerings. Please Save The Date for February 16-19, 2021 and check our website for more information regarding programming. We will be having 2 locations in the District for these meetings.

Topics will include:

- COVID-Related Changes
- Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- From the Land of Kansas and the Central Registration for Kansas Farmers Markets
- Double Up Food Bucks Program Overview
- Food Safety
- Value-Added Foods Lab Introductions
- Meat & Poultry Regulations
- Taxation
- Accepting EBT/SNAP

More information about the event can be found at www.fromthelandofkansas.com/page/farmers-market-regional-workshops

If you have any questions please contact Sonia Cooper at 785-632-5335 or Rebecca Zach at 785-527-5084.

2020 RIVER VALLEY EXTENSION DISTRICT LEASE SURVEY MEETING

The 2020 River Valley District Lease Survey results will be discussed via Zoom on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 7 p.m. Results will be shared on pasture leases, crop ground leases, and ag labor pay rates.

Sign up at www.bit.ly/RVDlease to receive the Zoom link.

If you have any questions, please contact River Valley Extension District Agents, Brett Melton at 785-243-8185 and Rebecca Zach at 785-527-5084.

CORN SCHOOL

Kansas Corn and K-State Research and Extension will be hosting three corn schools this winter. Corn Schools are free and open to farmers and industry partners.

The closest session to the River Valley District will be on Friday, January 11th from 9am to 2 pm at the Webster Conference Center in Salina.

Lunch is provided. RSVPs are required. Register online at <https://kscorn.com/cornschoo/#RegisterforaCornSchool>.

If you have any questions, contact Rebecca Zach, Crop Production Extension Agent, at 785-527-5084.

SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is designed to provide low-income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs while also increase local farmers' markets.

SFMNP is available in all four counties in the River Valley Extension District—Clay, Cloud, Republic, and Washington Counties.

Seniors must be 60 years of age or older and must have an income at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. Income eligibility is determined by household, but benefits are distributed individually. Anyone who meets the age AND income requirements within the same household may receive KSFMNP benefits.

Seniors may apply for benefits between the dates of July 1 and September 15, 2021. The KSFMNP is a first-come, first-serve program. Vouchers can only be accepted at vendors who are authorized. Vendors can get authorization by:

- Completing annual training
- Submitting an annual Farmers Agreement
- Growing eligible foods in Kansas or a county adjacent to the Kansas border in a neighboring state
- Selling at farmers markets, roadside stands or farm stores in any of the participating counties listed on the homepage.

Eligible Foods Include

- Fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, cut herbs, and local honey for human consumption
- Foods may not be prepared beyond their natural states except for usual harvesting and cleaning procedures
- Locally grown means grown in Kansas or in a county adjacent to Kansas's state lines if you are near the Kansas border

For more information on the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program visit- www.kdheks.gov/sfmnp/index.htm.

If you have any questions please contact Sonia Cooper at 785-632-5335.

THANK YOU SHICK COUNSELORS

Big thanks to these SHICK Counselors who helped Medicare beneficiaries shop and enroll in Medicare Part D Prescription Plans this during Part D Open Enrollment this fall. The River Valley Extension District appreciates all these counselors helping with Open Enrollment each year. If you see one of these counselors in town, please thank them. The Counselors are awesome to volunteer their time and expertise! They are very much appreciated!

Jim Beck, Audrey Carlson, Lynn Elliot, Janet Elliott, Sonya Garwood, Beverly Lang, Deanna Turner, Belinda Robison, and Nola Unruh.

MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

The Social Security Administration announced the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security benefits will be 1.3%, so there will be an increase in 2021.

If you are on Medicare and receiving Social Security benefits, the premium for Medicare Part B is deducted from your benefits. Medicare Part B, which covers mainly physician services, outpatient hospital services, lab, durable medical equipment, and ambulance.

The majority of Medicare beneficiaries who have Medicare Part B in 2021 will pay \$148.50 per month. Social Security will tell you the exact amount you will pay for Part B in 2021 as some beneficiaries pay less or more than this amount.

AVAILABLE FOR MEDICARE QUESTIONS

Have questions about being New to Medicare, concerns about your 2021 Medicare Part D Plan, or other Medicare questions? Jordan Schuette, Adult Development and Aging Agent, and Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Agent, can help answer these questions.

If you need assistance, call for an appointment. Contact Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 for Cloud and Republic Counties and Jordan Schuette at 785-325-2121 for Clay and Washington Counties.

