

FHD Extension News

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WELCOME ABBY!

Abby Gettinger began serving as the Flint Hills District Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent on May 16. Abby's primary office is located in Council Grove.

Abby earned both her bachelor's degree and master's degree in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from the University of Wyoming. She has most recently been employed as a biological science technician (soils) for the U.S. Forest Service – Colville National Forest in Kettle Falls, WA.

Agriculture and Natural Resources agents develop and deliver educational programming related, but not limited, to agronomic and livestock production, agricultural economics, management and public policy, horticultural production and management, natural resources conservation, and environmental stewardship.

Contact Abby via email at: agettinger@ksu.edu.

FLINT HILLS DISTRICT SERVICES

Did you that in addition to educational programs, our Extension offices offer many services to our community! A few are highlighted below:

- * Water test kits
- * Radon test kits
- * DoTerra bags for prescription disposal
- * Farm account books
- * Family account books
- * Soil testing
- * Forage and feed testing
- * Pressure canning gauge testing

4-H HAPPENINGS

MORRIS COUNTY SHARP SHOOTERS

The Shooting Sports project has been popular in the Morris County 4-H Program for many years. As a District, Chase County 4-H members have the opportunity to join in this program if they wish to participate in 4-H Shooting Sports. Instructors for Shooting Sports have many hours invested in training, safety protocols, and practice time. We thank them for their efforts!

A group of eight Flint Hills District 4-Hers traveled to the Great Bend, KS on April 23 to participate at the Kansas State Shooting Sports BB competition. Individuals competing were: Castyn Andres, Cooper Andres, Zach Andres, Wyatt Haddox, Laramie Mayer, Lexi Todd, Cole Wilson, and Kasey Wilson. Congratulations to Kasey Wilson for placing 1st in the Junior Division Sitting position!

The team consisting of: Castyn, Cooper, Zach, Laramie, Lexi, Cole, and Kasey have qualified to participate at Daisy Nationals in Rogers, Arkansas this summer! The team is currently working on fundraising efforts to prepare for the trip. At Daisy Nationals, participants are required to complete a written test and shoot from all 4 positions (prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling). Congratulations 4-Her's on a job well done and State and Good Luck at Nationals!

4-H EVENTS FOR SUMMER 2022

Summer brings many opportunities for 4-H members to explore their interests, meet new people, and grow in their leadership skills. Highlighted below are a few opportunities that 4-H members have this summer.

Discovery Days—For youth ages 13-18, this leadership conference is a chance to experience a sample of college life on the campus of Kansas State University. Attendees stay in the dorms on campus and dine in the Kramer dining center. There are general sessions which all youth attend to hear amazing speakers. In addition, youth can sign up for a wide range of classes that are offered to fit their interest area, from swing dancing to leadership. Plenty of chances to meet teens from across the state are available during the activities designed for youth.

Citizenship Washington Focus—For youth ages 14-18, this road trip across the USA while stopping to see sites along the way has a destination of Washington, DC. Youth meet 4-Hers from other states, learn about the government, and tour places that have made history and places that are making news today. They will visit Capitol Hill, government departments, historic sites, and memorials. They will get a close-up view of political process through visits to Capitol Hill and meet with the Kansas Congressional and Senate delegations to discuss legislative issues. Participating in workshops and assembly groups will foster life skills and discuss possible solutions to domestic and international problems.

4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch—For youth who are entering 3rd grade through age 18, and is held at the Rock Springs 4-H Camp Center, south of Junction City, KS. Sessions are available for all ages of 4-H members to experience camp. Activities include: hiking, fishing, campfires, flag ceremonies, swimming, crafts, stream studies, recreation, ropes course and more! Older 4-H members can participate in a Leader in Training (LIT) or Counselor in Training (CIT) session if they wish.

CHASE COUNTY FAIR

is scheduled for

July 21-28

Cottonwood Falls



2022

COUNTY FAIRS



MORRIS COUNTY FAIR

is scheduled for

July 23 - August 1

Council Grove

**FAMILY &
CONSUMER
SCIENCES**



Creating Healthy & Sustainable Families

DRYING AND FREEZING SUMMER STRAWBERRIES

Preserving summer strawberries allows them to be used throughout the year! Included are details for drying or freezing strawberries to preserve them.

Drying Strawberries Without Added Sugar Dried strawberries are a fun snack or addition to baked goods, smoothies, granola, salads and yogurt. Directions: Wash hands and kitchen surfaces. Rinse strawberries under running water, remove caps and drain well. Cut strawberries into ½-inch slices or in half lengthwise. Small berries can be dried whole. Place strawberries cut side up on dehydrator trays. Set the dehydrator temperature between 130–140 degrees F. For berries with 2 cut sides, turn berries halfway through the drying process, so they won't stick to drying tray. Drying time varies, depending on size of pieces. Be sure to check after seven hours. For thick pieces, drying can take up to 36 hours. Cool fruit for 30 minutes. Dried strawberries should be pliable and leathery with no moisture. Store in an airtight container or freeze for longer storage.

