

# River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

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

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Extension District

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Research and Extension

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## The Silent Epidemic

### A Real Story of Victory over Severe Depression

Retired College Head Basketball Coach, Mark Potter, and his wife Nanette, share their personal experience with severe depression.

**Attend this free event!**  
**Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.**  
**Arley Bryant Gymnasium**

Cloud County Community College  
2221 Campus Drive  
Concordia, KS 66901



Face coverings are required, temperatures will be checked, and entry is limited. You must have a ticket and enter through Entrance 2 – main entrance near the flagpole.



SCAN ME

Reserve a free ticket to this event online at [www.cloudtbirds.com/silentepidemic](http://www.cloudtbirds.com/silentepidemic) or call Amber with RVED at 785-243-8185.

This free event is sponsored in partnership by River Valley Extension District, Cloud County Community College Athletics, and Cloud County Community College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council.



*This program is funded in part by a grant from the Kansas Health Foundation Public Health Fund through the Community Foundation for Cloud County and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.*



**K-STATE**  
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River Valley District

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, Sonia Cooper or Monica Thayer, two weeks prior to the start of the event (March 25<sup>th</sup>) at 785-632-5335, 785-527-5084, [srcooper@ksu.edu](mailto:srcooper@ksu.edu), or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu). 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  
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## **BREEDING SOUNDNESS EXAMS IDENTIFY BULL FERTILITY ISSUES FROM FROSTBITE**

The impacts of the cold weather experienced in Kansas and surrounding states in early February will not be forgotten any time soon and will leave lingering effects. The bull battery often does not get close attention during the winter months and some may have lacked adequate bedding or wind protection needed to prevent scrotal frostbite. Older bulls with pendulous scrotums seem more prone to issues than yearling bulls.

Bull breeding soundness exams (BSE) were first developed due to concerns regarding bull fertility after a series of storms during the winter of 1948 – 1949. According to the National Weather Service, a massive blizzard hit in early January that lasted 3 days and brought heavy snow, strong winds and cold temperatures. Additional storms through mid-February created huge snowdrifts. The effects of frostbite were then followed in 15 bulls impacted by the 1949 blizzard and 8 of the bulls refused service for 6 months.

Bull anatomy is designed to keep the testicles at a lower temperature than the body core and during cold weather the testicles are drawn closer to the body. However, compared to the rest of the body, the scrotum has less hair and thinner skin. When temperature regulation is not maintained, fertility is reduced. A bull suffering from frostbite may exhibit inflammation and swelling of the scrotum a few days after the weather event. The subsequent heat produced from the inflammation negatively effects the sperm cells maturing and being stored in the epididymis. The effects of frostbite may be temporary, but may also result in permanent damage to sperm production. Scabs of various sizes may become evident as healing occurs, but the lack of a scab does not mean there is no injury. In more extreme cases, tissue adhesion can influence circulation in the scrotum and scrotal circumference can be reduced.

After a 1964 blizzard, eight veterinarians reported on 553 bulls with some level of frostbite. In this group, semen quality of 89% of bulls with severe frostbite was unsatisfactory, in bulls with moderate frostbite, 48% were satisfactory, 25% were questionable and 27% were unsatisfactory. Regardless of weather, bulls should have a breeding soundness exam before each breeding season. Several large data sets indicate that 10-30% of mature bulls fail BSE annually. It is recommended that breeding soundness exams be delayed 60 days following the occurrence of frostbite or illness with elevated body temperature. Exams earlier than this may result in culling bulls that may yet recover.

A breeding soundness exam consists of a physical evaluation, palpation of accessory sex glands and testes, and semen evaluation. The exam does not evaluate the willingness to mate or serving capacity, so observing activity during the breeding season is an important component of minimizing the risk of open cows.

If adjustments were not made for increased energy demands of cattle during the extreme cold weather, weight loss most likely occurred and would be greater in animals that were already thin. A study in Western Canada found fewer low

body condition bulls (2, scale of 1 thin to 5 obese) had satisfactory semen quality compared to bulls in moderate condition (2.5 – 3.5). On the other end of the spectrum, fat in the scrotum interferes with the normal cooling process and is detrimental to semen quality. Bulls should be in good body condition, but not fat, in advance of the breeding season.

