



# NEWSLETTER



## From the Director's Desk

Happy New Year! We blinked and 2026 arrived. According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2026 is the year of the Fire Horse, beginning on the Lunar New Year, February 17, and ending on February 5, 2027. Accordingly, it is characterized by dynamic energy, enthusiasm, and fast-paced action. I don't know about you, but I sure hope we aren't on a bareback horse in a rodeo without a riggin!

I do hope 2026 brings good to each and every one of you. Whether you like to set New Year's Resolutions or are a goal setter, I encourage you to keep putting one foot in front of the other and keep moving forward. If you "fall off your horse", get back on and keep moving!

The new year brings many changes to our office. Our new Extension Board took the reins in January. They meet on the first Tuesday of every month in our office. 2026 board members include: Kyle Nichols, Chancie Rose, Cheryl Williams, Bitty Wiebe, Tara Varner, Steven Oltman, Kris Janzen, Cole Camac and Ann Brackenridge.

Alyssa Dodd joined our team on January 5th as our new office professional. We are excited to have her energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge join our office! Alyssa is from Towanda, Kansas, and a graduate of Circle High School and Butler Community College. Alyssa enjoys reading and spending time with her family. I hope you will stop by the office and come meet Alyssa!

Here is her contact information:  
adodd10@ksu.edu



We will also be hiring a new Family and Consumer Sciences Agent. This position will open this week. Be watching our website and social media pages.

We look forward to an exciting year and hope you are as well. Let us know how we can help you!

-Charlene

**Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**

## Inside this Edition:

- 1 From the Director's Desk
- 2 Upcoming Events
- 6 Available Services
- 7 Outreach
  - Christmas Donation Drive
  - All Things Kansas
- 9 Ag Talk
  - BIOSECURITY
- 10 Ag Talk
  - HPAI Information
- 11 Ag Talk
  - Be Aware of Slow-Moving Vehicles
- 12 Ag Talk
  - Learning Opportunities
- 14 Find Your Balance
  - Assistive Devices for Your Home
- 16 Find Your Balance
  - K-State Expert Shares Tips to Budget for the Winter Holidays
- 18 Find Your Balance
  - 10 Tips to Reduce Holiday Stress
- 19 Garden Gossip
  - Caring for Holiday Plants
- 21 Garden Gossip
  - Need a Speaker?
- 22 Garden Gossip
  - Gifts for Gardeners
- 24 Garden Gossip
  - December Gardening Calendar
- 26 4-H
  - Butler County 4-H: A Year of Growth, Leadership, and Being "Beyond Ready"
- 28 4-H
  - 4-H Program Highlights

# Upcoming Events

 <h1>January 2026</h1>						
				① Happy New Year	②	③
Office Closed						
④	⑤	⑥ Extension Council Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.	⑦ Garden Hour 12 p.m.	⑧ 4-H Archery Practice Begins Kansas Corn & Soybean Agronomy Series - Newton	⑨	⑩
⑪	⑫	⑬ 4-H Council 4-H Pistol/Rifle Practice Begins	⑭ Lunch & Learn - Andover Public Library 12:15 p.m.	⑮	⑯	⑰
⑱	⑲ Lunch & Learn - Lori's EMPORIUM! Augusta 12:15 p.m. 4-H/FFA YQCA Training	⑳	㉑	㉒	㉓ 4-H State Horse Judging Contest	㉔
㉕	㉖	㉗	㉘	㉙	㉚	㉛

**Butler County Extension Office**  
 206 North Griffith  
 Suite A  
 El Dorado, Kansas 67042  
 (316)321-9660

### Hours

**Monday - Thursday**  
 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Friday**  
 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

 <h1>February</h1>						
① 4-H Volunteer Registration Deadline	②	③ Extension Council Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.	④ Garden Hour 12 p.m.	⑤	⑥	⑦
⑧	⑨	⑩ 4-H Council Meeting	⑪	⑫ Women Grow the Farm - Manhattan	⑬ Women Grow the Farm - Manhattan	⑭ <b>HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY</b> ♥
⑮ 4-H Citizenship in Action - Topeka	⑯ 4-H Citizenship in Action - Topeka	⑰ 4-H/FFA YQCA Training	⑱	⑲	⑳	㉑ 4-H Horse Panorama - Rock Springs 4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In & Tagging
㉒ 4-H Horse Panorama - Rock Springs	㉓	㉔	㉕	㉖	㉗	㉘

## Coffee Mugs Now Available!

Get yours today at the K-State Research and Extension - Butler County Office  
 206 North Griffith, Suite A  
 El Dorado, KS 67042



**\$10.00 Each**

**K-STATE** Butler County  
 Research and Extension  
 butler.k-state.edu

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

# Upcoming Events



## LUNCH & LEARN

Bring your lunch and join Horticulture Agent, Calla Edwards, over the lunch hour during our monthly Lunch & Learn Program. This will be held over the lunch hour and will cover a variety of horticulture topics.

