

FHD Extension News

Council Grove Office: 620-767-5136
Cottonwood Falls Office: 620-273-6491
Website: www.flinthills.k-state.edu/4-h
Facebook: flinthillsdistrictksre

Shandi's E-mail: sdandres@ksu.edu
Chelsea's E-mail: chelse1@ksu.edu
BettyAnn's E-mail: byeager@ksu.edu
Aleece's E-mail: adpriest4@ksu.edu

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WELCOME TO THE FLINT HILLS DISTRICT NEWSLETTER!

Flint Hills Extension District is Morris and Chase County. We have an office in Council Grove and in Cottonwood Falls. If you haven't been in to visit our offices, we encourage you to stop by!

You might have previously been receiving an Ag newsletter. We are using this opportunity to transition to a newsletter that covers all program areas within our Extension District. You will find information about Ag, Family and Consumer Science, Community involvement, 4-H, events, and updates for both Morris and Chase Counties. If you have topics that you would like to see covered in the future, please ask.

If you have preferences for receiving the newsletter in a digital format through email or in printed copy through the mail, please call or email so we can adjust how you receive your copy of the newsletter. You are welcome to receive it in print, email, or both print

MEET THE STAFF

Shandi Andres
District Director
Family and Consumer
Science/4-H Agent

Betty Ann Yeager
Office Professional
Cottonwood Falls Office

Donna Frese
Program Assistant
Council Grove Office



Chelsea Bartels
Ag and Natural
Resources/4-H Agent

Aleece Priest
Office Professional
Council Grove Office

4-H NEWS

Flint Hills District 4-H Club Day Results

Flint Hills District 4-Hers participated in 4-H Club Day on Saturday, March 5th, at the Council Grove Elementary School in Council Grove. Winners were chosen from each county in the event categories. The 4-Hers who received top blue awards and some alternate top blues awards have the opportunity to participate in Regional 4-H Club Day at Madison, Kansas, on Saturday, March 26th. The following are the results from the day's events.

Chase County Project Talks: Colton Cooper, D – blue; Tate Gibb & Colton Cooper, D – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Archer Hodges, D – second Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Vincent Hodges, D – second Alternate Top Blue; Bella Mushrush, B – first Alternate Top Blue

Morris County Project Talks: August Carson, WW – B; Dani Day, FH – first Alternate Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Eli Day, FH – blue; Bailey Ehrlich, DS – blue; Jameson Lutt, DS – second Alternate Top Blue; Joshua Lutt, DS – blue; Beatty Mayer, DS – second Top Blue; Daylen Nielsen, NV – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Andrew Schrader, DS – blue; Mariette Thibodeaux, DS – blue

Chase County Show and Share: Owen Hodges, D – blue; Max Mann, D – blue; Kate Mushrush, B – blue; Lakin Spain, D – blue

Chase County Junior Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks: Vonda Danford, T – blue; Hadden Giger, G – blue; Heath Giger, G – second Alternate Top Blue; Jerit Inlow, B – first Alternate Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Sadie Mushrush, B – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Josiah Peters, B – second Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier

Morris County Junior Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks: Castyn Andres, DS – first Alternate Top Blue; Evan Birk, NV – blue; Lawson Carson, WW – blue; Macey Hensley, NV – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Laramie Mayer, DS – blue; Ronnie Mayer, DS – blue; Lexi Todd, DS – second Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier

Chase County Senior Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks: Karlie Gibb, D – red; Harrison Giger, G – blue; Henry Giger, G – blue; Kinslea Glanville, G – blue; Josepha Inlow, B – first Alternate Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Bryson Koch, G – second Alternate Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Bethany Peters & Rebekah Peters, B – second Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Lydia Peters, B – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier

Morris County Senior Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks: Mark Andres, DS – first Alternate Top Blue; Cassidy Dalquest, FH – first Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Lakoddah Downes, FH – second Top Blue and State Fair Qualifier; Gavin Carson, WW – red; Trinadee Fetters, NV – red; Jacob Kasten, WW – second Alternate Top Blue

Chase County Readings: Kinslea Glanville, G – blue; Sophia Glanville, G – blue; Addison Hansford, D – blue; Heidi Hansford, D – blue; Jerit Inlow, B – Alternate Top Blue; Enley Lauer, D – blue; Hadlee Litke, D – blue; Carter Mann, D – Top Blue