Finding out after the fact your bull was only a ‘cow companion’ during the breeding season is a costly problem. Schedule breeding soundness exams with your veterinarian so unsatisfactory breeders (cow companions) can be replaced before the breeding season begins.

*By Sandy Johnson, Extension Beef Specialist, Colby*

## **PREVENTATIVE MEASURES FOR COYOTE CONTROL**

Spring calving season is upon us, and this brings the added concern of protecting calving cattle and their calves from predators. According to the National Agriculture Statistics Service, losses of calves to predators have increased steadily from 3.5% of all calf deaths in 1995 to 11.1% in 2015, based on a nation-wide survey of cattle producers. In Kansas, 0.2% of cattle losses and 4.6% of calf losses were due to predation. Coyotes are responsible for about two-thirds of the cattle losses and the vast majority (84%) of calf losses to predators. If we include the value of cattle and calves reported as injured but not killed with losses to predation, the total cost of predation to Kansas cattle producers is nearly \$4 million annually (based on 2015 market values).

How can you protect your cattle and calves from coyote predation? The old adage, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” applies to predator issues, just as it does to many other situations. Calving close to areas with high human activity and lights, such as a lot at the farmstead can discourage coyotes and other predators from mingling with the herd and encountering vulnerable calves. However, this is not practical for many producers. Other practices such as removing dead livestock from calving pastures and not calving close to carcass disposal sites are very important because coyotes will travel several miles outside of their normal territory to feed on large resources like a carcass. Livestock guardian animals are commonly used by sheep producers to protect their flocks from predators. Guardian animals are not used by many cattle producers in Kansas, but could be a useful tool for producers who experience chronic calf losses to predators.

Lethal control is the most intuitive method that comes to mind for folks who are experiencing predation issues. However, the success of predator control efforts can be greatly hampered by the biology of the critter involved. Coyotes, for instance, have a mechanism to deal with population changes called compensatory natality. In other words, coyote populations can compensate for imbalances in the ratio of resources to coyote density through natural adjustments in birth rate (natality). When coyote populations are high or food is scarce, an average litter of coyotes would contain 3 pups and females typically will not breed until they are at least 2 years old. When coyote populations are low and/or food is abundant, an average litter will contain 8 pups and most female pups produced the previous spring will breed. This allows coyote populations to

recover from intensive removal efforts within a year or so. The social hierarchy of coyote populations, which includes resident and transient individuals, can also complicate population control efforts in the short term. Residents are breeding pairs with established territories, and one or two of their previous years' offspring. Transients are coyotes that haven't secured a territory and have very large home ranges that overlap the territories of several residents. Transients are waiting for the opportunity to claim a territory when a resident dies, and up to 50% of the individuals in an area can be transients. This 'surplus' of coyotes and their use of vocalizations and scent marking to maintain territories ensures that vacated territories are quickly filled. In fact, statistical models have indicated that more than 70% of the coyotes in an area would have to be killed every year for 50 years to eradicate them.

Even though population-level control of coyotes is not an effective method for most producers to deal with coyote predation, lethal control of the individuals that are causing damage is very effective. As my predecessor often said, "Death works!", and offending coyotes can often be removed by concentrating trapping and calling efforts in the area where calves are lost, and coyote sign is found. There is no closed season on coyotes in Kansas. Anyone with a valid Kansas hunting license may hunt coyotes, and anyone with a valid Kansas furharvester license may trap or snare coyotes. Additionally, landowners or legal occupants of land may take coyotes "when found in or near buildings on their premises or when destroying property" including livestock and pets, as long as there is no attempt made to use the animal after it is killed. Any local restrictions related to the use of traps and snares or discharging firearms must also be followed. There are no toxicants registered for the control of coyotes in Kansas.

