



River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

rivervalley.ksu.edu

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Extension District

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Cut the Clutter & Get Organized

LEARN ABOUT CLUTTER, ITS
IMPACT ON YOUR HEALTH,
AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES
TO MANAGE CLUTTER



Wednesday, April 3
12:15 pm

Chamber of Commerce
207 W 6th St, Concordia
RSVP to 785-243-8185

Thursday, April 18
12:15pm

FNB Basement
101 C St, Washington
RSVP to 785-325-2121

Please feel free to bring your lunch. We encourage a
sack lunch to start decluttering your fridge and cabinets.

**Can't attend in person? Attend a session via Zoom on
Monday, April 15 at 12:15pm. RSVP to 785-527-5084**

These free events are sponsored by the
City of Concordia, Concordia Chamber of
Commerce, and the City of Washington.



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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 (Monica Thayer) four weeks prior to the start of the event (March 6, 2024) at (785-527-5084 or mthayer@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 Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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MEDICARE BASICS TO BE HELD IN BELLEVILLE & CLAY CENTER

Medicare and its parts, options, and plans can be confusing. Whether you are starting Medicare soon or are already on Medicare, consider attending Medicare Basics to learn more about the benefits, enrollment, eligibility, and more! River Valley Extension District Agents will be presenting Medicare Basics Programs at the following locations:

Thursday, April 25th
Belleville Public Library
5:30pm
RSVP to 785-527-5084

Monday, April 29th
Clay Center Extension Office Meeting Room
5:30 p.m.
RSVP to 785-632-5335

Medicare Basics is free to attend, but registration is requested. If you would rather schedule a personal appointment or if you have specific questions regarding Medicare, please call Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu or Jordan Schuette at 785-325-2121 or jschuette@ksu.edu.

AMERICA SAVES WEEK

In the most recent *Report on Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households* released in May 2023 by the Federal Reserve, the increased cost of living expenses has caused changes in financial management. 51% of households reported reducing their rate of savings. With America Saves Week coming up, now is the perfect time to examine your finances and work on increasing savings.

Family Resource Management Extension Agent, Monica Thayer, will be posting a daily video during America Saves Week on the River Valley Extension District Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/RVED4>). These videos will be posted at Noon each day during America Saves Week on the topics listed below.

Monday, April 8, 2024 - Saving Automatically
Tuesday, April 9, 2024 - Saving for the Unexpected
Wednesday, April 10, 2024 - Saving for Major Milestones
Thursday, April 11, 2024 - Paying Down Debt is Saving
Friday, April 12, 2024 - Saving at Any Age

If you have any questions regarding America Saves Week or any other financial management topic, please reach out to Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu.

HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR FREE CREDIT REPORT?

Your credit reports are an explanation of your credit history, including personal information, credit accounts, payment history, public records, and more. Credit reports can affect many aspects of your life, including the ability to receive credit, interest rates, employment opportunities, and more. Monitoring your credit reports regularly is an important part of being in control of your finances.

Three national credit report agencies (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) are required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act to provide a consumer with a free copy of their credit report weekly. The only truly free resource to receive your free credit reports are www.annualcreditreport.com or by calling 1-877-322-8228. There is a paper form on their website if you prefer that process. Once you have received your credit reports, it is extremely important to ensure information is accurate and correct any errors if needed.

If you have any questions regarding your credit reports or need assistance, please contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent, at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu.

ALZHEIMER'S EDUCATION - A CAREGIVER'S GUIDE TO FINANCES

The River Valley Extension District and Clay County Medical Center are sponsoring an Alzheimer's Educational Series in Clay Center. If you missed the first session in March on 10 Warning Signs, you could still attend our second session, *A Caregiver's Guide to Finances*. This program is scheduled for Monday, April 8th at 6:00 p.m. at the Clay County Events Center on the Fairgrounds.

A Caregiver's Guide to Finances will be presented by Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Agent and Alzheimer's Association Community Educator. Alzheimer's affects more than just a person's memory. It also affects their thinking and behavior which includes their ability to manage money. You will learn about the costs of caregiving, benefits of planning early, learn how to start conversations about finances, and more. This could be beneficial to any person needing or providing caregiving whether due to Alzheimer's, dementia, or any other illnesses.

This program is free to attend, and a meal will be provided by our sponsor, Clay County Medical Center. We do ask that you register for the event by Wednesday, April 3rd by calling the RVD-Clay Center Office at 785-632-5335. If you have any questions about the event, you can reach out to Jordan Schuette at 785-325-2121 or Monica Thayer at 785-527-5084.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



What is Stay Strong, Stay Healthy?

