

# River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

[rivervalley.ksu.edu](http://rivervalley.ksu.edu)

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**BELLEVILLE OFFICE**  
1815 M Street  
Belleville, KS  
66935-2242  
Phone: (785) 527-5084  
[rp@listserv.ksu.edu](mailto:rp@listserv.ksu.edu)

**CLAY CENTER OFFICE**  
322 Grant Avenue  
Clay Center, KS  
67432-2804  
Phone (785) 632-5335  
[cy@listserv.ksu.edu](mailto:cy@listserv.ksu.edu)

**CONCORDIA OFFICE**  
811 Washington—Suite E  
Concordia, KS  
66901-3415  
Phone: (785) 243-8185  
[cd@listserv.ksu.edu](mailto:cd@listserv.ksu.edu)

**WASHINGTON OFFICE**  
214 C Street—Courthouse  
Washington, KS  
66968-1928  
Phone: (785) 325-2121  
[ws@listserv.ksu.edu](mailto:ws@listserv.ksu.edu)

Check us out on the Web at:  
[www.rivervalley.ksu.edu](http://www.rivervalley.ksu.edu)  
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Extension District



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

River Valley  
District

## Wheat Plot Tours 2021

**Tuesday June 1, 2021**

St. Peter and Paul Parish Hall, Clay Center ..... 1:00 pm

Sarah Lancaster- Weeds Specialist

Dan O'Brien- Ag Economist

Lucinda Stuenkel ..... 3:30 pm

Located 3 miles East of Hwy 15 on Clay Co 30/362, North on  
Quail Rd. 1 mile, East on Parallel 1.2 miles

Ohlde Seed Farm ..... 5:30 pm

Located 1 mile North of Linn on Osage Rd., 1 mile East on 9th Rd.

Dinner to Follow.

**Wednesday June 2, 2021**

Belleville Experimental Field ..... 1:00 pm

Located 2 miles West of Belleville on the North side of the road

Peyton Frybarger ..... 4:00 pm

Located at 2330 Elm Rd. Munden

Polansky Seed ..... 6:00 pm

Located 2 miles West of Belleville on 36, 1.25 miles South on 150 Rd.

Dinner to Follow.

Contact Rebecca Zach if you have any questions. 785-541-0283 or email at [zrebecca@ksu.edu](mailto:zrebecca@ksu.edu)

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 two weeks prior to the start of the event. 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.

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

## NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?

You may be eligible to enroll in health insurance on the Marketplace ([www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)), but only for a limited time. This special enrollment period is now open until August 15, 2021.

The Marketplace was created with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. Typically, open enrollment is during the fall, but due to the pandemic, a special enrollment period was opened this spring.

To be eligible for health insurance through the Marketplace, you must live in the U.S., be a U.S. citizen or national (be lawfully present) and cannot be incarcerated. To receive financial assistance with your Marketplace health insurance, you cannot have affordable job-offered insurance or Medicare. Marketplace health insurance cost is based on household income.

Health insurance can be confusing, but free, local help is available. Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent for the River Valley District, is a certified application counselor for the Marketplace and is available to assist with researching options, applying, and selecting health insurance.

Contact Monica at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu) to schedule an appointment today. She will be scheduling appointments in Belleville, Clay Center, Concordia, and Washington. All individuals must wear face coverings. You may also opt to do an appointment via Zoom.

## HIGH ENERGY BILLS-LIEAP

After the frigid temperatures we faced in February, brace yourself as energy bills may be higher than normal in the months to follow.

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.

Governor Laura Kelly with the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) has announced two changes to the LIEAP that may be beneficial for assisting with those higher energy bills.

First, the application period has been extended until May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. You may either apply online at <https://cssp.kees.ks.gov/apspsp/sppNonMed.portal> or by contacting your local DCF office (<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/DCFContacts/Pages/default.aspx>).

Secondly, for 2021 only, the income guidelines have been increased slightly so more Kansans are now eligible to receive this one-time benefit.

Learn more about LIEAP and its guidelines online at <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/EnergyAssistance.aspx>.

If you have any questions, please contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent, at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu).