Kansas livestock producers experiencing coyote damage have several options for receiving assistance with lethal control efforts. Local trappers and predator hunters are often happy for the opportunity to harvest coyotes on new properties, especially during the Kansas furbearer season from mid-November to mid-February. There are also many Nuisance Wildlife Damage Control operators throughout the state who will provide wildlife damage control assistance for a fee. A list of NADC permit holders, their location, and the species that they control may be found on the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks webpage, [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com). The Wildlife Damage Control Act of 1972 directs K-State Research and Extension to conduct a statewide program in wildlife damage control. Through this program, the Extension Wildlife Specialist is available to provide training to farmers and ranchers in effective control techniques and provide, on loan, control equipment not readily available.

*by Drew Ricketts, Extension Wildlife Specialist*

## **DEFENSIVE DRIVING CLASS**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 13**

**9AM-3PM**

**AT KSRE RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE**

**322 GRANT AVE., CLAY CENTER**

**TO REGISTER CALL: 785-632-5335 (by April 6th)**

## **MONEY SMART WEEK**

Virtual Money Smart Week 2021 will be held Saturday, April 10 – Saturday, April 17. This week-long free virtual campaign aims to help people better manage their personal finances with a focus on those hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year's line-up includes:

- Saturday, April 10 @ 10:00 a.m. CST  
Talking Cents (The University of Chicago Financial Education Initiative)
- Sunday, April 11 @ 10:00 a.m. CST  
Saving (FINRA Investor Education Foundation)
- Monday, April 12 @ 12:00 p.m. CST  
Basic Banking (The Economic Awareness Council)
- Tuesday, April 13 @ 12:30 p.m. CST  
Student Loans (U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid)
- Wednesday, April 14 @ 1:00 p.m. CST  
Fraud Protection (Internal Revenue Service)
- Thursday, April 15 @ 1:00 p.m. CST  
Personal Finance (Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center)
- Friday, April 16 @ 12:00 p.m. CST  
Housing Protections + Resources (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau)
- Saturday, April 17 @ 10:30 a.m. CST  
Budgeting (University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension)

View more details at [www.moneysmartweek.org](http://www.moneysmartweek.org). Events are free and open to the public, but registration is advised. Questions for the panelists can be submitted during the registration process.

Contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent, with any financial management questions at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu).

## **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 May 15, 2021. The American Rescue Plan Act has made some additional changes to the Marketplace, including lower premiums, repayment forgiveness, and more.

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 house-

hold 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/apspssp/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).

## REACH FOR HEALTHY SNACKS

Last month I shared that March is National Nutrition Month with the message of “Personalize Your Plate.” To go along with that message; this month I want to emphasize when choosing snacks, reach for the healthy choice.

It’s not shocking for me to read that on average, snacks provide about one-third of daily calories. For many, snack foods and beverages aren’t always the most nutritious options. I want you to think about snacking in the way that snacking can be part of a healthy eating plan. Snacks can provide lots of nutrition and do not have to be loaded with calories.

Following is some information you can use on making healthy snack food choices:

\*Develop a smarter snacking plan. If you are like me, I eat a lot of snack foods between my major three meals each day. I need to make these choices healthy food choices. To be in control of snacking, plan what to eat, how much, and when to eat a snack. Planned snacking reduces the likelihood of over-eating on not-so-healthy foods at a fast-food restaurant, vending machine, or convenience store. Keep snacks from replacing meals, avoid eating snacks within one hour of meals.  
\*Keep nutritious snacks handy. Availability drives snack selection. If the cupboard is full of cookies, chips, and candy,

it’s easy to make them your snack. Fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits can be easy “grab-and-go” options that need little preparation. Prepare and store sliced vegetables in the fridge and eat them with dips like hummus or low-fat dressing. Have healthy snacks portioned into snack-size bags or containers.

\*Compare food labels. Read the Nutrition Facts Label on products to find food with the most nutrition for your money. Using the Nutrition Facts Label helps you compare fat, calories, fiber, sodium, and sugar found in different items. They also provide information on the serving size and how many servings are in an item.