It is an evidence-based strength training program designed for older adults. The eight-week program includes 16 exercise classes that meet twice weekly for one hour.

Why strength training?

Strength training keeps your body and mind functioning at their best! Regularly completing strengthening exercises will help you build muscle and increase bone density, preventing frailty and osteoporosis.

What are the benefits of strength training?

Strength training:

- Increases muscle strength
- Improves balance
- Enhances flexibility
- Strengthens bones
- Relieves arthritis
- Helps control weight
- Lifts depression
- Reduces stress
- Reduces risks for heart disease

How does Stay Strong, Stay Healthy work?

The program's goal is to improve health and quality of life.

Classes incorporate:

- Warm-up exercises
- Eight strengthening exercises, with or without hand and ankle weights
- Cool-down stretches

Over the course of the program, you will learn exercises to improve strength, balance and flexibility.

After the eight weeks are over, you can continue the strength training program in the comfort of your home or with a group.



Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Starting Monday, April 15, 2024

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church - 200 W 4th St. Washington, KS 66968

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Class Cost - \$20

Class is limited to 15 participants.

Register by calling the Washington Office at 785-325-2121



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Hands-On

Mushroom Cultivation Workshop

Saturday, April 20, 2024

10:00am to Noon

4-H Conference Center
Clay County Fairgrounds
205 S 12th Street
Clay Center, KS 67432



Discover easy, low-cost methods for growing delicious gourmet mushrooms such as shiitake, wine cap, and oyster. Learn how to inoculate logs and wood chip beds so that you can harvest and sell your own mushrooms year after year!

Topics Covered:

- Growing mushrooms on substrate
- Inoculating mushroom logs (hands-on)
- Growing mushrooms in woodchips or straw mulch
- Log selection and harvest

Each participant will receive:

- Gray Dove Oyster Mushroom Production Kit
- Inoculated Log with their choice of Lion's Mane or Golden Oyster
- Bag of Winecap Spawn

Cost of the workshop is \$30

Space in workshop is limited

Please bring a hand drill to the workshop

(Corded is better than cordless. If bringing cordless, bring extra charged batteries) Some extra drills will be available
Drill bits will be provided

For more information, contact:

Kelsey Hatesohl
khatesohl@ksu.edu
785-325-2121
or
Pam Paulsen
ppaulsen@ksu.edu
620-662-2371

Return with \$30 payment to:

River Valley District
214 C Street, Washington, KS 66968



Mushroom Cultivation Workshop

Please return registration by April 18

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE street _____ EMAIL city _____ zip code _____

EVALUATING HEIFERS BEFORE BREEDING

Walk through the halls of a high school and it is easy to see that not all kids develop at the same pace – some look like mature adults while others appear younger than their age. Similarly, individual animals in a cattle herd also reach maturity at different times, say the experts at Kansas State University’s Beef Cattle Institute. Speaking on a recent [Cattle Chat](#) podcast, the experts addressed factors that influence the pace at which heifers reach their maturity.

“Most heifers reach puberty at 12-13 months of age; there are some Brahman-influenced breeds that are a little older when they begin cycling,” said K-State veterinarian Bob Larson. To help producers identify the heifers that are most likely to get bred early in the breeding season, Larson advises that producers complete a pre-breeding evaluation of the heifers. The two things that drive maturity are their age and their body weight.

When Larson conducts the pre-breeding evaluation, he assesses their reproductive tract. “As they get closer to puberty, their reproductive tract starts to feel more like an adult tract with a thicker, larger uterus and some follicle structures on the ovaries,” Larson said. He said there are two main times these evaluations are done.

“Six weeks before the breeding season, I can get an idea of the likelihood they’ll be cycling at breeding, and I still have time to help that along with nutrition. The other time is when we are getting ready for a synchronization protocol and I can separate the ones that are not likely to get bred,” Larson said. Another factor affecting development is the amount of body fat heifers are carrying, which can be controlled by the heifer’s diet. The experts agree that the easiest way to measure that is through weighing the heifers.

“As heifers grow, they start to deposit more fat in each pound of gain and less muscle. When they get to about 60-65% of their mature weight, the hormones will signal to the body that it is time to ovulate,” said K-State beef cattle nutritionist Philip Lancaster. If these are retained heifers, Larson said, often producers will know a target weight that their females in the herd start to cycle. While it varies among herds, for many he said that is about 850 pounds.

Six weeks before breeding, Lancaster said producers can evaluate the heifer’s body condition and adjust accordingly. “We can safely increase their nutrition to get more energy in their diet to push them to gain 2-2.5 pounds per day. As long as we start 70-90 days before the breeding season, many of those heifers will reach puberty on time,” Lancaster said.