**January 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**12:15-12:45 p.m.**

**Lori's EMPORIUM!**

1604 Custer Lane

Augusta, KS

**January Topic:**

**Myths and Misconceptions  
in the Garden**

Some gardening wisdom is really not all that wise, while other gardening tales may actually have some truth to them. Calla Edwards, Butler County Horticulture Extension Agent, will look at common garden myths we have all heard, and evaluate the science behind what either proves them true or false. Learn how to know whether the garden advice you come across is reliable or not.

Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## LUNCH & LEARN

Bring your lunch and join Horticulture Agent, Calla Edwards, over the lunch hour during our monthly Lunch & Learn Program. This will be held over the lunch hour and will cover a variety of horticulture topics.

**January 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**12:15-12:45 p.m.**

**Andover Public Library**

1511 E Central Ave

Andover, KS

**January Topic:**

**Attracting Birds to Your Backyard**

Many people enjoy the excitement of birds routinely visiting their yard. Providing food and water is a great start to attracting backyard birds, but what types of food and habitat are going to attract the most birds and make them feel safest? Join us to learn more about what types of food attract the birds, what feeders to use, and what type of cover will keep birds hanging around all winter long.

Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Garden Hour Webinars:

These class are offered online via Zoom at Noon. For more information on the Garden Hour series or to register visit here:

<https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour/>

January 2026

# Upcoming Events



**K-STATE** |  Butler  
Research and Extension | County

## Blueprint to Business: Your idea. Your plan. Your business.

For youth in grades 6-12 interested in learning how to build their own business while preparing to compete in the Butler County YEC!

**Registration Required!**



<https://forms.gle/mUq4sntxedHuppQ4Z>



Time:  
**10 a.m. to  
3 p.m.**



Location:  
**200 N Griffith St  
El Dorado, KS 67042**



Date:  
**January 19,  
2026**

There will be a break for lunch. Please send youth with a sack lunch.

This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contact, Madeline Wallace, four weeks prior to the start of the event (December 22, 2025) at 316-321-9660 or [mwallac@ksu.edu](mailto:mwallac@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 is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



*Youth*  
**Entrepreneurship  
Challenge**

## Butler County YEC 2026

Through this contest, youth enrolled in grades 6-12 can showcase their entrepreneurial spirit by developing an executive summary and delivering a formal presentation to business leaders from their community.

### COMPETITION DATES:

Executive Summary Submission Deadline: February 13, 2026  
Trade Show & Final Presentation: **March 4, 2026**

#### Register

Register for **FREE** to participate in the Butler County YEC 2026  
<https://goventuredash.com/competitions/797>  
**DEADLINE: Feb 13, 2026**

#### Prepare

Contact your local host to get connected with a mentor. **Local Trade Show: March 4, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.**  
**El Dorado Civic Center  
201 E Central Ave.**

#### Compete

Cash prizes for the top 3 finishers!  
\*1st place winner secures a spot at YEC State

#### Connect

Madeline Wallace, 4-H Youth Development Agent  
[mwallac@ksu.edu](mailto:mwallac@ksu.edu) | 316-321-9660



SPONSORED BY



POWERED BY



# Upcoming Events

## 2026 K-STATE JUNIOR BEEF PRODUCER DAY

### Program

Join us on March 7, 2026, for the biennial K-State Junior Beef Producer Day! This event is a fun-filled educational day for youth, parents, beef project leaders, ag teachers, and extension agents to expand their knowledge of youth beef projects. Presentations by K-State faculty, staff, K-State livestock judging team members, students, and guest speakers will cover topics that may include selection, nutrition, daily care, meat science, reproduction, health, grooming, and showmanship. An optional YQCA certification class will be offered at the end of the day. A complimentary lunch and t-shirt will also be provided for those who register by the deadline. The registration fee is \$20 per person for those who sign up by February 13. The fee will increase to \$30 per person for those who register after the deadline. Only those who register by February 13 will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending the event must register, including youth and adults.



### Tentative Schedule

- 8:00AM Check-in
- 9:00AM Welcome
- 9:15AM Project Selection
- 10:00AM Morning Breakout Sessions  
-Nutrition, Meat Science, Daily Care, Grooming & Fitting
- Noon Lunch
- 1:00PM Afternoon Breakout Sessions  
-Health, Reproduction, Showmanship
- 3:15PM Dismissal
- 3:30PM Optional YQCA Class

### Registration



Scan Me!