\*Use MyPlate as a tool. Choose a snack from the MyPlate food groups. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables to help get the full range of vitamins, minerals, and fiber needed for health. Snack on whole grains such as popcorn, low-fat granola bars, or snack mixes with whole-grain cereal. Choose low-fat dairy products, such as low-fat string cheese, try plain yogurt. Eat a variety of lean protein.

\*Eat snacks only when hungry. Thirst is often misinterpreted as hunger, so it’s important to drink plenty of water during the day. Avoid eating snacks out of boredom or frustration; try physical activity instead.

Again, I refer to the National Nutrition Month message of “Personalize your Plate”, we all have varied lifestyles, what works for one may not work for another. Each person has various needs, when it comes to snacking, depending on activity levels, portion sizes at meals and work schedule. Elderly adults and toddlers may have difficulty eating large meals because of stomach capacity and may do well with several small snacks throughout the day. Children and teens are more likely to need snacks because of their growth and higher physical activity levels. No matter your age or activity level, plan when snacking. Make every bite count. Reach for the healthy snack choice. For more ideas, contact Sonia Cooper, [srcooper@ksu.edu](mailto:srcooper@ksu.edu), 785-632-5335.

## EGG HANDLING SAFETY TIPS

Spring celebrations seem to involve eggs. Here are some safety tips:

- Inspect the eggs before purchasing them and make sure they are not dirty or cracked. Bacteria may enter a cracked egg.
- Store eggs in their original carton in the refrigerator rather than the refrigerator door.
- If decorating eggs, use food-grade dyes. It’s safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, and fruit-drink powders.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before handling the eggs when cooking, cooling, and dyeing eggs.
- If having an egg hunt, consider hiding colorful plastic eggs. If using hard-cooked eggs for the egg hunt consider hiding places carefully. Avoid areas where the eggs might come into contact with pets, wild animals, birds, reptiles, insects, lawn chemicals, or other potential sources of bacteria. After the egg hunt, find all the eggs you have hidden. Discard cracked or dirty eggs and eggs left unrefrigerated more than two hours. Food safety comes first.
- Do not eat hard-boiled eggs used for an egg hunt or as

decorations (centerpieces) where the eggs have been at temperatures above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for more than two hours; discard them.

Have an Egg-cellent spring celebration!  
K-State Research and Extension, "You Asked It" [www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/holiday.html](http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/holiday.html)

## CHECK YOUR CREDIT

Your credit affects many areas of your life, which can include loan terms, employment, and deposit rates. If you aren't checking your free credit reports, right now is a great time to start.

With the Covid-19 pandemic and heightened identity theft risk, you may request your free credit reports weekly until April 2022.

You can request your free credit reports online at: [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com), by calling 877-322-8228, or by mailing a paper form. If you would like the paper form, please contact Monica at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu).

K-State Research and Extension's *Check Your Credit* email program may also be of interest to you. Receive emails to remind you to check your free credit reports and additional educational emails on how to understand your report, correct errors, and more.

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

## ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS

The third round of Economic Impact Payments (EIP), or more commonly referred to as stimulus checks, have started being distributed to individuals and families across the U.S. via direct deposit. Additional batches of payments will be distributed via mail as a check or debit card in the coming weeks.

If you haven't received the most recent EIP, you can check the status of your payment online at <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment>.

If you didn't receive or got less than the correct amount for the first or second EIP, at this point, you will have to file a 2020 tax return to claim the Recovery Rebate Credit, even if you don't normally have to file taxes. Learn more about the Recovery Rebate Credit here: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/recovery-rebate-credit>.

This EIP is a great opportunity to make sound financial decisions but first and foremost, make sure that you are meeting your basic human needs. Cover the cost of shelter, food, transportation, and utilities. If you have those covered, consider increasing your savings, paying down debt, or both.

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

## WALLET WISDOM-WEBINAR SERIES

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

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> – A Financial Checkup** – A regular check of financial health can identify problems, chart progress, and outlines steps to achieve financial goals.

