



March 2026

# THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Extension



## Director's Note

**Denise Dias**

Wyandotte County Director

Spring is almost here! Spring is a great time to try something new. Did you know that our staff teaches programs throughout the county? We go where you are, to make it convenient for you to get the information you need. Here are some topics trending this month in Extension.

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension  
Wyandotte County

# 4-H Youth Development

## 4-H MEMBERS REPRESENT WYANDOTTE COUNTY AT THE STATE 4-H HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

Wyandotte County 4-H members kicked off the new year with an impressive showing at the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest, held during Equifest of Kansas.

Two dedicated members of the 4-H Horse Project stepped up to represent our county in this challenging competition. Horse judging asks participants to evaluate horses as if they were in a live show, ranking them from first through fourth. Scores are based on how closely each participant's placings match those of the official judge. Competitors then demonstrate their knowledge by either presenting oral reasons—explaining and defending their decisions—or by completing a multiple-choice test about the classes they observed.

Abigail F. and Abby F. of the Blazing Bridles 4-H Club, and coach Casey Ling, devoted three months of preparation to this event, showcasing both their commitment and their growing expertise in the horse project. Their hard work and enthusiasm reflect the strong spirit of Wyandotte County 4-H.



Casey Ling,  
4-H Youth Development Agent  
csling@ksu.edu



**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension  
Wyandotte County

# Family and Consumer Sciences

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A MINDFULNESS MONDAY?

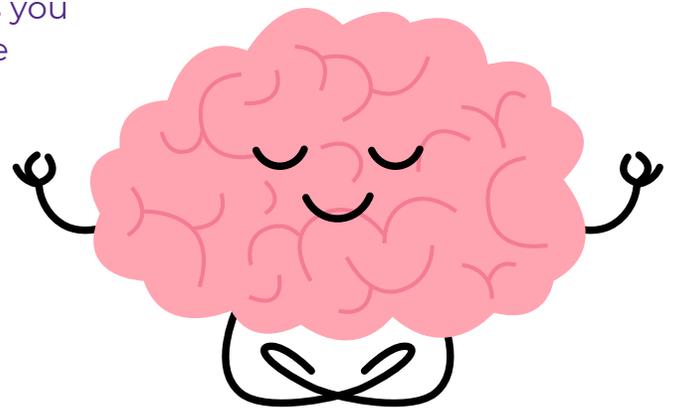
Monday mornings can serve as a highly stressful day for many people. It is the time when some people return to work or school after the weekend. If the weekend was long, such as a three-day weekend because of a holiday, it can be more stressful than the average end to the weekend. If returning to work occurs after a vacation, the level of stress can be the most stressful of all. If either work or school is unpleasant or, worse, hated, getting up to go to start the day can be extremely difficult. Even those people who like their job or school can find starting the week a challenging experience. If you find yourself in one or more of the categories of people who experiences this stress and depression on Monday morning you are not alone.

Committing yourself to mindful Mondays lets you get used to being more present, positive, and healthy, which then becomes natural and stays with you no matter what day it is.

Here are 11 ideas for your first mindful Monday. Try them all and find the ones that works best for you.

1. Make a Goal List for the Week
2. Take a Nature Walk
3. Recommit To Your Beauty Routine
4. Make Your Bed
5. Eat a Healthy Breakfast
6. Stretch Right Away
7. Show Gratitude for the New Week
8. Write a Letter to Your Saturday or Sunday Self
9. Put Aside 15 Minutes for Journaling
10. Try Yoga
11. Try Meditation and Mindfulness

Living your best life every day requires the ability to stop and enjoy the present moment. While there are lots of positive things you can do daily to feel happier, having at least one mindfulness day per week will help you better connect to your inner self.



# Nutrition and Food Safety

## FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Hi everyone!

My name is Lauren Woody, and I'm thrilled to step into my new role as the Family and Consumer Sciences Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Extension Agent here in Wyandotte County. I'm excited to share a little about myself and the path that brought me here.

I'm originally from Dallas, Texas, where I spent most of my life before heading to college in 2019. I attended the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, earning my Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition and Dietetics in 2023. I then moved to Kansas City to continue my education at the University of Kansas Medical Center, where I completed a Master of Science in Dietetics and Nutrition along with my dietetic internship, graduating in 2025. I officially became a Registered Dietitian in September 2025.