Deadline: February 13  
 Fee: \$20/person  
 Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/BeefJrProducer>  
 Late Registration: \$30/person (after February 13)  
 \*All attendees must register, including youth & adults.  
 \*\*Late registrants will not receive a t-shirt.

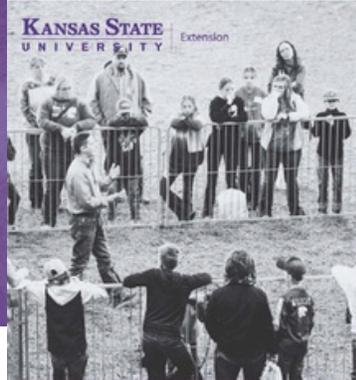
Registration Due  
February 13

Questions?  
Lexie Hayes

785.532.1264 | [adhayes@ksu.edu](mailto:adhayes@ksu.edu)



K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.



## 2026 K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day

<b>Date</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Questions</b>
4.11.2026	Due: 3.20.2026	Lexie Hayes
Manhattan, KS	Cost: \$20/person	785.532.1264
Scan Me!	<a href="https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer">https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer</a>	<a href="mailto:adhayes@ksu.edu">adhayes@ksu.edu</a>
	*All adults & youth must register to attend. **Only those registered by 3/20/26 will receive a t-shirt. ***Late registration is \$30/person.	

<b>Program</b>	<b>Tentative Schedule</b>
Join us for the biennial K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day on Saturday, April 11, 2026. Presentations will be provided by featured guests, as well as K-State faculty, staff, and students. This event will be an educational day of activities in which youth, parents, extension agents, ag teachers, and sheep project leaders can increase their knowledge of youth sheep project selection and management. A variety of topics will be shared, including an optional YQCA certification at the end of the day. All ages and skill levels are invited! Lunch and a t-shirt are included. The registration fee is \$20/person for those who sign up by March 20 or \$30/person for those who register after that date. Only those who register by the deadline will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending, including both youth and adults, must register. There will be an optional tour of the sheep and meat goat center offered on Friday evening and Saturday after jr. day.	<b>Friday, April 10</b> 5:00-7:00PM Optional Tour of Sheep & Goat Center <b>Saturday, April 11</b> 8:00AM Check-in 9:00AM Welcome 9:15AM Selection 10:00AM Nutrition 10:45AM Morning Breakout Sessions -facilities & equipment, reproduction, project management purchase to show Lunch Health NOON 1:00PM Afternoon Breakout Sessions 1:45PM -wool, showmanship, clipping & grooming Dismissal 3:45PM Dismissal 4:00PM Optional YQCA Class 4:00-6:00PM Optional Sheep & Goat Center Tour

K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

# Upcoming Events

**Butler County**  
**H.E.A.L.**

Health. Education. Action. Lifestyle.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO LIVE A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE THROUGH EDUCATION AND ACTION

PROMOTING HOLISTIC HEALTH BY INCORPORATING RESEARCH BASED EDUCATION INTO PRACTICAL DAILY LIVING.

**K-STATE** | Butler County  
Research and Extension

206 N Griffith, Suite A  
El Dorado, KS 67042  
(316) 321-9660

**scmh south central mental health**  
HELPING TO SHAPE PROMISING FUTURES

221 King St, Andover, KS 67002  
524 N Main St, El Dorado, KS 67042  
2821 N Brookside Dr, Augusta, KS 67010  
(316) 733-5047 ext 515 OR 528

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

**Onofre** **Filbert** **Kasten** **Perkins** **Nelson** **Strunk** **Lancaster**

**COMING TO NEWTON - JANUARY 8**  
Wild Prairie Event Center, 1610 SE 3rd St, Newton, KS

**Speakers from Godsey Ag, Agrimodis, Banded Ag, StoneX, Ag Market Insurance Services, KSU**

**Dr. Rodrigo Onofre & Sophie Filbert, Kansas State University Plant Pathology**  
How 2025 Disease Pressure Shapes 2026 Decisions. Fungicide Timing & Efficacy on Disease & Yield

**Dr. Chad Godsey, Godsey Ag**  
In-Season Nutrient Recommendations

**Chris Kasten, Agrimodis & Chris Perkins, Agrimodis/Banded Ag LLC**  
Fertility Management in Low Commodity Prices

**Ted Nelson, StoneX**  
Wrapping Your Arms Around Corn and Soybean Markets

**Tim Strunk, Ag Market Insurance Services**  
Crop Insurance Update; One Big Beautiful Bill Changes

**Dr. Sarah Lancaster, Kansas State University Agronomy**  
Herbicide Strategies for 2026

*Wrap up the day with the KCGA/KSA Social Hour: State/National Policy Update & Tariff Impacts on Trade*

# Available Services

## Bad Odor?

We have a breath of fresh air for you! K-State Research and Extension - Butler County offers Nilodor cotton balls to help eliminate the odor in your most desperate areas.

