

April 2023

THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Research and Extension

Director's Note

Denise Dias,

Wyandotte County Director

It's been a whirlwind of year since I became the Wyandotte County Extension Director. The biggest surprise is the desire of everyone that I have met to find a way to make the Dotte a better place to live. That theme runs through all we do in Extension too! Just read over our staff articles and see it for yourself.

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BECOME A 4-H VOLUNTEER!

Jessie Carr

4-H Youth Development Agent

April 16-22 is national volunteer week. We know that 4-H Youth Development programs, clubs, events and more wouldn't be possible without our awesome volunteers! We should celebrate our volunteers all of the time but especially during national volunteer week!

KS 4-H has a few ideas on how to celebrate volunteers...

- Encourage your club members to recognize their organizational leaders, project leaders and other important 4-H volunteers during the week.
- Use your news column or write a special news release to recognize volunteers in your program.
- Prepare a series of Tweets or Facebook posts to recognize volunteers during the week.
- Highlight National Volunteer Week in your April 4-H Newsletter.
- Handwrite several notes of appreciation throughout the week to special volunteers in your program.
- Check-in with a new 4-H volunteer to see how things are going and offer help as needed.

Volunteers have the opportunity to connect with youth and create lasting impact! If you are interested in learning more about volunteering with Wyandotte County 4-H be sure to visit our website: [Become a 4-H Volunteer!](#)

4-H Youth Development



Contact
Jessie Carr,
by email
carrjessie@ksu.edu



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CLEAN YOUR KITCHEN PANTRY

Chiquita Miller,
Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Do you have food items in your cabinets that are collecting dust, outdated, or broken? Spring is a great time to clean out your kitchen cupboards.

Getting Started

Start your spring cleaning by removing all items from the pantry or cupboard, so that you can thoroughly clean and sanitize the shelves. Use a mild detergent, appropriately mixed in warm water to clean, and then rinse. If using commercial sanitizing wipes, be sure to read the label for use.

Keeping or Tossing

Next, check the "use by" or "best by" dates on the food items from your cupboards. This date is determined by the manufacturer and is the last date recommended for use of the product for best quality. Most people wonder if the product can be used after this date and the answer is, it depends. It depends on the product itself, how it was handled, how it was stored, and how it is to be used. Now, determine what you are going to discard.

Restocking

As you prepare to re-stock your cupboard, check the "use by" or "best by" dates and place older dated items in the front to ensure they are used first. This is the FIFO (First In First Out) method of storage.

Remember that the ideal storage temperature for non-perishable foods is between 50°F and 70°F. If at all possible, avoid storing food in cupboards by the stove, dishwasher, or under the sink, as well as locations with extreme temperature changes such as the garage or basement.

A clean and organized kitchen pantry helps make food preparation timelier and more enjoyable and is also important for food safety and food waste. If you are not sure about an item, remember, when in doubt, throw it out.

For more information regarding the tips, you can visit this resource: <https://extension.psu.edu/spring-clean-your-kitchen-pantry>

Family and Consumer Sciences



Contact
Chiquita Miller by email
chmiller@ksu.edu

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SEEKING NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Stephanie Whatley-Hopkins
EFNEP Agent

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) is growing! Classes are currently being taught 3-4 days a week both in person and virtually. However, our program has room in its schedule for more.

EFNEP has a range of curricula that focus on school age children 3rd grade and up through adulthood.

- Do you know a group that is looking for nutrition education courses?
- Do you know expecting parents or groups looking for nutrition education based on the needs of pregnancy?
- Are you a teacher looking for a way to teach your students about food?

Please contact Stephanie Whatley-Hopkins at smwh@ksu.edu or 913-299-9300 ext. 111.

EFNEP currently is teaching classes for families with children under 18. Upcoming sessions will be hosted at Keeler Women's Center (a series dedicated to Spanish speakers) and the Kansas City Kansas Public Library West Wyandotte Library.

EFNEP is also looking for partners to collaborate with for a program called Oral Health for Life. Part of our mission is to provide support to community partners based on health-related needs. Oral Health for Life is an initiative in collaboration with Oral Health Kansas. Oral Health for Life is looking for community partners who are interested in building a brand-new program together.