BECOME A SHICK COUNSELOR

Want to help people? Become a Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) Counselor. SHICK is a program of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. The rewards are numerous helping Medicare beneficiaries in your county enroll in Medicare Part D Plans during the Open Enrollment October 15th – December 7th.

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas provides free, unbiased, and confidential assistance to Kansans who have questions about Medicare and related insurance issues. Beginning counselors self-study at home with one day training in-person. Returning counselors attend a one-day update training every year. The training helps to answer questions of Medicare beneficiaries. Often the training is held in Manhattan, however virtual trainings were offered this past year due to COVID-19.

During the Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D Plans, Jordan Schuette, Adult Development and Aging Agent, and Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Agent, coordinate the Medicare Part D appointments at the District Extension Offices where they and one or more counselors take appointments.

If you are interested in becoming a SHICK Counselor contact Jordan Schuette at 785-325-2121 or jschuette@ksu.edu or contact Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu. They will be happy to answer any questions and provide more information.

TIPS FOR SELF-CARE DURING COVID-19

During time of change and uncertainty, it is most important to incorporate self-care and structure into your schedule. I want to share ways to stay healthy and remain connected. Every day take a moment or more to take care of yourself.

- **Exercise:** Exercising increases energy levels, improves happiness, and doesn't have to take place in a gym. Take a virtual workout class at home or spend some time outdoors walking or biking. At this time going into the winter months you may need to be creative about the physical activity you choose. The most important thing is that you set aside time each day to exercise.
- **Eat Healthy:** The foods we choose to nourish our bodies and the way we enjoy them can have a tremendous impact on our mental and physical health. Be purposeful when restocking groceries and pick up foods that boost your mood such as oatmeal, nuts, and even dark chocolate.
- **Sleep:** Sleep plays a major role in our overall health, improving emotional regulation and management of anxiety. It's important to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep, especially during times of stress. Try to limit your exposure to the news and social media a couple of hours before bed.
- **Learn and Explore:** Research shows people engaged in learning feel more confidence, hope, and purpose. Keep your mind active by taking virtual tours of museums, putting the pieces of a puzzle together, reading, trying new recipes, or solving word puzzles, for example a word search or word scramble.
- **Structure and Routines:** Having regular times for eating, going to bed and rising in the morning, exercising, and working or studying can help maintain a sense of normalcy.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** Take breaks throughout the day, first thing in the morning or before bed to slow down and be present. The practice of pausing, breathing, and just "being" is essential to our well-being and mental health because it helps us reduce stress, worry less and it enhances feelings of resiliency.
- **Talk to a friend:** Our connections with others help us cope with the ups and downs in life. Keep in contact with friends, family and co-workers through phone and video calls, email, text, or send a card or message.

For mental health resources, visit EachMindMatters.org



**Save the Date for
Walk Kansas 2021
March 28 through May 22**

FIGHTING THAT SNACK ATTACK

Whether you may truly be hungry between meals or prefer multiple smaller meals, make purposeful healthy food choices. Reach for unprocessed foods, like fruits, low-fat plain yogurt, veggies and nut/seeds.

Remember everything you eat or drink is a chance to nourish your body. Snacking is an opportunity to add nutrients you may fall short on, like calcium from dairy or Vitamin A from vegetables or fruits.

Rely on Nutrition Facts labels and ingredients lists instead of front-of-package claims. It is a myth that healthy snacks take effort. There is a common misconception that healthy eating takes extra time. What could be easier and tastier than grabbing a piece of ripe fruit or a sweet and savory handful of crunchy nuts with chewy dried fruit?



It can take some initial planning to restock your pantry and fridge with healthy snack options, but once you find favorites and develop new habits healthy snacking can be easy.

Remind yourself to eat healthy choices if you're hungry and stop when you're satisfied. Avoid distractions, like TV, working, and reading, and watch portion sizes so you don't override your hungry/full signals.

If you are thirsty, have an unsweetened drink. If you are bored, read a book, do a puzzle, or listen to a TED talk. If you are sad or lonely, call a friend.



All it takes is a little planning and mindfulness to make the difference between a high-calorie, low-nutrient, unnecessary snack and an energizing, satisfying, nourishing between meal boost.

For more information about healthy snacking, contact Sonia Cooper, Nutrition, Food Safety and Health agent in the River Valley District at 785-632-5335.

KINDNESS CAN BE CONTAGIOUS

There are millions of ways to be kind to one another and many opportunities to practice kindness. Starting off the new year is a great time to focus on spreading kindness to those around you.