Just 1 drop can neutralize the air in a 10'x10' room. Costing only \$0.10 per cotton ball, this is an extremely cost effective solution to your most smelly situations.



## Soil Testing

Whether you are preparing your garden for spring planting or wanting to make sure your fields are ready to produce a bumper crop, we can help.

Bring your soil into the K-State Research and Extension - Butler County Office today and we will ship it to K-State Soil Labs for testing. Each test comes with personal recommendations put together by our Agriculture and Horticulture Professionals. Cost will vary depending on tests requested.

For more information on Horticulture Soil Testing, visit our website here: <https://www.butler.k-state.edu/horticulture/Soil%20Tests.html>

For more information on Agriculture Soil Testing, visit our website here: <https://www.butler.k-state.edu/agriculture/soiltest/untitled.html>



# Outreach

## All Things Kansas

Your guide to understanding all 105 counties of the Sunflower State.

[k-state.edu/allthingskansas](https://k-state.edu/allthingskansas)



**Access free interactive tools** with data-driven mapping, reports and insights through **30,000+ data layers** and **120+ national and state sources.**

### Your one-stop shop for Kansas data about:

- Agriculture
- Broadband access
- Business
- Child care and youth
- Economy
- Education
- Environment
- Food and food systems
- Health and health care
- Housing
- Population trends and profiles
- Water
- Many more topics

### How All Things Kansas can help:

- Save time by accessing multiple data sources in one place
- Visualize and map data
- Build geography-based reports
- Identify opportunities across Kansas
- Understand communities and market demands
- Analyze workforce strengths and industry gaps
- Research information to help with grant writing
- Make data-informed decisions

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

LEARN MORE  
Scan the QR code or visit  
[k-state.edu/allthingskansas](https://k-state.edu/allthingskansas)



# Ag Talk

**Charlene Miller**

Director/Agriculture Agent

[cmmiller1@ksu.edu](mailto:cmmiller1@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/agriculture/>

## BIOSECURITY

Let's talk Biosecurity! EHV1 is making it rounds through the horse community and wreaking havoc for many. Biosecurity is important for animal producers. Whether you are traveling with your animals or visiting places with animals and then returning to your own operation, biosecurity should be a top priority. In simple terms, biosecurity refers to taking all necessary measures to protect your operation. The Kansas Department of Agriculture has a great [website](#) with Biosecurity information. If you have animals, I encourage you to visit their website and ensure you are taking the necessary steps to protect them. If you have any questions, please contact your local veterinarian.



# Ag Talk



## HPAI: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

Highly pathogenic avian influenza, or HPAI, is a rapidly spreading viral disease that can infect many types of birds. Avian influenza, often called avian flu or bird flu, can be common, but some strains are highly pathogenic, which means they are more deadly. Introduced by migrating wild birds, HPAI can spread through spring migration and affect **all** domestic poultry — small and backyard flocks as well as commercial industries.

Poultry with HPAI **do not** survive the illness. Vaccines for HPAI are not readily available.

### Signs of Avian Influenza

- Coughing and sneezing
- Difficulty breathing
- Extreme depression
- Lack of energy
- Decrease in feed or water intake
- Swelling or purple discoloration of head, eyelids, comb, wattle and legs
- Decrease in egg production
- Sudden unexplained death

Biosecurity is your best option to prevent HPAI from entering your small or backyard poultry flock.

### Here is what you can do:

## Protect Your Small Flock from Avian Influenza

1

**Avoid** attracting wild birds and waterfowl to your home or farm. Song birds, sparrows, starlings, etc. are **low risk**.



- Clean up feed spills.
- Reduce puddles and standing water.
- Avoid visiting ponds and streams, especially with pets.
- Do not move birds from farm to farm.
- Isolate new birds.

2

**Limit or halt** travel with your birds to sales, shows and swaps.

Ensure you have clean hands, clothes, and footwear before handling your birds if you attend events. **Do not** allow others to handle your birds.



3

**Limit** your birds' visitors.

If someone must visit your birds: discuss where they have been. Have them wash their hands and wear clean clothes and footwear.



Call your veterinarian if your flock shows signs of influenza or you suspect exposure. No veterinarian? Call the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Animal Health at 785-564-6601.