Nutrition and Food Safety



Contact
Stephanie
Whatley- Hopkins
by email
smwh@ksu.edu

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THE ALLERGEN SESAME NOW REQUIRED ON FOOD LABELS

Lori Wuellner

Food and Nutrition Agent

For a couple of years now there has been “rumbling” of sesame making it’s way to the stage to join the existing 8 food allergens which were established in 2004. It is now official...as of January 1, 2023, sesame is required to be labeled as an allergen on packaged foods, including dietary supplements which will make it the 9th major food allergens declared by federal law.

The allergen declaration will be stated within the 1) ingredient list or 2) as a separate “Contains” statement below the ingredient statement on food packages.

There may still be food products in grocery stores that don’t list sesame as an allergen if they were already made and shipped to stores before 2023. So those who are allergic to sesame will need to check the ingredient statement regularly. Also, foods that are not packaged, such as bakery goods displayed on trays, may or may not have allergen information. Always ask the vendor to find out any food allergen information.

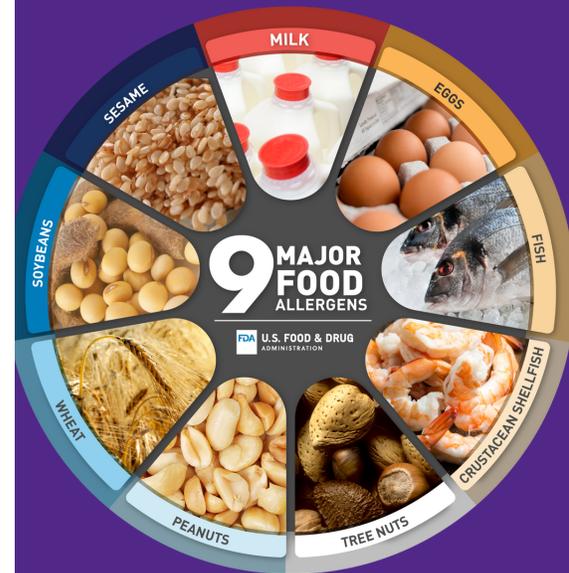
In summary, the 9 food allergens are:

- milk
- eggs
- fish, such as bass, flounder, cod
- Crustacean shellfish, such as crab, lobster, shrimp
- tree nuts, such as almonds, walnuts, pecans
- peanuts
- wheat
- soybeans
- sesame

For more information on food allergies refer to the following USDA link, <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/food-allergies>

(Source: USDA, Allergic to Sesame? Food Labels Now Must List Sesame as an Allergen; KSRE- You Asked It Newsletter, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter/index.html>)

Nutrition and Food Safety



Contact

Lori Wuellner

by email

lwuellne@ksu.edu

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YOU MIGHT TURN GREEN IF YOU BELIEVE THESE FOOD SAFETY MYTHS

Jan McMahon

Nutrition Program Assistant

Nutrition and Food Safety

Myth: I don't need to clean the refrigerator produce bin because I only put fruit and vegetables in there.

FACT: Bacteria in fresh fruits and vegetables can cause cross-contamination in your refrigerator. A recent NSF International study found that the refrigerator produce compartment was the #1 "germiest" area in consumers' kitchens. To prevent the buildup of bacteria that can cause food poisoning, it is essential to clean your produce bin and other bins in your refrigerator often with hot water and liquid soap, rinse thoroughly, and dry with a clean cloth towel or allow to air dry outside of the refrigerator.

Myth: Cross contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator -- it is too cold in there for germs to survive!"

Fact: Some bacteria can survive and even grow in cool, moist environments like the refrigerator. In fact, *Listeria Monocytogenes* grows at temperatures as low as 35.6°F! A recent study from NSF International revealed that the refrigerator produce compartment was one of the "germiest" places in the kitchen, containing *Salmonella* and *Listeria*. ü Keep fresh fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs. ü Clean your refrigerator regularly with hot water and soap and clean up food and beverage spills immediately to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. ü Don't forget to clean refrigerator walls and undersides of shelves.

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/pdfs/5-steps-to-clean-your-refrigerator.pdf>



Contact
Jan McMahon,
by email
jmcmahon@ksu.edu

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COMMUNITY GARDEN & ORCHARD GRANTS

Denise Dias
Extension Director

One of our neighborhood groups wanted to find some grant options for a community garden. I am sure your neighborhood or HOA could use one of these grant opportunities to help beautify or grow healthy food for their neighbors!