Freezing Strawberries Without Added Sugar Frozen strawberries without added sugar can be used when you only want to take out a few strawberries at a time, as for smoothies. These strawberries will turn mushy if completely thawed, so they are best used cold. This method also works well to keep berries to make jam later. Directions: Wash hands and kitchen surfaces. Rinse strawberries under running water, remove caps and drain. Spread a single layer of berries on a baking sheet and freeze until solid (approx. one to two hours). Transfer berries to freezer bags. Press out as much air as possible. Label all preserved items with product name and date. For more ways to preserve strawberries, visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation or Cooperative Extension websites.

Shared from the Preserve It Fresh, Preserve It Safe newsletter, May/June 2022 edition

SUGAR IN SWEET SPREADS AND CANNING FRUIT

Fruits contain natural sugar known as fructose. When we make canned jellies or sauces, we may add more sugar to help preserve, sweeten and maintain the quality of the fruit. Many people are paying more attention to the amount and type of sugar they consume. In commercially processed fruit or fruit spread this “added sugar” is included on the Nutrition Facts Label.

Granulated sugar often is used in home-canned foods. Corn syrup or mild-flavored honey can be used to replace part of the sugar (usually one-half) when preserving fruit. For best results, experts recommend using recipes that were created using honey or syrup instead of modifying. Some sweeteners can overpower the delicate flavor of fruit. Brown sugar and molasses usually are not recommended for use in preserving fruit because of their stronger flavor.

Besides providing sweetness, sugar helps preserve jams and jellies by preventing microorganisms from growing. Sugar plays an important role in creating gels through its interaction with commercial pectin and/or pectin naturally found in the fruit. The natural acid in fruit also is needed for gel formation. In canned fruits such as peaches, sweetened syrups help maintain color, shape and flavor. The type of syrup varies from “very light” to “very heavy” according to the amount of water to sugar. “Light” syrups have less sugar and fewer calories than “heavy” syrup.

Reduced-sugar recipes are available to make high-quality preserved products. Sometimes fruit juice can be used in place of syrup. Low-calorie liquid sweeteners and Splenda, which is a granular sugar substitute, can be used in jelly, jam and sauce recipes that were created using these products. Low – or no-sugar pectin is available to use with less sugar or artificial sweeteners. Do not reduce sugar or use artificial sweeteners with regular powdered or liquid pectin.

See these resources from the National Center for Home Food Preservation:

- https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can7_jam_jelly.html for several reduced sugar recipes
- https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_02/syrups.html for directions

Shared from the Preserve It Fresh, Preserve It Safe newsletter, May/June 2022 edition



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

Agroforestry Field Day

When: June 15th, 8:30
am to 3 pm

Where: Family Farm of
2019 Kansas
Agroforestry Award
winners Roger and
Nancy Wells, 868 Rd
290, Americus, KS
66835

Registration is
available online and
costs \$12 prior to the
event, \$15 for those
who register on June
15. Pre-registration is
recommended to help
organizers get an
accurate meal count.
Registration Fee
includes workshop
materials, beverages,
and meals. Seating is
limited, it is
recommended to bring
a lawn chair with you.

Topics Include:

- Range management
- Tree removal & planting
- Wildlife habitat & food plots
- Prescribed burning
- Timber stand improvement & management plans
- Streambank stabilization and riparian forest buffers

Is There Any Value to Starter Fertilizers on Soybeans?

BY: Dorivar Ruiz Diaz, Nutrient Management Specialist

Soybean is a crop that can remove significant amounts of nutrients per bushel of grain harvested. Because of this, soybeans can respond to starter fertilizer applications on low-testing soils, particularly phosphorus.

Typically, corn shows a greater response to starter fertilizer than soybean. Part of the reason for that is that soils are generally warmer when soybeans are planted than when corn is planted. The typical response in early growth observed in corn is usually not observed in soybeans. However, yield response to direct soybean fertilization with phosphorus and other nutrients can be expected in low-testing soils.

K-State guidelines for soybeans include taking a soil test for phosphorus (P), potassium (K), sulfur (S), zinc (Zn), and boron (B). If fertilizer is recommended by soil test results, then fertilizer should either be applied directly to the soybeans or indirectly by increasing fertilizer rates to another crop in the rotation by the amount needed for the soybeans.

The most consistent response to starter fertilizer with soybeans would be on soils very deficient in one of the nutrients listed above, or in very high-yield-potential situations where soils have low or medium fertility levels. Furthermore, starter fertilizer in soybeans can be a good way to complement nutrients that may have been removed by high-yielding crops in the rotation, such as corn and help maintain optimum soil test levels.

Banding fertilizer to the side and below the seed at planting is an efficient application method for soybeans. This method is especially useful in reduced-till or no-till soybeans because P and K have only limited mobility into the soil from surface broadcast applications.

However, with narrow row soybeans, it may not be possible to install fertilizer units for deep banding. In that situation, producers can surface-apply the fertilizer. Fertilizer should not be placed in-furrow in direct seed contact with soybeans because the seed is very sensitive to salt injury.