# Ag Talk

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension  
Butler County

## POND MANAGEMENT



**FREE TO ATTEND**



RSVP

316-321-9660

<https://forms.gle/uX4Putpp8ao5Gbyq6>



GUEST SPEAKER:

**DR. JOE GERKEN**

K-State Extension  
Fisheries & Aquatic Specialist



**TUESDAY,  
MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**



**6:30 P.M.**



**BUTLER COUNTY COMMUNITY/4-H BUILDING**  
200 N. Griffith  
El Dorado, KS 67042

### COVERED TOPICS



**Managing Ponds**



**Aquatic Plant Control**



**Stocking Fish**

This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contact, Charlene Miller, four weeks prior to the start of the event at [cmmiller@ksu.edu](mailto:cmmiller@ksu.edu) or 316-321-9660. 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 is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

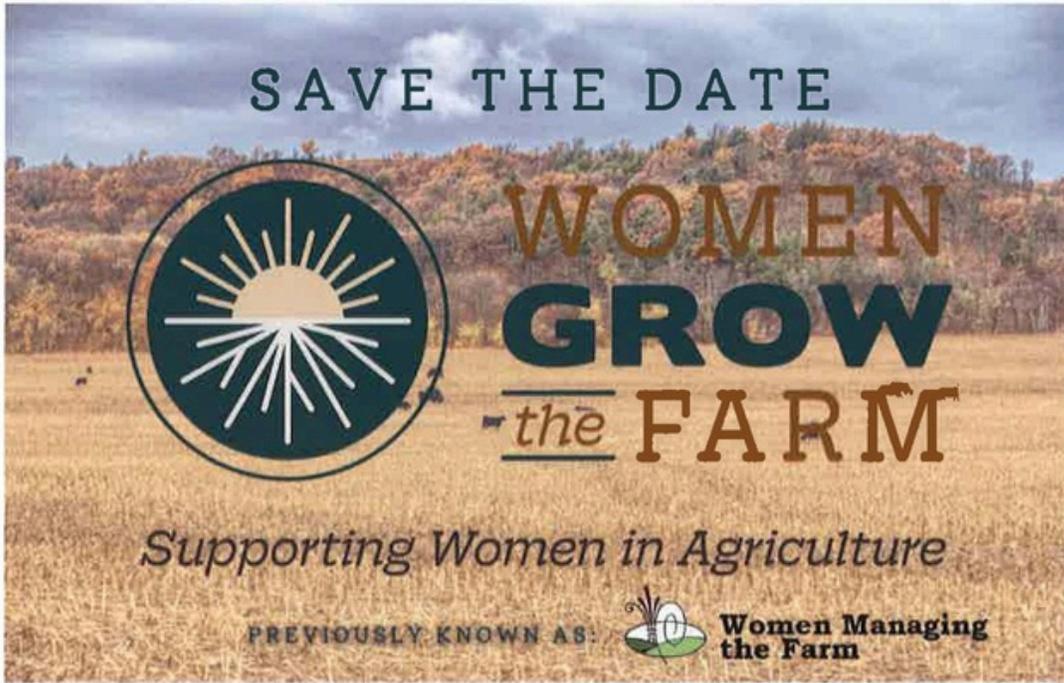
# Ag Talk

**Charlene Miller**

Director/Agriculture Agent

[cmmiller1@ksu.edu](mailto:cmmiller1@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/agriculture/>



MANHATTAN, KS | FEBRUARY 12TH & 13TH



**WOMEN  
GROW  
the FARM**

**Women don't just manage the farm—we grow it.**

Join us **February 12–13, 2026** in **Manhattan, KS** at the Hilton Garden Inn for the Women Grow the Farm Conference.

Two days of keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and powerful connections with women shaping the future of agriculture.



Use this QR Code to learn more  
and register to secure your spot!

[womengrowthefarm.com](http://womengrowthefarm.com)

# Ag Talk

**Charlene Miller**

Director/Agriculture Agent

[cmmiller1@ksu.edu](mailto:cmmiller1@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/agriculture/>

K-State Agricultural Economics presents

## Finances and the Farm:

An online class to enhance your farm management skills

An applied approach to developing and using farm financial statements for management decision-making for farmers and ranchers of all types

**This is a self-paced course you can take when it is convenient for you!**

This course can be taken for education only or to fulfill FSA borrower's requirements.