Think of ways to be kind. This can include a kind word, a smile, opening a door, sending a note or thank you in the mail, an email, or a text, compliment someone, helping to carry groceries, doing yard work, or shovel snow for a friend or neighbor without them knowing who is doing the work, and the list goes on. Surprise yourself and others. Be spontaneous with an act of kindness.

Above all, remember kindness includes being kind to yourself. Do you treat yourself kindly? Do you speak gently and kindly to yourself and take good care of yourself? First start by being kind to yourself. Being kind to yourself leads to reaching out and being kind to others.

NEW YEAR! NEW PLAN! NEW YOU!

Plan for a new you in 2021. It's simple. Start with tips using USDA's Choose MyPlate.

Eat the right amount of calories for you. Everybody requires a different number of calories depending on their age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level. Find out what works best for you.

Build a healthy plate by following MyPlate guidelines. Focus on whole fruits. Include fruit at breakfast. For example, top whole-grain cereal with your favorite fruit, add berries to pancakes, or mix dried fruit into hot oatmeal.

Vary your vegetables. Cook a variety of colorful vegetables. Make extra vegetables and save some for later. Use them for a stew, soup, or a pasta dish. Try a vegetable that is new to you. Make this vegetable part of the rotation in your menu.

Vary your protein routine. Add beans to a casserole dish. Have a variety of nuts for a snack. Make half the grains you eat whole grains. Use brown rice in a stir-fry dish. Try whole grain pasta and add whole grain pasta to your menu routine.

Enjoy low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt. Make a parfait using low-fat plain or vanilla yogurt. Top with fruit and nuts to get in two more food groups.

Drink or eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

Read the nutrition facts labels and ingredient lists on items and compare the items that you purchase.

Be physically active your way. Start by doing what you can and pick activities you like. An individual is more likely to be active and stick with it if you are doing something you like. To gain the most benefits, adults should aim for at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week and youth should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.

Overall, remember a small change makes a BIG difference. Start with small changes. You can do it. If you have other questions, contact Sonia Cooper, Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Extension Agent at 785-632-5335.



River Valley Extension District Offices will be closed Friday, January 1st to celebrate the New Year!

We will resume normal business hours on Monday, January 4th.

Happy New Year!

HARDINESS OF FRUIT TREES

I know we are a few months away from spring, but it is never too early to start planning for next spring. If you are looking into purchasing fruit trees this spring, there are a few factors that you should consider when planting apricot and peach trees.

Spring in Kansas is often an unsettled weather pattern, which can affect fruit trees. Apricot and peach tree flowers are very vulnerable to late frosts that can kill their fruit buds. Of course, the tree itself will be fine but there will be little to no fruit for that year. Late frosts can affect other species of fruit trees as well, but apricot and peaches are by far the most sensitive.

The closer a tree is to full bloom, the more sensitive it becomes to the frosts. Apricots are more likely to have frost kill flowers because they bloom earlier. Peaches are next on the list for greater chance of being caught by a late frost. With peaches, two characteristics become important when considering whether they can be damaged, bloom time and fruit bud hardiness.

Like apricots, bloom time in peaches is very important but fruit bud hardiness is also important. Fruit bud hardiness refers to the hardiness of the bud to late frosts rather than the ability to survive extreme low temperatures during the winter. A few late blooming peach varieties include 'China Pearl', 'Encore', and 'Risingstar.'

When choosing what varieties of fruit trees to plant, remember to look at the bloom time and fruit bud hardiness. These two things will help you choose the best fruit tree for your area, as well as give you the best chance for a bountiful harvest.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelsey Hatesohl, Horticulture Extension Agent, at 785-325-2121.

CHECK YOUR CREDIT

One in five people have an error on at least one of their credit reports according to a study conducted by the Federal Trade Commission. When is the last time you checked your free credit report?

Credit reports affect many aspects of your life, including your ability to get a loan, rates for loans and insurance, and more. Sign up today for K-State Research and Extensions' Check Your Credit email program.

We'll remind you to check your credit report three times during the year on February 2, June 6, and October 10 (2/2, 6/6, 10/10). We will also send you periodic emails with information about how to understand your credit report, correct errors, and use your credit report to your advantage.

There is no cost to participate and registration is easy! Take a step towards financial well-being today by signing up for K-State Research and Extension's Check Your Credit email program at <http://bit.ly/ksrecheckyourcredit>.

Contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent for the River Valley Extension District, at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu for more information.