Morris County Readings: Samuel Barr, FH – Alternate Top Blue; Dana Davis, WW – blue; Kimberly Davis, WW – blue; Ryan Davis, WW – blue; Macey Hensley, NV – Top Blue; Lilliana Stilwell, WW – blue

Chase County Public Speaking: Lydia Filinger, T – second Top Blue; Sophia Glanville, G – first Top Blue

Morris County Public Speaking: Mark Andres, DS – second Top Blue; Carissa Dalquest, FH – first Top Blue

Morris County Junior Gavel Games: Dwight Sunflowers 4-H Club (Hudson Lange, Jameson Lutt, Joshua Lutt, Ronnie Mayer) – Top Blue; Dwight Sunflowers 4-H Club (Fayth Ehrlich, Kaylee Ehrlich, Laramie Mayer, Maya Mulryan) – Alternate Top Blue

Chase County Club Skit/1 Act Play: Bazaar 4-H Club – Top Blue; Diamond 4-H Club – Alternate Top Blue; Gladstone 4-H Club – blue

Morris County Club Skit/1 Act Play: Dwight Sunflowers 4-H Club – Alternate Top Blue; Flint Hills 4-H Club – Top Blue

Chase County Model Meetings: Toledo 4-H Club – Top Blue

Morris County Model Meetings: Burdick Hustlers 4-H Club – red; Willing Workers 4-H Club – Top Blue

Morris County Novelty: Samuel Barr, FH – Top Blue

Morris County Junior Instrumental Solo: Fayth Ehrlich, DS – Alternate Top Blue; Brayden Jarvis, FH – Top Blue; Laramie Mayer, DS – red; Maya Mulryan, DS – blue; Haylee Nielsen, NV – blue; Alex Priest, FH – red; Mariette Thibodeaux, DS – blue

Chase County Senior Instrumental Solo: Josepha Inlow, B – Top Blue

Morris County Senior Instrumental Solo: Ella Kirk, NV – Top Blue

Morris County Instrumental Ensemble: Fayth Ehrlich & Laramie Mayer, DS – Top Blue

Morris County Junior Vocal Solo: Lilliana Stilwell, WW – Top Blue

Morris County Senior Vocal Solo: Sierra Meade, FH – Top Blue

Chase County Club Codes: B – Bazaar; D – Diamond; G – Gladstone; T – Toledo

Morris County Club Codes: BH – Burdick Hustlers; DS – Dwight Sunflowers; NV – Neosho Valley; FH – Flint Hills; WW – Willing Workers

There are 10 4-H members committed to attend Citizenship Washington Focus in Washington, DC. The trip is planned for **June 3-12, 2022**. Those members who are signed up to attend are: Castyn Andres, Mark Andres, Gavin Carson, Ian Effland, Kinslea Glanville, Sophia Glanville, Josepha Inlow, Colter Johnson, Jacob Kasten, and Gus Wainwright. The group is currently working to earn funds to attend the event by enlisting sponsors and holding fundraisers.

The group will offer a raffle for two(2) Lifetime Hunting and Fishing Licenses. Two hundred tickets will be sold, and two winners will be drawn to win a Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License. This raffle will open March 11



Flint Hills District 4-H Goes to Washington DC



and the winner will be drawn on April 2nd.

The group is still planning two breakfast fundraisers. The next event will be held in White City on March 19 at the White City Methodist Church from 7-10 AM. The last breakfast fundraiser will be in Council Grove on April 2 and the Council Grove Methodist Church from 7-10 AM.

The members attending are excited to bring their experiences back to share within the District.

If you are interested in being a sponsor, purchasing raffle tickets, or need additional details regarding the breakfast, please contact Shandi for more information.

sdandres@ksu.edu or 620-767-5136



Canning Season is almost here!

If you have a dial gauge pressure canner, it is time to get it tested. Our Extension offices can test the brands Presto, National, Maid of Honor and Magic Seal. We cannot test All American gauges. Contact one of our offices to make arrangements to get yours tested!