**Seven Lessons: Recordkeeping, Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Enterprise Budgets, Cash Flow, Goal Setting and Managing Family Living Expenses**

**Participants will:**

- Understand the structure of a balance sheet, income statement, enterprise budgets, and cash flow
- Choose either Cattle & Crops or CSA & Farmers Market case farm to complete quizzes to check understanding and practice using these financial statements in a real-world setting
- Be prepared to use financial management techniques for their own operation
- Set goals for their operation

- Learn how to make changes to avoid financial difficulties

**Registration Fee:**

- \$300 for FSA credit class
- \$100 for education only

**Approved for FSA Borrower's Training Credits in Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming**

Taught by Robin Reid, K-State Extension Farm Economist, and LaVell Winsor, K-State Farm Analyst

**Register online for FSA Credit or Education Only:**  
[www.AgManager.info/Events](http://www.AgManager.info/Events)

**KANSAS STATE** Agricultural Economics | **USDA** National Institute of Food and Agriculture | **KSRE** KANSAS STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION | **K-STATE** Research and Extension

Funding for this project was provided in part by the South Central Extension and Management Education Center and the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture under Award Number 2017-29022-16896. Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs available to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, visual, or hearing disability, contact Robin Reid, (785) 532-8964 or Director of Affirmative Action, Kansas State University, (785) 532-4802. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Signed in the presence of Cooperative Extension Board, Act of May 1, 2018, June 30, 2014, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Council, Extension Districts, and District Staff Department of Agricultural Experimentation, 1. Grant Martin, Director.

K-State Agricultural Economics Presents:

## Risk Management on the Farm

Online, on-demand course to take when it is convenient for you.  
Taught by Robin Reid, Extension Farm Economist, and LaVell Winsor, K-State Farm Analyst

**Five Lessons: Determining Cost of Production, Crop Insurance, Crop Marketing, Farm Programs (ARC/PLC), and Beef Cow/Calf Risk Management**

**Register online by using the link below:**  
[www.AgManager.info/Events](http://www.AgManager.info/Events)

**Course Description:**

- Learn principles of determining cost of production, developing a marketing plan, evaluating crop insurance options, and participating in farm programs (ARC/PLC)
- Participants will work with a case farm to apply these topics to a real - world farming operation through hands-on activities.
- The goal of this class is to acquire risk management skills that can be applied directly to a farming operation.
- The bulk of the course focuses on risk management for row-crop farming operations but also includes principles for beef cow/calf operations.

**Special Topics:**

- Managing stress and being resilient in tough times
- Communicating effectively with family members

**Registration Fees:**

- \$100 education only

**Other information:**

- Have 6 months from registration to complete
- This course is a replica of the 5-part Risk Management Series delivered by KSRE in 28 locations across the state from January-February 2022 in which 340 producers participated in-person

**KANSAS STATE** Agricultural Economics | **K-STATE** Research and Extension

# Find Your Balance

WITH BONNIE BREWER  
FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENT  
K-STATE RESEARCH & EXTENSION



FAMILY LIFE - MENTAL WELLNESS - NUTRITION - RELATIONSHIPS - SELF-CARE

[bjbrewer@ksu.edu](mailto:bjbrewer@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/fcs/>

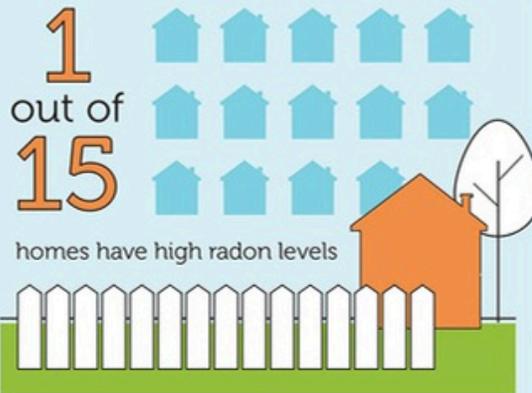
## January is Kansas Radon Action Month!

### Protect Your Family from Radon



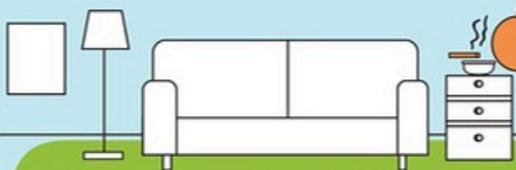
Radon is in the ground naturally. But sometimes it gets into homes through cracks in the floors or walls.

Radon is a gas that you can't see, smell, or taste – but it can be dangerous. It's the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S.



homes have high radon levels

### Radon and Smoking: A Dangerous Combination



If you live in a home with high radon levels, smoking raises your risk of lung cancer by **10 times**.



### Take the First Step

There's good news – you can protect your family by testing your home for radon.

Learn more by calling the National Radon Hotline:  
**1-800-SOS-RADON**



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Environmental Health

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

It is important that you know your risks when it comes to radon.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas released in rock, soil and water that can build up to dangerous levels inside any home; this means new and old homes, well-sealed and drafty homes, and homes with or without a basement.

Breathing radon can increase your risk of lung cancer and is the number one cause of lung cancer among people who do not smoke. Homes with high levels of radon have been found in every state. In fact, radon levels can vary greatly from home to home--even levels next door can be very different.

Radon gas is odorless and invisible, and the only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test for it. Take action today by visiting your local K-State Extension Office to purchase your radon test, and encourage your friends and family members to do the same!