## MAKING SENSE OF NUTRITION LABELS

Bright letters, fun images, bold colors, buzz words. These leap off food packages and encourage us to purchase the food item. Many make nutrition claims. Some are misleading. Following are ways to help you determine whether a food is a healthy choice.

**Multigrain:** “Multigrain” simply means more than one type of grain is used to make the product. Go to the ingredient list as the best source of information. To find out for sure if a bread, pasta, cracker, cereal, or other grain product is a good source of whole grains look for words like “whole wheat” or “whole grain” as the first ingredient on the list.

I like to think of the ingredient list as the recipe, listing all the ingredients in a food product. What a person needs to remember about the ingredient list is that the items on the list are itemized from the most in the product to the least. This is important to remember when you read “made with real fruit” Look at the ingredient list and the order of the ingredients listed. The “real” fruit in the food product may be several words down the list so it only accounts for a small bit of the product. “Made with spinach” is another popular claim on products like pasta, wraps, and snacks. Look at the ingredient list, there may not be enough spinach in the food product to actually affect nutrient content. Check the ingredient list to ensure the healthy component is the first ingredient listed. Choosing a minimally processed food is usually the best choice.

The truth is the bold, bright, colorful images and words on the front of the food package might be misleading and influence purchasing. This usually not a reliable source of a product’s healthfulness. The best solution to help you make the healthy food choice is to read the ingredient list and the Nutrition Facts Label.

Become familiar with the ingredients in the foods you are purchasing. If you have questions, contact Sonia Cooper, 785 -632-5335 or email [srcooper@ksu.edu](mailto:srcooper@ksu.edu)

## MAKE EVERY BITE COUNT WITH DIETARY GUIDELINES

It is never too early or too late to improve a person’s pattern of eating. No matter what stage of life, think of a healthy dietary pattern using four key guidelines:

- 1) Choose a variety of food options from each of the five food groups. Vegetables – Include a variety of colors. Fruit – especially whole fruit, fresh, frozen, or dried. Grains – half of grains consumed should be whole grains. Look for the word whole grain as the first ingredient on the ingredient list. Dairy – consume low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese. Protein – seafood, poultry, eggs, lean meats, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products. Pay attention to portion size when making the healthy food choice. Do not overeat. This leads to consuming more than one’s calorie needs.

## NATURAL CAPITAL IN THE RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT

2. Choose foods and beverages from each food group that are nutrient-dense within calorie limits. Nutrient-dense foods provide our bodies with more of the nutrients we need for optimal health per calorie. Some examples are: Cereals without added sugars are more nutrient dense than sugary choices, roasted veggies have more nutrients per calorie than fried versions, carrot and celery sticks are a more healthy choice than salted veggie chips.
3. Personalize the food choices that go on your plate. Within each food group, choose health promoting foods that most appeal to you. Include personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations. A lot is written about the health benefits of eating certain foods, but if you do not like a certain food it is better to choose a nutrient dense food that you will eat.
4. Limit added sugars, unhealthy fats, excess sodium and alcoholic beverages. Identify in your eating pattern foods that are the largest contributors and ask yourself, “Is this food healthy for me?” You may need to find healthier versions of foods you enjoy or eliminate those foods.

Remember the nutrition facts label can help you determine added sugar in a food or the amount of sodium. Make small changes in your eating style and take charge of your meal plan to work towards your personal health and wellness one bite at a time. For more information look at the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. [www.dietaryguidelines.gov/about-dietary-guidelines](http://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/about-dietary-guidelines).

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT BREAKFAST?

When it comes to breaking the overnight fast, whether to eat breakfast – and what to eat if you do – can be a confusing topic. The fact is, if you do it right, the morning meal can offer an important opportunity to nourish your body, and it may help with weight control.

Breakfast is a great opportunity to bring in foods which we may be falling short on, such as dairy products (milk, yogurt, cottage cheese), whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. A whole-grain hot or cold cereal, plain yogurt with granola, or cottage cheese topped with fresh or frozen fruit and nuts is a quick, simple, nutritious, and satisfying way to break your fast. A slice of whole grain toast or a whole wheat wrap makes a great base for peanut or other nut butter and banana or apple, melted cheese and tomato, mashed beans and salsa, or mashed avocado and hard-boiled egg. Eggs are fine for breakfast in moderation.

