



March 2024

THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Research and Extension



Director's Note

Denise Dias

Wyandotte County Director

Have you ever played with building blocks? It doesn't matter which kind you use, they all have the same idea. To build upon one another to make things bigger and better. That is how I think you can describe Extension to someone unfamiliar with our mission. We build up communities, youth, leaders, families, businesses, and neighborhoods. To improve their lives and our county. So, the next time you tell someone about us, you can describe us as builders for a better Wyandotte County.

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COUNTY CLUB DAY AND HORSE PANORAMA RESULTS

When most people hear 4-H, they tend to think of raising livestock and summer days showing at the county fair. While this is true, 4-H has so much more to offer for its youth members. Projects range from robotics, photography, sewing, and textile design, to public speaking, and shooting sports- just to name a few. Even though it is still wintertime and months away from county fair season, 4-H members are still expanding their knowledge by working on their projects and competing in 4-H events.

County Club Days- County Club Days are held every year in February and allow 4-H youth to showcase their abilities in public speaking, instrumental and vocal solos, dance, acting, and mock job interviews, among many other skills. 4-Hers are judged on their performance and receive feedback and a ribbon for their efforts. This year Wyandotte 4-H partnered with Leavenworth 4-H to put on the event.

- Anson G: Jr Demonstration: Red Award
- Ellie G: Jr Demonstration: Red Award
- Jr Instrument Solo: Red Award
- Amber Y: Sr Demonstration: Purple Award
- Sr Piano Solo: Blue Award
- Ruby Y: Sr Demonstration Talk Blue Award
- Sr Piano Solo: Red Award

Kansas 4-H Horse Panorama- Horse Panorama is an event where 4-H members are tested on their equine knowledge. There are several contests designed for all age groups and experience levels, including public speaking, demonstrations, hippology (written exam, hands-on identification of equine-related knowledge), quiz bowl, and logo design contest. Horse Panorama is an excellent event for youth wanting to learn more about horses or be involved with the Horse Project without having to own a horse. This year Wyandotte 4-H sent a team of four to compete at the event.

- Ellie G, Abigail S, Abigail F, and Lux.
- Team WyCo placed 3rd overall in Hippology.
- Ellie G: Placed 1st and 2nd for the Logo Contest
- Abigail S: 1st in Open Quizbowl and 3rd in Open Hippology.



Family and Consumer Sciences

SPRING BREAK SAFETY TIPS

Spring Break is a pivotal holiday for students and families across the United States, offering a pause from academic duties and a chance to indulge in travel, relaxation, and various leisure activities. The timing of Spring Break 2024 varies by educational institution, typically occurring between March and April, closely aligned with the Easter holiday. We want all students and families to have a fun – and safe – Spring Break. Here are some Spring Break safety tips to keep in mind.

For students and families who might be traveling:

- Let a family member/loved one know your travel plans, including the name and location of your hotel/where you are staying, and your dates for arrival and departure.
- Limit advertising your plans about being out of town on social media.
- If you are driving, be sure to have your car checked/serviced before a long trip.
- Leave jewelry or other valuables at home. Make copies of your credit cards in case they are lost. Include the phone number to call and cancel the cards if needed.
- Make sure your cell phone is on at all times and be sure it is fully charged.
- Secure the doors to wherever you are staying, Use a hotel safe or in-room safe for valuables.
- Team up and use the buddy system at your destination.
- Please do not accept food or drinks from strangers.
- Please remember to take your medications (and sunscreen if you are going to a beach or warm area).

Special considerations for students and families who plan to travel abroad for Spring Break:

- Check the U.S. State Department travel advisories website for countries on their list.
- Make two copies of your passport in case it is lost. Include the phone number to call to report lost passports. Leave one copy with a family member or trusted friend not traveling with you.
- Only use established taxis or ride services. Find out how you contact the US embassy, police, and hospitals, and make phone calls once you arrive in another country.

<https://parents.wfu.edu/family-news/spring-break-safety-tips/>



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Nutrition and Food Safety

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

March is many things but in the “nutrition world” we know it as National Nutrition Month® and this year’s theme is “Beyond the Table”.

During March, each week will be dedicated to a specific topic:

Week 1: Stay nourished on any budget.

- Learn cooking, food preparation and meal planning skills.
- Use a grocery list and shop sales when purchasing food.
- Learn about community resources such as SNAP, WIC and local food banks.
- Practice home food safety.

Week 2: See a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN).

- Ask your doctor for a referral to an RDN.
- Find an RDN who specializes in your unique needs.
- Receive personalized nutrition information to meet your health goals.
- Learn about the many ways RDNs can help people live healthier lives.

Week 3: Eat a variety of foods from all food groups.

- Include your favorite cultural foods and traditions.
- Eat foods in various forms including fresh, frozen, canned and dried.
- Experiment with recipes using different ingredients.
- Try new foods or global cuisines.

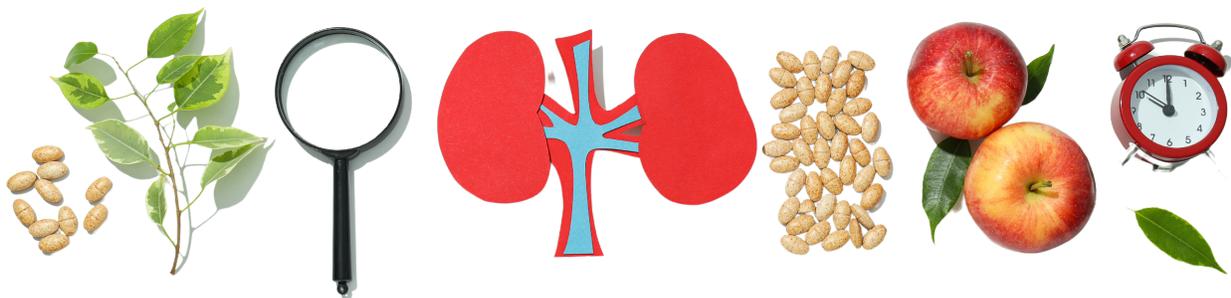
Week 4: Eat with the environment in mind.