# Find Your Balance

WITH BONNIE BREWER  
FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENT  
K-STATE RESEARCH & EXTENSION



FAMILY LIFE - MENTAL WELLNESS - NUTRITION - RELATIONSHIPS - SELF-CARE



## THANK YOU & FAREWELL

**Bonnie J. Brewer**

FCS EXTENSION AGENT

*"Time unfolds beauty, wonder, and mystery to reveal the auspicious tapestry of life."*

~ A.D. Posey

I am writing to let you know that I have accepted the position of K-State Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent in Harvey County and will be transferring to their office in January 2026. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your kindness, encouragement, grace, and support as I have served as the Butler County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agent.

As I transition to a different office, I view this move not as a final "good-bye," but as an "I'll see you around." I am still Butler County's next-door neighbor and am here to wish you the best and provide support when needed.

The quote above reflects to me that life holds much mystery – time unfolds wonders and brings about events that sometimes are unexpected and incomprehensible. May you each embrace the auspicious tapestry of life and focus on the beauty, wonder, and mystery that surrounds each of us every day.

Kindest Regards,

*Bonnie J. Brewer*

Bonnie J. Brewer

# Garden Gossip

**Calla Edwards**

Horticulture Agent

[callae@ksu.edu](mailto:callae@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/horticulture/>

## Caring for Your Holiday Plants

The holidays have come and gone but the plants we purchased during that time are still around. While some plants purchased for the holidays are only around for a short time, for example Christmas trees, others can bring us joy for many years if cared for properly.

Poinsettias are one the most common and probably the most popular of the plants sold around the holidays. They can make an easy-to-care-for, gorgeous houseplant if you decide to keep them after the holidays. In their native range, poinsettias develop woody stems and grow to be the size of small trees, so one of the first steps to their indoor care is to transplant them into a larger pot to allow the roots room to grow. Water them when the top inch of soil gets dry and provide plenty of light. Trim the poinsettias back around Valentine's Day to prevent them from becoming leggy and start fertilizing them at



half-strength. Once the weather warms up they can be moved outside and slowly transitioned to full sun for the summer. Water and fertilize regularly through the summer till September when you bring them back indoors. To encourage a bushy plant with more blooms prune them back about Father's Day for the final time.



Holiday cacti are probably the longest-lived of the plants you can purchase for the holidays with some living to be well over 100 years old or longer. Holiday cacti are tropical cacti that prefer to be watered when the top two inches of the soil get dry. Similar to the poinsettia, wait to fertilize them till February and then fertilize regularly throughout the growing season till they set blooms in the fall. These cacti can be moved outside once nighttime temperatures are above 50 degrees, but keep them in an area where they get morning sun and afternoon shade only.

# Garden Gossip

## Caring for Your Holiday Plants Cont.

They will burn in full afternoon sun in our area. The plants should be brought inside in the fall when the weather is cool and treated like a houseplant. Holiday cacti prefer to be pot bound and should only be transplanted every couple years into slightly larger pots.



Amaryllis are the final holiday plant to talk about. While not as long-lived as the others, amaryllis can provide years of enjoyment in the home. The secret to getting them to rebloom is to have healthy plants. Once they have finished blooming, cut off the blooms but leave the bloom stalk. A green stem will continue to promote photosynthesis, which creates energy that is stored in the bulb for future leaf growth and flowers. Start fertilizing at half strength in February and continue fertilizing through the summer. Move the amaryllis outdoors in the summer and treat it like any other outdoor plant till fall. If you bought a bulb wrapped in wax you must remove the wax or the plant will die. Take a sharp knife and cut a “v” in the wax at the base then slowly peel the wax off the bulb, leaving as much of the brown papery covering as possible. Place the bulb on a damp paper towel for 4 to 6 weeks till the bulb has 3 to 4 roots that are three inches long. Transplant the bulb into a pot about two inches larger than the diameter of the bulb. This process may take several months but the bulb should live. If your amaryllis does not bloom in the spring, it didn’t store enough nutrients the previous growing season.



# Garden Gossip

**Calla Edwards**

Horticulture Agent

[callae@ksu.edu](mailto:callae@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/horticulture/>

**NEED A  
SPEAKER?**



## CALLA EDWARDS

K-State Extension is your number one source of reliable, research-based information in Butler County. If you are looking for a speaker for any of your programs or meetings, Horticulture Agent, Calla Edwards, has vast expertise in all areas of horticulture! Some of her programs include:



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Butler County

Butterfly Gardening  
Feeding the Birds  
Houseplants

Organic Gardening and Insect Management  
Vegetable Gardening from Start to Finish

**Contact Calla at [callae@ksu.edu](mailto:callae@ksu.edu) or 316-321-9660**

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu)

## Winter Care of Tools



Winter, with its cold, dreary days, is the perfect time to prepare your garden tools for the growing season. If taken care of properly, tools can last for years and make your job easier. If you don't take care of your tools they can quickly rust, become dull, and make gardening harder. Here are a few tips to help keep your tools in top shape for this gardening season.