**April 29<sup>th</sup> – Emotions and Money** – Your relationship with money can be based on years of emotion. Learn more to better understand your financial habits.

**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 Extension Agent, at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu).

## BUTTERFLY GARDENING

Butterfly gardening is becoming more and more popular. Providing for the basic needs of butterflies, such as food, shelter, and liquids, will encourage butterflies to visit this summer. There are a number of plants you could put in your landscape that will attract butterflies. However, different species of butterflies prefer different plants. Using a variety of plant material that vary in blooming times of day and year helps attract a diverse group of visitors. Plant groups of the same plant together, a group is easier for butterflies to find. Only a single plant is difficult for a butterfly to detect. If trying to attract a certain species of butterfly, learn which plant (s) that butterfly prefers, and then emphasize that plant in your landscaping. Annuals that attract butterflies include ageratum, cosmos, French marigold, petunia, verbena, and zinnia.

Perennials and shrubs can be split into those that bloom early, mid-season, and late. Good choices for those that bloom early are allium, chives, forget-me-not, and lilac. Bee balm, butterfly bush, black-eyed Susan, buttonbush, butterfly weed, daisy, daylily, gaillardia, lavender, lily, mint, phlox, privet, sunflower, and veronica are fitting picks for mid-season bloom. Late bloomers include aster, glossy abelia, and sedum.

There are other things you can do to encourage butterflies.

Butterflies are cold-blooded and like open areas where they can sun themselves on cool days and shade to cool off when the sun is too intense. Butterflies also need water. A simple way to make a butterfly pool is to take a bucket, fill it with gravel, and bury it to the rim. Now add water, sugar water or sweet drinks so that the butterflies can land on the gravel but still reach the liquid. 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).

## PROPER TIMING FOR CRABGRASS PREVENTERS

As the weather starts to warm up, it is time to think about preparing your lawn for the summer months. Did you have a problem with crabgrass last year? If so, it's time to put down a crabgrass preventer. Crabgrass preventer is another name for preemergence herbicides that prevent crabgrass seeds from developing into mature plants. Preemergence herbicides do not kill the weed seed. However, they do kill the young plant after it germinates. Therefore, they do not prevent germination but prevent the plant from emerging. Crabgrass preventers are just that-preventers. With a few exceptions, they have no effect on existing crabgrass plants. Therefore, preventers must be applied before germination.

Additionally, preventers do not last forever once they are applied. Microorganisms and natural processes begin to gradually break down the herbicide soon after it is applied. If some products are applied too early, they may have lost their strength by the time they are needed. Most crabgrass preventers are ineffective after about 60 days, but there is considerable variation among products.

For most of Kansas, crabgrass typically begins to germinate around May 1 or a little later depending on the spring weather patterns. April 15 is normally a good target date for applying preventer because it gives active ingredients time to disperse in the soil before crabgrass germination starts. An even better way to tell when it's time to apply your preventer is with the bloom of ornamental plants. The Eastern Redbud tree is a good choice for this purpose. When the trees in your area approach full bloom, apply crabgrass preventer. Depending on what chemical you decide to put down you may have to do a follow-up application. Products that do require a follow-up application about 8 weeks later include Pendimethalin (Scotts Halts) and Team (Hi-Yield Crabgrass Control). If you are using Dimension or Barricade, a follow-up will not be needed.

Dimension and Barricade are the only two products that give season-long control of crabgrass from a single application. In fact, they can be applied much earlier than April 15 and still have sufficient residual strength to last the season. Barricade can even be applied in the fall for crabgrass control the next season.

Dimension can be applied as early as March 1. Because of the added flexibility in timing, these products are favorites of lawn care companies who have many customers to service in the spring. Though Dimension is usually not applied as early as Barricade, it is the best choice if it must be applied later than recommended. It is the exception to the rule that preemergence herbicides do not kill existing weeds. Dimension can kill crabgrass as long as it is young (two-to-three-

leaf stage). Dimension is also the best choice if treating a lawn that was planted late last fall. Normally a preemergence herbicide is not recommended unless the lawn has been mowed two to four times, but Dimension is kind to young tall fescue, perennial ryegrass, and Kentucky bluegrass seedlings. However, read the label of the specific product you wish to use to ensure you are applying it correctly.