Shandi often receive calls with questions about Medicare and other insurance topics. She is certified as a SHICK Counselor. SHICK stands for Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansans. SHICK Counselors provide free, unbiased, confidential information on Medicare, Medicare Supplement Insurance, Long-Term Care, and other health insurance subjects that concern older Kansans. The goal is to educate and assist the public to make informed decisions on what's best for them.

A few times that you might be interested in these services:

- ◇ If you are getting ready to turn 65, the process begins about 3 months before the month of your birth day. Feel free to call or make an appointment at either the Council Grove office or Cottonwood Falls office to review the steps or ask questions.
 - ◇ Sign up for Part A & B (this can be done with Social Security when you sign up for benefits or Online), choose Medicare Supplement, and sign up for Part D.
- ◇ Every Fall from October 15—December 7 is Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D (prescription insurance component of Medicare)
 - ◇ During this time, appointments can be made through the Council Grove office or the Chase County Senior Center to review medications and choose the best plan based on cost and coverage.

USING A SPONGE VS. A STARTER IN YEAST BREAD

In some bread cookbooks, you may see the terms sponge and starter used interchangeably. They are not, however, the same product. Let's explore the differences. In bread, a starter is a form of yeast. It is typically a combination of flour and water that is exposed to air to attract wild yeasts, such as lactobacilli bacteria, to create fermentation. Other ingredients that might be added include rye flour, onion, or potato to add microorganisms. The starter ferments for a few days before using. The variety of microorganisms creates one-of-a-kind flavors for breads. Typically, a portion of the starter is saved, refreshed with flour and water, allowed to ferment, and used in the next batch of bread. Another way to use a starter is to save a piece of the dough to add to the next day's dough. Baker's pride themselves on how long a starter is kept active, which can be years. A sponge is an extra step in the bread making process. This involves combining the yeast, some of the flour, and the water. The mixture is somewhat soft. The sponge is allowed to ferment from a 30 minutes to several hours. The sponge usually becomes bubbly and rises. Longer fermentation gives stronger, acidic flavors. After this period, the bread making process continues as usual. Bread sponges may also be referred to as poolish (French for "polish"), preferment, or biga (Italian version). Each of these will have different proportions of flour and water, as well as varying fermentation times. Sources: How Baking Works, P. Figoni Understanding Baking, J. Amendola and N. Rees

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Sources: How Baking Works, P. Figoni Understanding Baking, J. Amendola and N. Rees

This article was published as part of the February 2022 You Asked It! through the K-State Rapid Response Center. Full newsletters can be viewed here: <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter/index.html>



K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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 Extension Office two weeks prior to the start of the event at 620-767-5136. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so.

Spring Burning in The Flint Hills

The prescribed burning season in Kansas has started. The outlook for potential wildland fire in Kansas is above normal for parts of Kansas due to a dry winter and the predicted forecast. Winter conditions over the last few months followed a textbook La Niña pattern. March is beginning on a very, very warm and dry note. This has only increased fire concerns across the region. Being proactive this burn season will help you have a successful and safe spring burn. Weather forecasts can be obtained from the NWS office in Topeka by going online, simply type weather.gov/topeka

Weather conditions for conducting a safe prescribed burn are:

- ◆ wind speeds 5-15 mph,
- ◆ 40-70% relative humidity, and
- ◆ air temperatures of 50-80°F.

The amount of cloud cover and mixing height will influence smoke dispersal. Check under the hourly forecast to see what is expected. That hourly forecast is also helpful to see when wind shifts might occur. A smoke model located at ksfire.org predicts the direction smoke from a fire will travel based on current weather conditions, location, date, amount of fuel, and size of area to be burned. Another site providing useful information relative to conducting a prescribed burn is the Kansas Mesonet. You can see current humidity and wind directly at mesonet.ksu.edu/fire/rh at 70+ locations across the state.

If you plan on prescribed burning this year in particular, here are a few things to be mindful of:

- ◆ Fires will burn more aggressively, be unpredictable, and hard to contain - especially during periods of light wind.
- ◆ If prescribed burning, we recommend cutting larger fuel breaks in advance and expect less effective timber control lines.
- ◆ Fire response and prescribed burning this spring will require more people/equipment due to conditions.
- ◆ Know the forecast 2-3 days in advance and prepare accordingly.
- ◆ Consider waiting until green-up is more established.
- ◆ Make sure prescribed fires are completely extinguished.