Think of breakfast as a nutritional bonus. Breakfast is the opportunity to have whole grain items or dairy products that you might not have for another meal during the day. Choose breakfast as a health goal, start your day, the good way, with breakfast. Tufts University Health and Nutrition Letter; March 2021.

In a previous article, I briefly outlined the Community Capitals framework. This framework breaks communities down into the assets that contribute to their strengths. Natural capital, cultural capital, human capital, social capital, political capital, financial capital, and built capital are the seven Community Capitals. This article will dive a little deeper into the natural capital we have in the River Valley District.

Natural capital refers to the landscape, air, water, land and soil, and biodiversity of both plants and animals, in other words, our environment and natural resources. This includes a community's environment, rivers, lakes, forests, wildlife, soil, weather, and natural beauty. Since people and the communities of which they are a part are embedded in the environment, one could argue that natural capital underlies several of the other capitals. A healthy and functioning environment provides valuable ecosystem services, such as food, timber, wildlife habitat, flood control, and recreational opportunities, which are essential for human life. Moreover, people and their communities are generally unable to thrive in areas where natural capital is neglected and depleted.

The River Valley District covers Clay, Cloud, Republic and Washington Counties. This expanse makes it difficult to summarize our natural capital. We sit primarily in the Smokey Hill region that fades into the Flint Hills on the far eastern side. The Republican River runs through the heart of the district with the Little Blue River running through the eastern part, and the Solomon River just clipping the southwest corner.

This leaves us with a wonderful array of hills and bottomland affecting the nature of many of our agricultural and natural resource practices. Agriculture is an obvious output from the available resources with approximately 67% of land in use raising crops and 29% in pastureland. Most of the economy in the area is touched by agriculture in some way.

The mixture of native grass hills, timber, and waterways set the area up for great hunting and other recreational opportunities. These are important economic and enrichment contributors to our communities. The area is known for upland game birds including quail, pheasant, prairie chicken, and dove. Hunters, trappers, and sightseers will also find a variety of other game including duck, goose, rabbit, turkey, deer, squirrel, beaver, muskrats, raccoons, coyotes, and bobcats. The habitat is also home to numerous nongame birds and animals. The regions water features serve as a stopover area for migrating waterfowl in the fall and spring. Bald eagles are a common sight.

Milford Reservoir and Wildlife Area, the Brzon Wildlife Area, Washington County State Fishing Lake and Wildlife Area, and the salt marshes of Jamestown Wildlife Area all highlight the region's unique natural assets.

Above are just some examples of how natural capitals contribute to our community. I have not even touched oil and gas, rock and sand quarries, wind energy, or many other resources that make huge contributions to our livelihoods. As important as natural capital is, we need to be actively preserving, restoring, enhancing, and conserving environmental features in an effort of sustainable use.

If you have any questions or input, please reach out to Wade Reh at 785-632-5335 or wreh@ksu.edu.

## SIMPLE STEPS NOW CAN MAKE RECOVERING FROM EMERGENCIES EASIER

K-State specialist shares tech tips  
Written by Mary Lou Peter - KSRE

With spring comes awareness of severe weather – plus the need to plan ahead – and this year is no exception, said Jan Steen, community vitality specialist with K-State Research and Extension.

“We have insurance on our crops, vehicles, and homes should disaster strike, but how are we protecting our important data? Digital photos and videos, documents, and spreadsheets can be gone in a blink of an eye in a tornado or flood – and fire or theft at any time of year,” said Steen, a coordinator of the Kansas PRIDE Program and social media specialist.

Steen provided tips to prepare for a disaster, whether it's a flooded basement in your own home or a community ravaged by fire:

- **Take photos or videos of your property and valuables.** This visual inventory can help with the insurance claim process and will make identifying items to replace easier. Be sure to back those photos or videos up and to update them when you purchase new items.
- **Have an emergency plan.** Know where to go in case of severe weather or fire.
- **Have an emergency kit** you can grab on your way to a storm shelter or as you exit for a safer place in case of fire or flood.
- **Print paper copies of your most important documents.** Business and household spreadsheets, insurance policies, bank account details, passports and drivers' licenses. Put copies in your emergency kit or store off-site in a safe deposit box or with a family member. Add phone numbers of family and work contacts that aren't memorized.
- **Consider using a cloud storage service** (Google Drive, OneDrive, Drop Box, etc.) and back up four files regularly. In the event your computer is damaged or stolen you'll have access to the files you need from another device.