Products containing Dimension and Barricade may use the common name rather than the trade name. The common chemical name for Dimension is dithiopyr and for Barricade is prodiamine. Remember, when using any pesticide, read the label and follow instructions carefully. It is recommend to apply crabgrass preventers before fertilizer so that the grass isn't encouraged to put on too much growth too early.

## PLANTING TOMATOES TOO EARLY

Spring might feel like it's here, but when planting your garden, you need to be sure the soil has warmed up enough to plant. Gardeners often try to get a jump on the season by planting tomatoes as early as possible. Though this can be successful at times, there are certain precautions that should be taken, especially with the up and down temperatures we have been having this year.

The first precaution that should be taken is checking to make sure the soil is at an adequate temperature. Tomato roots do not do well until soil temperatures reach a consistent 55°F. Use a soil thermometer to check the temperature at 2 inches deep during the late morning to get a good average temperature for the day. This should be done for three or four days to get an average temperature for the week. To warm your soil up quicker try putting down black plastic mulch. This plastic mulch should warm up your soil enough for you to get that early jump on planting your tomatoes.

The second precaution that should be taken is to harden off plants that you are transplanting into your garden. Plants moved directly from a warm, moist greenhouse to the more exposed and cooler conditions outside may undergo transplant shock. Transplant shock causes plants to stop growing until they are acclimated to the weather. Plants can be acclimated to outside conditions by placing them outdoors in a location protected from wind and full sunlight for a few days before transplanting. The best conditions for transplanting is an overcast, windless day; well as close to a windless day as we can get in Kansas.

The third precaution that should be taken is to protect your tomatoes from frost. Tomatoes cannot tolerate frost. Watch the weather and cover the plants if frost is predicted. A floating row cover or light sheets can be used for protection. A floating row cover can be left on the plants for two to three weeks to increase the rate of growth and establishment of your tomato plants.

Here are a few other tips for getting your tomato plants off to a fast start. Use smaller stockier plants rather than tall spindly ones. The smaller plants tend to form roots and become established faster than the tall overgrown plants. Don't mulch your plants as soon as you plant them; give them time to start growing well, then mulch. By mulching too early, it will prevent the soil from warming up, and slowing down the growth of the tomato plants. I hope these tips will help you have a successful tomato crop.

**K-State Research and Extension**

**Round 2** Join us for the 2021  
**“Cattle Conversations Series”.....ONLINE**

**10:00 a.m.  
 Thursdays  
 April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**

**Details**

- Online sessions, Thursdays, beginning April 1
- 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. each Thursday through April 29
- One 25 minute session each week with five topics
- **NO COST**

**Register ONLINE at: <http://bit.ly/CattleConversations>  
 (Once you register you will receive the link to participate.)**

**Schedule:**  
**Thursday, April 1:** Walt Fick - KSU Agronomist- Spring burning practices  
**Thursday, April 8:** Keith Harmony - KSU Range Specialist - Pasture weed control  
**Thursday, April 15:** A.J. Tarpoff - KSU Beef Vet. - Troubleshooting pasture lameness  
**Thursday, April 22:** Jody Holthaus- KSU Livestock Agent - Green-algae studies/research  
**Thursday, April 29:** Will Boyer and Ron Graber - KSU Watershed Specialists - Providing adequate water to grazing livestock

**K-STATE**  
 Research and Extension

This program is a collaboration with K-State Research and Extension Districts: Central KS, Cottonwood, Midway, Post Rock and River Valley.

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 Sandra L. Wick (785-282-6823). Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**STORY WALK® JOINS  
 WALK KANSAS FOR  
 RVD DISTRICT EVENTS**

Join the River Valley Extension District for a free Story-Walk® and Walk Kansas Event near you. All individuals and families are invited to participate in this event with Walk Kansas activities and a StoryWalk® featuring the children’s book “Get Up and Go” by Nancy Carlson, which encourages physical activity. You do not need to be participating in Walk Kansas to join us. Everyone is welcome!