Soybean seldom responds to nitrogen (N) in the starter fertilizer. However, some research under irrigated, high-yield environments with sandy soils suggests a potential benefit of small amounts of N in starter fertilizer.



K-State Releases Price Risk Management Series for Cow-Calf Producers

By: Jennifer Ifft, K-State Department of Agricultural Economics

Jennifer Ifft knows that farmers and ranchers face risk each day, so finding strategies to mitigate risk is necessary to be successful.

Ifft, an associate professor of agricultural economics at Kansas State University, has released a [nine-part series and historic performance decision aid](#) about price risk management considerations and strategies for cow-calf producers.

She said that those that will benefit from the series include cow-calf producers with limited experience hedging; and producers who are interested in learning more about Livestock Risk Protection (LRP), including stockers, feedlot operators and cow-calf producers with hedging experience.

“In today’s volatile commodity markets, price risk management is as important as ever,” Ifft said. “Cow-calf producers historically have had limited options for formal price risk management. LRP is a livestock insurance product that has been available for two decades, but recent policy changes make it more affordable to producers. LRP makes payments when national prices drop below the producer-selected coverage price.”

She said the risk management series will:

- Help cow-calf producers assess whether LRP is a good fit for their operation, or learn more.
- Increase awareness of key policy characteristics and decisions for producers that are interested in LRP.

Ifft said the series is designed to provide a gradual introduction to LRP. She said cow-calf producers -- especially small and midsize operations -- may have limited experience with hedging, which is similar to LRP.

“The series begins with key price risk management concepts and practices before presenting policy details. The series concludes with a discussion of how LRP would have performed historically for Kansas cow-calf producers,” she said.

“LRP is very similar to a put option (which gives an option buyer the right to sell at a predetermined price) but is more affordable and small-producer friendly,” Ifft said. A producer can enroll anywhere from 1 to 6,000 head of cattle (feeder or fed) in a single policy (endorsement) and premiums are not due until the end of the coverage period (usually after cattle would be sold).”

Ifft added that LRP is designed to replace the income that is lost due to unexpected price declines.

“The producer must select a coverage price, or the level to which prices must drop for an LRP payout to be triggered,” she said.

Ifft noted that like other federal crop and livestock insurance products, LRP is designed so the producer comes out ahead in the long run. Producers are more likely than not to receive more in payouts than they pay in premiums in the long run, she said.

“The key phrase here is ‘the long run,’” Ifft said. “Several years can pass without a payout. Having a long-term perspective and understanding how LRP works as insurance against price declines can help producers decide whether LRP is a good choice for their operation.”

[The series of articles can be found online](#) from the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics.

WHAT PRODUCERS SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT IN JUNE...

Tips by Dale Blasi, Extension Beef Specialist

June is a month to let Mother Nature take her course. **Assuming timely precipitation**, native grasses are usually at peak production; therefore, little supplementation is needed, except for some minerals.

Cow-Herd Nutrition

- ◆ Provide plenty of clean, fresh water.
- ◆ Provide free-choice minerals to correct any mineral deficiencies or imbalances.
- ◆ Monitor grazing conditions and rotate pastures if possible and practical.
- ◆ Consider creep-feeding if it's cost-effective.

Herd Health

- ◆ Monitor and treat pinkeye cases.
- ◆ Provide fly control. Consider all options; price and efficiency will dictate the best options to use.
- ◆ Monitor and treat for foot rot.
- ◆ To reduce heat stress, avoid handling and transporting cattle during the hottest times of the day.

Forage and Pasture Management

- ◆ Check and maintain summer water supplies.
- ◆ Place mineral feeders strategically to enhance grazing distribution.
- ◆ Check water gaps after possible washouts.
- ◆ Harvest hay in a timely manner; think quality and quantity.

Reproductive Management

- ◆ If using AI, do not expect all females to conceive. A common practice is to breed once or twice with AI, then turn out cleanup bulls for the balance of a 65-day breeding season. A 42-day AI season with estrus synchronization at the front end gives most females three chances to conceive by AI.
- ◆ Watch bulls for libido, mounting and breeding function.
- ◆ Record breeding dates to determine calving dates.
- ◆ By imposing reproductive pressure (45-day breeding season) on yearling heifers, no late-calving 2-year-olds will result. This will increase lifetime productivity and profits.

Genetic Management

- ◆ Monitor herd performance. Then identify candidates to cull because of poor performance.

General Management

- ◆ Check equipment (sprayers, dust bags, oilers, haying equipment, etc.), and repair or replace as needed. Have spare parts on hand because downtime can make a big difference in hay quality

KEEP MOWER BLADES SHARP

Lawn-mowing season is here. Remember that dull blades give the lawn a whitish cast. A dull blade does not cut cleanly but rather shreds the ends of the leaf blades. The shredded ends dry out, giving the lawn that whitish look. A sharp mower blade is even more important when the turf starts putting up seed heads next month. The seed head stems are much tougher than the grass blades and more likely to shred. Under normal use, mower blades should be sharpened about every 10 hours of use. (Ward Upham)





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