- **Perform regular backups to physical removable storage** (thumb drives, secure digital or SD cards). These can be easily placed in your emergency kit or safe deposit box along with your paper copies.
- **Have an extra phone charging cable and plug for your emergency kit.** The power may be out where you are, but if you need to shelter elsewhere, you have a way to charge your phone for important calls or for filing insurance claims.
- **For charging, also consider a portable power pack.** These are about the size of a smartphone and allow you to charge a device anywhere from once to multiple times, depending on the model and brand. Be sure to keep the battery pack itself charged for when you need it most. Some portable NOAA weather radios have hand cranks to generate power and a USB port to charge your phone, which may be useful for long-term power outages.

More emergency preparedness information can be found on the K-State Research and Extension Prepare Kansas blog (<https://blogs.k-state.edu/preparekansas>), produced by extension agents and specialists committed to education aimed at reducing the impact of disasters for Kansans. They are affiliated with the national Extension Disaster Education Network (<https://extensiondisaster.net>), comprised of extension personnel across the country focused on disaster education. For more information contact Jan Steen [jmsteen@ksu.edu](mailto:jmsteen@ksu.edu).

## STORY WALK/WALK KANSAS EVENT RESCHEDULED IN WASHINGTON

Due to the cold weather and unexpected snow the Story Walk/Walk Kansas event was postponed. Following is the updated information:

Plan to participate in the free StoryWalk and Walk Kansas event in Washington. Tuesday May 11<sup>th</sup> 3:00-6:00 p.m. on the Courthouse Square. This is a come and go event. You do not need to participate in Walk Kansas to join us. Everyone is welcome!



All are invited to this event featuring the children's book "Get Up and Go" by Nancy Carlson. The book encourages physical activity and it is fun to read how the characters get up and get moving. Come walk, read, and taste test a few recipes. The StoryWalk project is the creation of Anne Ferguson and the Kellogg-Hubbard Library from Montpelier, Vermont and is described as an innovative and delightful way for children and adults to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time.

Learn more about the StoryWalk Project here: <http://www.kellogghubbard.org/storywalk>. If you have any questions, please contact Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 or Sonia Cooper at 785-632-5335.

## LOCAL AG STRESS RESOURCES

The Pawnee Mental Health Agriculture Assistance Program exists to offer a unique opportunity for agriculture workers who may not have access to mental health services. While working in agriculture can be physically demanding, it is also extremely mentally demanding.

Pawnee created this program to assist farmers, ranchers, and their employees who do not have employer-paid Employee Assistance Programs. We are continuing to gain support for this program every day, from companies, foundations and organizations who are helping to finance the program.

Our goal is to ensure this program is sustainable as well as easy to access. The program is limited to agriculture workers who reside or work in our 10-county service area which includes Clay, Cloud, Geary, Jewell, Marshall, Mitchell, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, and Washington.

Services provided include 4 free sessions either in person, or via zoom or telephone. You can even have a therapy session from the comfort of your tractor cab!

To access these services, call your local Pawnee office and tell them you are with the Ag-AP program. For more information about accessing or contributing to the Agriculture Assistance Program, visit our website, [pawnee.org](http://pawnee.org) or contact Diane Hinrichs-Toburen at 785-587-4300 ext. 527, or email [diane.hinrichs@pawnee.org](mailto:diane.hinrichs@pawnee.org).

**By Delta Wilson, Marketing and Development Administrative Assistant**

**Kansas Suicide Prevention Line  
1-785-841-2345**

**Crisis Text Line 24/7 Support  
Text "HOME" to 741741**



## TAX DEADLINE EXTENDED

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has extended the federal tax filing and payment deadline until Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Governor Kelly has announced the extension until May 17<sup>th</sup> for Kansas as well.