CONTROLLING VOLUNTEER TREES

Trees are a vital part of our landscapes, but there are situations where trees need to be controlled. Volunteer trees often come up in the wrong place, whether that is in a pasture or in your flowerbed. Sometimes control measures are needed to combat the spread of volunteer trees.

Volunteer trees can be difficult to control because some species resprout after cutting and some species will not resprout. Of the species that do not resprout, cutting is an effective control method. For example, eastern redcedar is a very common species that will not resprout after cutting.

Some of those species that do resprout after cutting are Siberian elm, hackberry, Osage orange (hedge tree), oak, ash, aspen, cottonwood, maple, and sycamore, but these are just a few of the trees that resprout. If you are trying to eliminate any of these trees, either they need to be dug out or the cut stump will need to be treated with an herbicide after cutting.

When I say volunteer trees, I mean those that come up from a seed, not suckers that originate from the roots of an existing tree. The recommendations given in the remainder of this article are designed to kill volunteer trees not suckers.

Using herbicides on suckers will damage and possibly kill the original tree. Trees that commonly produce suckers include honeylocust, black locust, hackberry, crabapple, and cottonwood. It is also possible for larger trees of the same species to become root-grafted. Even though root-grafted trees are not suckers, they do share materials between the individual root systems and therefore herbicides used to treat one tree can be passed along to its neighbor.

Let's say you have a tree that you want to control that is a volunteer and there is no other tree of the same species close enough to be root-grafted, what should be done? Well, if the tree is too large to be dug out and moved, then you should cut the tree down and use an herbicide on the cut stump.

The next question is what herbicide should be used on the stumps. Triclopyr and glyphosate are the herbicides most commonly available to homeowners. Triclopyr is found in many brush killers and glyphosate is found in Roundup as well as numerous other products. Read the label before purchasing to make sure that a cut stump treatment is listed.

Most often the undiluted product is applied to the stump immediately after cutting. A paint brush is often used for the application if the stump is close to other plant material. It is important that the stump is treated immediately or at least within 5 minutes of being cut.

Trees do not need to be actively growing to be controlled. Actually, this time of year is a very good time to treat as long as the applications are made when the temperature is above freezing.

If you have any questions, contact Kelsey Hatesohl, Horticulture Extension Agent, at 785-325-2121 or by emailing khatesohl@ksu.edu.

FEEDING BIRDS IN WINTER

Severe winter weather is not only hard on people but can be a life and death struggle for birds. Though birds also require water and shelter, food is often the resource most lacking during cold weather. Many different bird food mixes are available because various species often prefer different grains. However, there is one seed that has more universal appeal than any other, black oil sunflower.

If you are new to the bird-feeding game, make sure there is a high percentage of this seed in your mix. White proso millet is second in popularity and is the favorite of dark-eyed juncos and other sparrows as well as the red-winged blackbird.

As you become more interested in bird feeding, you may want to use more than one feeder to attract specific species of birds. The following is a list of bird species with the grains they prefer.

- Cardinals, evening grosbeak and most finch species- Sunflower seeds, all types
- Rufous-sided towhee- White proso millet
- Dark-eyed junco- White and red proso millet, canary seed, fine cracked corn
- Many sparrow species- White and red proso millet
- Bluejay- Peanut kernels and sunflower seeds of all types
- Chickadee and tufted titmouse- Peanut kernels, oil (black) and black-striped sunflower seeds
- Red-breasted nuthatch- Oil (black) and black-striped sunflower seeds
- Brown thrasher- Hulled and black-striped sunflower seeds
- Red-winged blackbird- White and red proso millet plus German (golden) millet
- Mourning dove- Oil (black) sunflower seeds, white and red proso plus German (golden) millet



Extended cold periods can also make water unavailable. A heated birdbath can be a tremendous draw for birds during times when all other water is frozen.

If you have any questions, contact Kelsey Hatesohl, Horticulture Extension Agent, at 785-325-2121 or by emailing khatesohl@ksu.edu.

**FARMER TAX GUIDES
ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL FOUR
RIVER VALLEY EXTENSION DISTRICT
OFFICES FOR FREE!**

NATIONAL SOUP MONTH

Soup is on! January is National Soup Month. Soups are wonderful as there is a great variety of options. Soup is a great way to use up leftovers from a meal. The combinations of ingredients and flavors are endless.



Soups are a great way to boost your intake of vegetables so include a variety of vegetables, use a variety of beans and include wholegrain pasta or brown rice. Create a soup from simple foods.