The events will be held from 3-6 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

- Tuesday, April 20th in Washington – Courthouse Square
- Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> in Concordia – City Park
- Tuesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> in Clay Center – Zoo Walking Trail
- Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> in Belleville – Downtown Square

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 outdoors at the same time. Learn more about The StoryWalk Project here: <http://www.kellogghubbard.org/storywalk>.

Activities include taste tests of Med instead of Meds recipes, the StoryWalk®, an Extension knowledge wheel, and more.

Watch for more details to be released soon. If you have any questions, please contact Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 or [mthayer@ksu.edu](mailto:mthayer@ksu.edu) or contact Sonia Cooper at 785-632-5335 or [scooper@ksu.edu](mailto:scooper@ksu.edu).

**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.


Quarterly estimated tax payments are still due as normal. This extension does not affect those dates. First and second quarter 2021 estimated income tax payments are still due April 15, 2021 and June 15, 2021.

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

**K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

**Tractor Safety Course 2021**

**BY: National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operation Program**



River Valley Extension District, Post Rock District, Central Kansas District, Midway District, Cottonwood District

will be conducting the Hazardous Occupations Training/ tractor and machinery safety training. 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. **Participants must be 14 or older to receive certification, though 12 and 13 year olds may take the course for education purposes only.**


Federal Law requires youth to participate in a Hazardous Occupations Training and become certified in order to work for hire for anyone other than their parents.

Sign up go to- [https://kstate.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV\\_1HaTQ8m15e4da4e](https://kstate.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_1HaTQ8m15e4da4e)

**April 10<sup>th</sup> – Virtual**

**May 8<sup>th</sup> – Smith Center**

**May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Minneapolis**



River Valley District- 785-527-5084- Rebecca Zach [rzebecca@ksu.edu](mailto:rzebecca@ksu.edu)  
 Post Rock District- 785-282-6823 - Sandra Wick [swick@ksu.edu](mailto:swick@ksu.edu)  
 Central Kansas District- 785-309-5850 - Cade Rensink [crensink@ksu.edu](mailto:crensink@ksu.edu), or  
 Jay Wisbey [jwisbey@ksu.edu](mailto:jwisbey@ksu.edu), or Justine Henderson [jwh04@ksu.edu](mailto:jwh04@ksu.edu)  
 Midway District- 785-472-4442- Clinton Laflin [clafflin@ksu.edu](mailto:clafflin@ksu.edu) or Craig Dinkel [cadinkel@ksu.edu](mailto:cadinkel@ksu.edu)  
 Cottonwood District- 620-793-1910- Alicia Boor [aboor@ksu.edu](mailto:aboor@ksu.edu)

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PERMIT NO. 3****Address Service Requested****RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT****“2021 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Mar. 28-May 22		Walk Kansas	State Wide Program
April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29		Cattle Conversation Series	Online– See page 7
April 8	7pm	The Silent Epidemic with Mark Potter	Cloud Co. Community College
April 10-17		Money Smart Week Events	Online– See page 3
April 10		Tractor Safety Course	Virtual– See page 7
April 13	9-3pm	Defensive Driving Course	Clay Center RVD Office
April 20	3-6pm	Story Walk-Walk KS Event	Washington-Courthouse Square
April 22	3-6pm	Story Walk-Walk KS Event	Concordia-City Park
April 27	3-6pm	Story Walk-Walk KS Event	Clay Center-Zoo Walking Trail
April 29	3-6pm	Story Walk-Walk KS Event	Belleville-Downtown Square
April 22,29, May 6,13, 20, 27		Wallet Wisdom—Webinar Series	Online– See page 5
May 8		Tractor Safety Course	Smith Center– See page 7
May 22		Tractor Safety Course	Minneapolis– See page 7
June 1-2		Wheat Plot Tours	TBD