This extension is not expected to create any delay in tax refunds as those are still being processed as normal. Remember, if you did not receive the first or second stimulus checks in 2020 and should have, you will need to file 2020 taxes, even if you normally do not have to, to receive the Recovery Rebate Claim. You do not need to file an extension as the May 17<sup>th</sup> deadline will apply to all taxpayers automatically.

If you have any questions regarding your taxes, please contact your tax specialist

## MULCHING TIPS

Now is the time of year when people are thinking about mulching their landscape beds. Mulching is an important gardening practice that offers many benefits to the soil as well as your plants. The most important benefit of mulch is that it helps to conserve moisture and keep the soil cooler during our long, hot summers. Mulch is also great at stopping unwanted weeds in your landscape. A freshly mulched area is the finishing touch, like frosting on a cake. Mulching is pretty easy, but there are a few common mistakes that should be avoided.

When mulching around trees the most common mistake is applying mulch too close to the trunk. Prolonged exposure of the trunk to the moist mulch results in decay of the bark layer, leading to poor growth or death. When properly applied mulch should start a few inches away from the trunk and extend at least three feet out from the base. The depth of the mulch layer should be about three inches and no more than four inches. When mulching trees, keep in mind the mulch pile should look like a doughnut, not a volcano.

When mulching around shrubs follow the same depth guidelines as trees. When piling mulch around the base of the plant, place mulch a few inches away from the base. Shrubs look best in the landscape when large beds or groupings of plants are all mulched together. Remove any grass between the shrubs or other plants and mulch the grouping as a whole. When mulching around flowers and vegetables a three-inch layer is recommended. A finer textured mulch could be used around flowers. Vegetable gardens are best mulched with materials such as straw, leaves, or grass clippings that will break down by the end of the season and can be incorporated into the soil.

When choosing what kind of mulch to use, that is a personal preference. All mulching materials that are organic, except rocks, provide the same basic function. The difference is in the texture, color, lasting power, and of course, cost. Trees and shrubs look good mulched with just about any material. Flower gardens look best against a darker color and finer grade of mulch. No matter what type of mulch you chose, it is important to follow these tips, not only for a beautiful landscape but for healthy plants as well. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or [khatesohl@ksu.edu](mailto:khatesohl@ksu.edu).

## BLACKSPOT OF ROSES

A common disease of roses is blackspot, a fungus disease that can cause defoliation of susceptible plants. When trying to decide if you have blackspot look for dark, circular lesions with feathery edges on the top surface of the leaves and raised purple spots on young canes. Infected leaves will often yellow between spots and eventually drop.

The infection usually starts on the lower leaves and works its way up the plant. Blackspot is most severe under conditions of high relative humidity (>85%), warm temperatures (75 to 85°F) and six or more hours of leaf wetness. Newly expanding leaves are most vulnerable to infection. The fungus can survive on fallen leaves or canes and is spread primarily by splashing water.

Cultural practices are the first line of defense against blackspot. Here are a couple ways to reduce the chance of spreading the disease:

1. Don't plant susceptible roses unless you are willing to use fungicide sprays. There are lists available of blackspot resistant varieties.
2. Keep irrigation water off the foliage. Drip irrigation works well with roses.
3. Plant roses in sunny areas with good air movement to limit the amount of time the foliage is wet.
4. Remove diseased leaves that have fallen and prune out infected rose canes to minimize inoculum.

If needed, protect foliage with a regular spray program (10 to 14 day schedule) of effective fungicides. Recommended fungicides include tebuconazole (Bayer Disease Control for Roses, Flowers and Shrubs), myclobutanil (Immunox, Immunox Plus), triticonazole (Ortho Rose & Flower Disease Control) and Chlorothalonil (Broad Spectrum Fungicide, Garden Disease Control, plus others.) If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or [khatesohl@ksu.edu](mailto:khatesohl@ksu.edu).