The first step with your tools is always to get them cleaned up. It's best to remove the soil from your tools right after you are finished using them, but that isn't always possible. Soap and water are an easy way to remove dirt from any tool. Use a wire brush or steel wool for stubborn dirt or small creases. If the tool is covered in sap you can use rubbing alcohol, mineral spirits, or a foaming bathroom cleanser.

The second step is to disinfect any tools to prevent the spread of diseases among your plants. Ideally, this step should be done after every use but that can be hard on tools. One of the easiest ways to clean your tools is by soaking them for 30 minutes in a diluted bleach solution containing 9 parts of water to 1 part of bleach. You can also wipe tools using 70 to 100% rubbing alcohol. Once the tools are clean and disinfected you can sharpen your shovels and pruning tools. Sharp tools make any task easier, especially pruning or digging with a shovel.

The final step with tools is to inspect the handles and sand down any rough spots to prevent splinters. Treat the wooden handles with linseed or mineral oil to keep the wood strong and help the tools last longer. If you do have tools that need replacing, now is the time to do it before the growing season starts.



# Garden Gossip

**Calla Edwards**

Horticulture Agent

[callae@ksu.edu](mailto:callae@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/horticulture/>

## January Gardening Calendar

### Vegetables and Fruits

- Pick up and discard fallen fruit before spring arrives
- As nursery catalogs arrive, look for plants with improved insect and disease resistance
- Order fruit trees



### Flowers

- Peruse seed catalogs and prepare your seed order
- Things you can start: get unplanted spring bulbs in the ground as soon as possible
- Start seeds throughout the winter, depending on growing requirements
- Water fall planted perennials to prevent dry soil conditions
- Watch for signs of frost heaving and cover tender roots
- Replace mulch layers
- Check bulbs in storage for rot and decay. Discard damaged ones
- Curl up with a good book and learn more about gardening



### Lawns

- Avoid walking on frozen lawns. It may injure the grass
- Rake fallen leaves that pile up on the lawn to prevent suffocation of grass
- Scatter snow instead of piling it up on the lawn next to drives and walks



# Garden Gossip

## January Gardening Calendar Cont.



### Trees and Shrubs

- Snow and ice on limbs:
  - Gently brush heavy snow from tree and shrub limbs to reduce damage
  - Allow ice to melt naturally from limbs. Do not use water to melt the ice or attempt to knock it off
- Pruning:
  - Prune storm-damaged limbs quickly to reduce damage and prevent tearing of bark
  - Avoid the temptation to prune on warm winter days. You'll prevent further damage
  - Bring twigs of flowering trees and shrubs indoors to force blossoms
  - Water the fall-planted trees and shrubs when the soil is dry but not frozen
  - Watch out for rabbit damage to the bark of trees and shrubs

### Miscellaneous

- Clean and repair garden tools during the winter
- Sand and seal tool handles to prevent splinter. Apply brightly colored paint to handles. It makes them easier to spot in the garden
- Keep bird feeders and water supplies filled for the feathered friends
- Evaluate the garden and make notes to assist in next year's planning
- Take photos of the garden and analyze for year-round interest



# 4-H

## Madeline Wallace

4-H Youth and Development Agent

[mgwallac@ksu.edu](mailto:mgwallac@ksu.edu)

<https://www.butler.k-state.edu/4-h/>

## A Minute with Madeline

### Beyond Ready for 2026!

- **Livestock Tagging Dates:** Families planning to exhibit livestock should watch for official tagging and identification information in their email and mailbox!
- **YQCA Certification:** YQCA class dates are now available. Completion is required for youth exhibiting livestock. Registration details are included in the 4-H newsletter.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC):** Registration information and important dates are outlined in the YEC section above.
- **Blueprint to Business Workshop:** Open to youth interested in exploring entrepreneurship, regardless of prior experience. Full details in the newsletter.
- **4-H Day:** County 4-H Day provides an opportunity for youth to showcase their project work through presentations and performances. All information, categories, and entry deadlines are included in the 4-H newsletter.
- **Regional 4-H Day:** Youth who advance from County 4-H Day get the opportunity to compete against top youth from surrounding counties! March 22, 2026. More details to come!
- **State 4-H Events:** Numerous state-level events and opportunities are scheduled throughout late winter and early spring! Most have their own event pages with additional information in the 4-H newsletter.