During my dietetic internship, I completed my Community Nutrition rotation right here at the Wyandotte County K-State Extension Office. I enjoyed the experience so much that when the opportunity opened to serve as the part-time FCS Program Assistant, I jumped at it and began working in that role in 2024. In that position, I delivered research-based nutrition and health education to individuals and families throughout Wyandotte County. I've been trained to teach K-State Extension signature programs and have assisted with initiatives focused on chronic disease prevention, food safety, physical activity, and healthy lifestyle behaviors.

I'm excited to continue this work and serve our community in my new role as the Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent!



**Lauren Woody**  
FCS Agent  
lwoody2000@ksu.edu

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension  
Wyandotte County

## MASTERING MARCH

With the spring season knocking on your garden gates, it's time to consider implementing the plans we have been thinking about all winter. Whether it's pruning that unruly vine or neglected trees and shrubs, applying chemicals, using soil amendments, or sowing early-season veggies, starting now will pay dividends down the stretch of the growing season.

### **Pruning Fruit Trees:**

The early weeks of March are still within the ideal window for training fruit trees such as apples, pears, peaches, cherries, and plums. Pruning can be intimidating for novice fruit tree growers, but it can help discourage disease, open airflow in the trees canopy, and lead to higher quality fruit yields. Remember to start with the three D's (dead, diseased, damaged) when selecting branches to cut. For more information, check out Kansas State Extension publication "MF3450 Pruning Apple and Pear Trees" linked below.

### **Pruning Vines and Canes:**

Grape vines, blackberry, and raspberry bushes can add texture to fence lines, spruce up an arbor, and, of course, give delicious fruits! Unfortunately, if left to grow, they can become wild and unsightly quickly, not to mention reduced fruit quality. Cleaning up a grape vine (as pictured above in the arbor) can help encourage the vines to grow upward, instead of out and downward.



### **Early Season Vegetable Planting:**

It's finally time to do some planting!

With regards to the Kansas State

Extension publication "Vegetable Garden Planting Guide" linked below, March is when we can begin to sow our roots and tubers, leafy greens, brassica veggies (broccoli, cauliflower), and onions.

Happy gardening!

[https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/pruning-apple-and-pear-trees\\_MF3450.pdf](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/pruning-apple-and-pear-trees_MF3450.pdf)

[https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/vegetable-garden-planting-guide-revised\\_MF315.pdf](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/vegetable-garden-planting-guide-revised_MF315.pdf)

## Community Development

# GRANT OPPORTUNITIES TO GREEN UP THE DOTTE

### **National Gardening Association**

Garden projects for non-profits, public or private schools, and youth programs  
<https://kidsgardening.org/garden-grants/>

### **Fruit Tree Planting Foundation**

Donates fruit trees for community projects, including city parks and neighborhoods.  
<https://www.ftpf.org/apply>

### **Sunderland Foundation**

Focusing on Bricks and Mortar contributions, they have also helped build structures for Kansas trails.  
<https://www.sunderland.org/>

### **USA Cycling**

Improve trails for racing, training, and recreational riding, and build new trails from scratch. <https://usacycling.org/foundation/trail-tune-up-grant>

### **Evergy Green Team**

The Green Team is a group of employees and retiree volunteers who have been taking on environmental projects across Kansas and Missouri since 1989.  
<https://www.evergy.com/smart-energy/environmental-impact/green-team>

### **Kansas Trails Council Trail in A Box- Add Volunteers**

Communities can apply to bring a Kansas Trail in a Box to their natural-surface trail. Once the project is approved, KTC will loan a trailer and work with you and your volunteers to get started. <https://www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/about/trail-in-a-box/>

### **American Trails**

Funding to support trail maintenance, research, and trail stewardship training needs.  
<https://www.americantrails.org/apply-for-the-trail-fund>

### **The Conservation Alliance**

Conservation Grants of many kinds, including Trail grants  
<https://www.conservationalliance.com/grants/>



**Denise Dias,**  
**Director**  
[ddias@ksu.edu](mailto:ddias@ksu.edu)

**KANSAS STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

Extension  
Wyandotte County

# Upcoming Events



**March 4-** K-State Garden Hour

**March 5-** Soil Blocking

**March 5 & 6-** Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

Connect with us!



K-State Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact Jo McLeland two weeks prior to the start of the event (insert deadline date) at (913-299-9300 or jo1@ksu.edu). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

**KANSAS STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

Extension  
Wyandotte County