Follow these tips:

- Choose one or more vegetables. Here are some ideas. The following can be fresh, canned, or frozen – celery, green pepper, green beans, carrots, peas, corn, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage. Sauté one medium chopped onion.
- Choose one protein. I've included some ideas – beef, chicken, ham, sausage, canned chicken, canned beans (pinto, kidney, black, white, chickpeas).
- Choose one starch. Here are some ideas – diced potatoes, canned beans, whole grain pasta, uncooked brown rice.
- Choose a broth or base. Ideas include – canned vegetable, chicken or beef broth, water with bouillon cube, crushed or diced tomatoes, milk and bouillon.
- Choose one or more seasonings. Here are some ideas – bay leaf, dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, parsley), fresh herbs, minced garlic, salt and pepper to taste.

Be aware of the sodium in the canned food items you include in your soup. Read the label and choose low-sodium broth or vegetables. Experiment with flavorful herbs and spices in place of salt. Use minced or powdered garlic and onion rather than the salt form.



Ultimately, the healthiest soups are the ones you make at home. If you are not making homemade soup, use the Nutrition Facts Label to help choose canned soups with lower sodium levels. Homemade soups can be made ahead of time and in large quantities.

Remember the food safety guidelines. Eat refrigerated soup within three to four days or freeze it. Don't let soup set at room temperature for more than two hours. To speed cooling, store soups in shallow containers. When serving soup, a second time, bring to a boil.

Experiment with different recipes and ingredient combinations for flavors you enjoy. Use your imagination. Soup can be part of your healthy eating plan.

If you have questions contact Sonia Cooper, River Valley Extension District, Clay Center Office 785-632-5335.

Create Better Health – Utah State University Extension.

CALVING SCHOOL

In anticipation of calving season, Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry and K-State Research and Extension are planning a series of calving schools throughout the month of January. A.J. Tarpoff, K-State Research and Extension beef veterinarian will be leading the program.

The program will outline overall calving management that includes stages of the normal calving process as well as tips to handle difficult calving situations. The goals of the event are to increase knowledge, practical skills and the number of live calves born if they need assistance.

Speakers will also share tips on when and how to intervene to assist the cow and how those times may be different when dealing with young heifers. Presenters will also demonstrate proper use of calving equipment on a life-size cow and calf model. Other topics covered will include body condition scoring (BCS) cows, colostrum management, and animal health product storage and handling.

The closest location to the River Valley Extension District will be on Wednesday, January 13th, in Blue Rapids. Other locations include Emporia (January 6), Winfield (January 11), and Dodge City (January 21).

More details can be found online at www.ksubeef.org. Contact Brett Melton, Livestock Extension Agent, with any questions at 785-243-8185.

RADON ACTION MONTH

According to the EPA radon risk chart, radon is a serious health problem. Have you tested your home for radon gas? If not, January is the month to take action!

Radon is a naturally-occurring radioactive gas that is inert, colorless and odorless. Most radon exposure occurs inside homes, schools and workplaces. Radon is trapped indoors after it enters homes or buildings through cracks and other holes in the foundation.

Breathing radon over time increases your risk of lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Nationally, the EPA estimates that about 21,000 people die each year from radon-related lung cancer. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths.

You can take steps to reduce and control the amount of radon in your home. Have your home tested, either by a professional or with a home test kit. Home test kits are available for \$6 each at your local River Valley Extension District Office. Instructions to complete the test are included.

If radon levels are high, contact a certified radon service professional. EPA guidance suggests mitigating if levels are at or above 148 Bq/m³ (4 pCi/L). Usually, radon problems are fixed using an underground ventilation system or by increasing the rate of air changes in the building.

You can learn more about radon at www.kansasradonprogram.org or by contacting Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent, at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu.

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2021 UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Dec. 24-Jan. 2		Offices Closed– Holidays	RVED Offices
Jan. 4	7pm	RVED Lease Survey Meeting	Zoom- See pg. 2 for information
Jan. 7-March 25	6:45pm	Living Well Together-Series on Thursdays	Zoom- See pg. 2 for information
Jan. 11	9am-2pm	Corn School	Salina– Webster Conf. Center
Jan. 18		Offices Closed—MLK JR Day	RVED Offices
Feb. 9	1-5pm	“Winning the Game” Marketing Class	TBD
Feb. 11-Mar. 25	5pm	Women In Ag	Washington– KSDS East Bldg.
Feb. 16-19		Direct to Consumer-Farmers Market Workshop	Zoom– See pg. 2
Mar. 28-May 22		Walk Kansas	State Wide Program