If you are planning to burn this spring, be sure to know your local regulations. Kansas regulations require the person conducting the burn to:

1. notify the local fire authority,
2. not create a traffic safety hazard,
3. not create an airport safety hazard, and
4. insure that the burning is supervised until the fire is extinguished.

Your county may require a burn permit. Always check with local authorities to ensure burning is allowed before starting a prescribed burn. (Agronomy eUpdate Issue 895)

Best Wishes,

Chelsea

(Agriculture/4-H Agent)

Stay connected with the Flint Hills District

-**Facebook:** K-State Research and Extension-Flint-Hills District

-**Website:** www.flinthills.ksu.edu

-**Mailing list:**

Call the office to be added (620) 273-6491 or
email Chelsea at chelsea@ksu.edu



March Fun Fact

2 billion pounds of bacon is produced
each year in the U.S.

Options for Damaged or Dead Brome Hayfields

By: Bruno Pedreira, Agronomist, Southeast Research and Extension Center

This past year was challenging for brome producers throughout eastern Kansas, with many reports of a complete loss or partial loss of their brome stands. Brome field damage varied greatly, with some fields that appear dead while others have no damage at all. The majority of the damaged area were late-harvested fields that were cut in mid-to-late July and after. Fall armyworm moths sought those recently harvested fields as sites to lay their eggs.

The brome plants tried to regrow (just a few inches tall) when the worms began feeding and within a couple of days, those fields turned brown. Hot, dry weather during this time led many producers to believe the burning fields were going dormant. However, questions arose after a few rain events in early September, and the brome wasn't greening up.

For now, producers need to identify the extent of damage that occurred in those fields. The first questions to be answered are: Are the brome plants alive or dead? Is there potential for regrowth?

If there are live rhizomes, it is likely that new tillers will be able to come up in the spring as environmental conditions improve. If there is no evidence that the plants are alive and the chances of regrowth are slim, producers need to plan for spring. In a "normal" year, with regular supply and input prices (seed, fertilizer, herbicide, etc.), the plan would be to calculate the damaged area and plan to have a well-prepared seedbed, and seed with 10 to 15 pounds of pure live seed (PLS)/acre. If a poor seedbed exists, seeding rates as high as 20 pounds PLS per acre may be required to obtain satisfactory stands. Higher seeding rates should be used when brome is broadcast on the surface and covered. In addition, there is a need to take soil samples and prepare a fertility program applying lime, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium as needed. More information on Smooth Brome production and utilization can be found at: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/c402.pdf>

As noted above, 2022 is a year with agriculture supply chain issues. Brome seed is very limited and the cost reflects that limited supply. Thus, there may be a need to identify other forage options.

1. If farmers need to produce forage during the spring and summer and are concerned with the cost of brome replanting (seed and fertilizer), they can consider exploring summer annual forages such as pearl millet, sorghum-sudangrass, forage sorghum, crabgrass, etc. These crops yield 4000 to 8000 lbs. of forage/acre. This is also an opportunity to consider seeding spring oats, spring triticale, and cereal rye with production from 1500 to 4000 lbs. of forage/acre. More details are available at: <https://www.agronomy.k-state.edu/documents/extension/mf2871.pdf>
2. If brome production this spring/summer is not crucial, or the producer isn't sure whether the brome is alive or dead, the grower can wait to see if the brome will come back during the spring and later decide what to do. With this option, farmers will have more time to determine stand health, identify prices trends, and make forage-based decisions. However, this option can also affect business profitability due to the uncertainty of forage yield during the next growing season.
3. If a grower really needs to produce brome hay to be sold and the field is damaged or dead, he should identify the number of acres to be replanted and purchase seed, fertilizer (take soil samples for lab analysis before defining the fertility program), herbicide, and insecticide as needed. Keep in mind that brome can be established in the spring, but weed pressure will be high. After planting in the spring, producers should scout for armyworms and other insects. Spring-planted brome is generally not harvested until the following spring. Fall-planted brome can be harvested in the spring of the next growing season.