Fruit Tree Planting Foundation information - ftpf.org

The Kansas Department of Commerce.

Neighborhoods near the Union Pacific and BNSF both have grants for communities that their rail lines serve.

- bnsffoundation.org/how-to-apply/
- up.com/aboutup/community/foundation/local-grants/

The Walmart Grant

Currently, it's up to \$5,000 - and potentially would be a benefit to them as well if some of the supplies are purchased at a local store. The key is to meet with the local manager so they are on board as they are the ones who forward on the applications in the system with recommendation for funding. If you just apply and they don't know about it, you will not have much of a chance:

- walmart.org/how-we-give/local-community-grants

American Family Insurance has grants for Community Resiliency, of which Community Gardens falls into their list:

- amfam.com/about/givingback/community-investment/community-grants

Bank of America grants can go to neighborhood revitalization, including community gardens:

- about.bankofamerica.com/en/making-an-impact/charitable-foundation-funding

Chipotle provides funds for community gardens:

- donations.community.chipotle.com/disclaimer

LifeWTR has a More to Life grant. They list community garden building as an example.

- moretolifewtr.com/lifegrants

Seedmoney.org has grants for food garden projects:

- seedmoney.org/apply/

The Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Program provides grants of \$100 to \$500 for pollinator gardens - for youth:

- wildones.org/seeds-for-education/

Community Development



Contact

Denise Dias by email
ddias@ksu.edu

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SPRING GARDEN CLEAN-UP

Horticulture

Lynn Loughary
Horticulture Agent

March is a great time to go outdoors and inspect your garden spaces. It's also a great time to remove debris from your perennials, cut back your ornamental grasses, and to take a soil test.

By removing old, dead leaves from your perennials, you can eliminate or reduce many diseases in the garden. Iris leaf spot is a fungus disease that attacks the leaves and occasionally the flower stalks and buds of iris. Infection is favored by wet periods during the spring, and the emerging leaves eventually show small (1/8 to 1/4 inch diameter) spots. The borders of these spots are reddish, and surrounding tissue first appears water-soaked, and then yellows. Spots enlarge after flowering and may coalesce. Though the disease will not kill the plant directly, repeated attacks can reduce plant vigor so that the iris may die from other stresses. Spores are passed to nearby plants by wind or splashing water.

Ornamental grasses benefit from removal of dead foliage by greening up earlier. A number of tools can be used including hand clippers, weed whips (if the foliage is of a small enough diameter), weed whips with a circular blade, or even a chain saw. It is often helpful to tie foliage together before cutting so it doesn't interfere and is easier to dispose of. Burning is another option — but only if it is safe and legal to do so.

One of the most important steps is to have your soil tested in your gardens. The most basic soil test checks pH and the levels of phosphorus and potassium. Most of the lawn and garden soil tests that come out of our soil-testing lab show more than adequate levels of both phosphorus and potassium. If those nutrients are not needed, applying them is a waste of money and can be a source of pollution. In extreme cases, excess phosphorus can interfere with the uptake of micronutrients. So, if you haven't taken a soil test in several years, take one this spring.

Begin by taking a representative sample from several locations in the garden or lawn about 6-8 inches deep. Mix the samples together in a clean container and select about one cup of soil. Take the soil to your county extension office to have tests done at the K-State soil-testing laboratory.

Lynn Loughary is the Horticulture Agent for Wyandotte County, K-State Research and Extension. She can be reached by calling 913-299-9300 ext 104, or by email lloughar@ksu.edu



Contact

Lynn Loughary
by email

lloughary@ksu.edu

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Upcoming Events



April:

April 5- K-State Garden Hour: Growing to New Heights with Vertical Gardening

April 5 - Gardening for Birds and Bugs

April 6- Dealing with Harmful Insects without Harming the Beneficial

April 11- Eating Smart, Moving More

April 11- ServSafe Class

April 19- Feeding Your Heart

April 16-22- National Volunteer Week

April 28- Volunteer Appreciation Social

April 28-29- Plant Sale

K-State Research and 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 (insert phone number and email). 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.

Connect with us!



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