## RABBITS IN THE GARDEN

When you think problems in a garden the first thing most people think is insects, but one of the biggest problems is rabbits. Rabbits in gardens are a perennial problem because of the wide variety of plants they can feed on. This time of year, they gravitate to young vegetables and flowers. There are some vegetables that are rarely bothered including potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers, and some peppers. The question is how do you protect plants that are more susceptible? Fencing provides a quick and effective control method. The fence does not need to be tall; 2 feet is sufficient for cottontail rabbits. The mesh must be sufficiently

fine (1 inch or less) so young rabbits will not be able to crawl through it. When building your fence be sure to secure the fence into the ground so the rabbits can't push the fence up and crawl under. Fence is one way to keep rabbits out of your garden

Often fencing is not an acceptable choice because it affects the attractiveness of the garden. A couple other ways to control rabbits include repellents or trapping. Repellents are often suggested for control, but often do not last long and require frequent reapplication. Also, many are poisonous and cannot be used on plants or plant parts destined for human consumption. Live traps can be used to collect and move the rabbits to a rural area several miles away from where they were trapped. A number of baits can be used to entice the rabbit to enter the trap including a tightly rolled cabbage leaf held together with a toothpick. However, rabbits often avoid baits if other attractive food is available. Repellents and traps might work but are not 100% effective.

Another possibility to help control rabbits is to use a motion-activated sprinkler. These are attached to a garden hose and release a short burst of water when motion is detected. Con-tech, Orbit, and Havahart each have a motion-activated sprinkler and each is advertised as protecting up to at least 1,000 square feet. Just remember to shut it off before you go work in your garden or you might get a little wet!

## WALLET WISDOM SERIES CONTINUES

Join K-State Research and Extension for the 4 final sessions of Wallet Wisdom – Focus on Your Finances, a webinar series covering basic money management topics, on Thursdays from Noon to 1 p.m.

**May 6<sup>th</sup> – Spending Plans** – A spending plan can help chart your income and expenses to assist you with managing your overall finances.

**May 13<sup>th</sup> – Increasing Savings** – Many situations may require savings, including emergencies, retirement, and more. Learn ways to increase your savings.

**May 20<sup>th</sup> – Debt Management** – Especially in our current economy, debt can get out of control. Join us to learn ways to manage and pay down your debt.

**May 27<sup>th</sup> – All About Credit** – From credit reports to credit scores, credit can affect many areas of your life. Learn how to make credit work for you.

Register once at the following link and attend as many sessions as you would like to: <https://bit.ly/walletwisdom2021> Sessions will be recorded and available for viewing after the live session.

If you would like more details about this webinar series, please contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

# Summer Crop Plot Tours

Join Us for an  
"Interactive Outdoor  
Classroom" at the  
KSU Belleville  
agronomy plots!

(West of Belleville 2 miles on 36)

**3 sessions:**

**June 8th at 8:30 a.m.**

Crop growth and development  
Herbicide Mode of Action

**July 13th at 8:30 a.m.**

Fungicide, Stress, and  
Insects

**August 18th at 6:00 p.m.**

KSU Fall Field Day



CCA and 1A credit  
Applied for

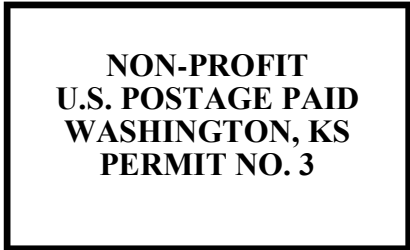


**Collaboration with K-State Research and Extension Districts,  
Central KS, Post Rock and River Valley along with  
KSU NC Experiment Field.**

Contact Rebecca Zach if you have any questions. 785-541-0283 or email at [zrebecca@ksu.edu](mailto:zrebecca@ksu.edu)  
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**River Valley Extension District**

Washington Office  
214 C. Street, Courthouse  
Washington, KS 66968-1928



**Address Service Requested**

**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT**  
**“2021 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
May 11	3-6pm	Story Walk-Walk KS Event	Washington-Courthouse Square
May 6,13, 20, 27	1pm	Wallet Wisdom—Webinar Series	Online– See page 6
May 8		Tractor Safety Course	Smith Center– Sign up at RVD
May 22		Tractor Safety Course	Minneapolis– Sign up at RVD
June 1-2		Wheat Plot Tours	See flier on Cover
June 8	8:30am	Crop Growth & Development Plot Tour	Belleville– 2 miles west
July 13	8:30am	Fungicide, Stress, and Insects Plot Tour	Belleville– 2 miles west
Aug. 18	6pm	KSU Fall Field Day	Belleville– 2 miles west