- Get creative with leftovers and ways to reduce food waste.
- Enjoy more plant-based meals and snacks.
- Buy foods in season and from local farmers when possible.
- Grow food at home or in a community garden.

For more information go to, <https://www.eatright.org/national-nutrition-month> where you’ll find topics related to food, health, fitness, and recipes for various ages and populations.

Click on the “See Resources” button for downloadable handouts and more.

(Source: Eatright.org, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)



SHAKE UP YOUR ROUTINE

What do you think of lunch? Even just thinking of this midday meal can cause palate fatigue when the only thing that comes to mind are wraps, sandwiches, or salads. Remember, not all lunch foods have to be classic lunch foods, and you can shake up old classics to make them fresh and interesting!

Inspiration:

- Breakfast for lunch: Greek yogurt + berries + nuts/seeds of choice + whole grain toaster waffles on the side
- Deconstructed breakfast burrito: scrambled eggs + black beans + salsa + avocado + shredded cheese + tortilla chips on the side
- Loaded hummus bowls: hummus base + roasted bell pepper and zucchini + diced grilled chicken strips + feta cheese + pita on the side

Tips for Making Grab-and-Go Lunches

Making grab-and-go lunches is a practice, and like any new habit, it is going to take time, trial, and error before it feels comfortable. Lunch preparation does not need to be perfect, nor does it need to look the same every week. However, there are foundational tips to help streamline this process!

Tip: Practice the 3 P's for make-ahead meals:

- Plan: Take inventory of what you have on hand, what recipes you would like to make for the week, and what you will need to obtain from the grocery store.
- Purchase: Remember your list! Take a picture of it, use an app, or put it in your phone notes so that you have it with you at the store. This is critical, as oftentimes meal plans fall apart when one or more key ingredients are missing.
- Prepare: Know that you do not have to make all of your lunches ahead of time to be successful for the week. Choose to prepare ahead the most critical and time-consuming steps of lunches to make the week easier. This could look like pre-chopping all fruits and vegetables, pre-portioning components, and cooking meats and grains to have them ready to use for quick meals.

Remember, the best lunch plan is the one that is enjoyable, attainable, and relevant for you and your family. Let this blog be a guideline to help you navigate lunches when life gets hectic. With a little creativity and planning, lunches can transform from drab and rushed, to the pick-me-up of the day!



SPRING GARDEN CLEAN-UP

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 the 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 the 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 the removal of dead foliage by greening up earlier. Several 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 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.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge Competition

This event will be held on March 5th from 9 am to 1 pm at Donnelly College. This is the fifth year of this competition. Youth will compete by describing their business idea in a written executive summary, setting up a display of their business idea, or pitching their idea to a panel of judges. This program helps to grow future businesses in Wyandotte County.

Save the date!

A new networking event for entrepreneurs and start-up businesses will be held on April 30th. This social time will be from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. It will be a time for networking, and learning business ideas around marketing, how to hire the right person, and financial matters too. This event will bring together experienced and new entrepreneurs into the same space to help build and support one another. More information to follow in next month's newsletter or follow us on social media.



Community Development

BUILDING LEADERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY BOARDS

Stepping into a leadership role at your church or community group can be a daunting thought. Many of our current community leaders are getting of that age where they are ready to step back and let someone younger take over. But sadly, no one comes forward to take over their role.

Maybe you are already on a board or are considering throwing your name in to serve on a board? If you are unsure if you have the skills to step up to a leadership role, then this program is for you. Welcome A-Board is an educational program for local community-based elected or appointed boards to help members and their organizations become more effective in their efforts. The four sessions cover the following topics:

- Session 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members/Effective Meetings
 - Organized Groups – How Do They Function and What Is Your Role When Asked to Serve?
 - Duties and Responsibilities of Non-Profit Board Members
 - Organizing and Leading Productive Meetings
 - Agendas to the Rescue!
 - Basic Parliamentary Procedure
- Session 2: Understanding Fellow Board Members/Conflict Management
 - Generations – Adapting Volunteers of Different Ages
 - Behavioral Styles
 - Managing Conflict in Groups
- Session 3: Financial Responsibilities, Fundraising, Legalities, and Ethics
 - Financial Responsibilities of Boards
 - Fundraising and Managing Grant Revenue
 - Legal and Ethical Issues for Boards
- Session 4: Strategic Planning
 - The Importance of Strategic Planning
 - Designing a Strategic Planning Strategy – Part 1 & 2
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The next online series begins on February 29, March 28, April 25 and May 30. From 12:00 to 1:00pm.

The program fee is \$20 and registration is due February 28th. Register [here](#).

For questions contact Denise Dias, ddias@ksu.edu or 913-299-9300.

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Upcoming Events



March 7: Native Bees

March 12-13: Spring Break Camp

March 31: Walk Kansas

April 4: From Seeds to Table

April 16: ServSafe

May 3 & 4: 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 (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.

Connect with us!



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