This damaged or dead brome situation will be very unique in each hayfield. Thus, what your neighbor is doing or decided to do does not necessarily apply to you and your hayfield. Analyze your field, check the plants, and decide what would be the best for your operation. Each field may require a unique solution.

WHAT PRODUCERS SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT IN MARCH...

Tips by Dale Blasi, Extension Beef Specialist

- ◆ Manage calving pens and pastures to minimize human, cow, and calf stress. Stay organized.
- ◆ An observation schedule should be implemented for calving first-calf heifers and cows. First-calf heifers should be checked every two to three hours.
- ◆ Sanitation is key to reducing and/or eliminating calf scours. An excellent calving pasture management plan by Dr. David Smith from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, can be found at <https://beef.unl.edu/a95e3e40-93f8-4893-a296-d706fb4aec9a.pdf>.
- ◆ Make sure every calf consumes adequate colostrum during the first four to 12 hours after birth.
- ◆ Keep accurate calving records, including cow identification (ID), calf ID, birth date, calving difficulty score, and birth weight. Other traits to consider recording are teat and udder scores, calf vigor score, and other pertinent information. This information, along with Angus sire information, is vital for enrolling cattle into the AngusSourceSM program.
- ◆ Calving books are essential sources of information; make sure you have a backup copy.
- ◆ Body condition score (BCS) cows. Thin and young cows will need extra energy to maintain yearly calving interval.
- ◆ If cow diets are going to be shifted from low- (poor quality forage or dormant grass) to high-quality forage (lush green grass) programs, begin a grass tetany prevention program at least three weeks prior to the forage switch.
- ◆ Given the high price of mineral supplements, conduct a needs assessment of your cow herd. Moreover, closely monitor daily intake to ensure that it is consistent with label directions.
- ◆ When making genetic selections, use the most recent National Cattle Evaluation (NCE) and herd records judiciously.
- ◆ If new bulls are purchased, now is the time to start preparing them for their first breeding season. Bulls need to be properly vaccinated and conditioned to be athletic. Moderate body condition with abundant exercise is ideal.
- ◆ After calving and before breeding, vaccinate cows as recommended by your veterinarian.
- ◆ Plan to attend beef production meetings.

Plant Cool-Season Crops in March

Derived from articles written by: Travis Carmichael & Ward Upham, K-State Research & Extension Horticulture Agents

A well-planned, properly tended vegetable garden not only provides an excellent source of fresh, nutritious vegetables, but also relaxation and enjoyment for the entire family. With a few simple tools, a little space, and a desire to nurture plant growth, anyone can create a thriving vegetable garden. Successful gardening begins with proper planning. This includes knowing how much to plant, when to plant, and proper spacing.

It is time to start thinking about those gardens because some of our garden crops can withstand the colder day and night time temperatures that late winter and early spring give us. Mid-March is a good time to start to plant garden crops such as broccoli, lettuce, potatoes, and peas, whereas beets, cabbage, endive, cauliflower, radish, onions/ onion sets, spinach, and turnips should be planted towards the end of the month.

As always, these planting times are just an estimate. The time to begin planting our garden crops can vary depending on the year because of any unseasonal weather patterns that may occur. One of the best ways to know when to plant vegetables is by checking the temperature of the soil. The soil temperature is a much better measure of when to plant than air temperature or the calendar.

You can find a metal soil thermometer at most garden or hardware stores. For a more detailed vegetable garden calendar, please stop by the Extension Office to get a copy (*Vegetable Garden Planting Guide MF315*).

Tips for a Successful Home Garden

- Use mulches to conserve moisture, control weeds, and reduce rots
- Keep plants free of insects and diseases
- Examine plants often to keep ahead of potential problems
- Keep weeds out
- Remove tomato suckers when they form (1 to 2 inches long)
- Sample soil and have it tested every three to four years
- Apply fertilizer to garden area as recommended See (*Fertilizing Gardens in Kansas MF2320*)
- Thin when plants are small
- Avoid walking and working in the garden when the foliage and soil are wet
- Wash and clean the sprayer well after each use



Flint Hills Extension District

Cottonwood Falls Office

PO Box 100

205 Broadway

Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845

Council Grove Office

501 W Main

Council Grove, KS 66846