To hear the full discussion, listen to [Cattle Chat](#) on your preferred streaming platform.

MINERAL SUPPLEMENT SELECTION FOR THE COW HERD

Beef cattle require several dietary mineral elements for normal maintenance, growth, and reproduction. Minerals that are required in relatively large amounts are called macro minerals. Those needed in small amounts are classified as micro or trace minerals. However, these terms have no relationship to the metabolic importance of a mineral in the diet. A trace mineral can be as essential to the health and performance of an animal as a macro mineral. The macro minerals include calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sodium, chlorine, and sulfur. Among those needed in trace amounts are iron, zinc, manganese, copper, iodine, cobalt, and selenium.

Although, the upcoming grazing season may be hard to picture at this point, it’s not too early to begin preparing. Among those preparations is selecting a mineral supplement, especially for those operations that are looking to take advantage of “early booking” discounts for mineral orders. It can be challenging to select a mineral program, as there are many different products and mineral formulations currently available. When evaluating mineral supplements, the phosphorous concentration may be used as a basic guide to determine if the mineral fits the production stage of the herd and forage base. Phosphorous is one of the most common mineral deficiencies in grazing systems around the world and is one of the primary reasons we provide mineral supplements to grazing beef cattle. Forage phosphorous concentrations vary and are typically greatest during the spring and lowest in the winter.

In Kansas, the phosphorous content of native range during the grazing season is typically between 0.15 and 0.20%. Thus, the maintenance requirements of lactating cow (20 lbs. milk/d) could be met by a mineral with at least 8% phosphorous. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Concordia office, 785-243-8185 or khildebrand@ksu.edu.

RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT FAIR DATES

Don’t forget to put the 2024 River Valley District Fair dates on your calendar!

Cloud County	July 16-21 2024
Washington County	July 16-21, 2024
Clay County	July 23-28, 2024
Republic County	July 29-August 3, 2024

ELEVATED WHEAT STREAK MOSAIC VIRUS RISK FOR 2024 CROP

For the past several years, there has not been much positive to say about Kansas winter wheat production, especially in the central corridor of the state. Kansas' midsection has endured three consecutive years of overwinter drought, accompanied by poor subsoil moisture at establishment and adverse conditions at heading and grain filling. However, one bright spot to the parched circumstances of our state's flagship crop has been minimal disease pressure.

Compared to the past few years, 2024's winter wheat crop has shown strong potential to be a turn for the better, and recent snows and rains have aided that. However, the conditions observed throughout the state in wheat's growing season thus far bode ominous indications of potential disease stress due to wheat streak mosaic.

The wheat streak mosaic virus is vectored by the wheat curl mite, and several factors are present in wheat this year that may contribute to accelerated curl mite reproduction. North-central Kansas experienced an autumn 3 – 4 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than the climatological average, and warmer temperatures persisted up until the turn of the calendar year. The winter thus far in the region has also brought 1.5 – 2 inches of (liquid equivalent) precipitation above average, providing suitable time and conditions for curl mite populations to distribute the virus into wheat fields across the state.

Furthermore, fields in three counties (Russell, Ellis, Barton), have already had confirmed cases of wheat streak mosaic this year. The last time Kansas recorded as many cases of wheat streak mosaic this early in the year was in 2017, which was a particularly bad year for the virus. By season's end in 2017, 361 cases of wheat streak mosaic were detected in 52 counties, resulting in a statewide yield loss of 5.6%. By comparison, there were only 38 detections in 13 counties in 2023, nearly tenfold fewer than in 2017.

Of course, an analogue year of data does not necessarily confirm that wheat streak mosaic is guaranteed to run rampant this year. However, it is important to keep the risks in mind as we approach winter wheat's impending emergence from dormancy. If you have questions about wheat streak mosaic or managing for other diseases in your row cropping systems, please reach out to Luke Byers, River Valley Extension District Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent, at 785-632-5335, or by email at lsbyers@ksu.edu.

PLANTING TOMATOES TOO EARLY

Spring might feel like it's here, but when planting your garden, you need to be sure the soil has warmed up enough to plant. Gardeners often try to get a jump on the season by planting tomatoes as early as possible. Though this can be successful at times, there are certain precautions that should be taken.

The first precaution that should be taken is checking to make sure the soil is at an adequate temperature. Tomato roots do not do well until soil temperatures reach a consistent 55°F. Use a soil thermometer to check the temperature at 2 inches deep during the late morning to get a good average temperature for the day. This should be done for three or four days to get an average temperature for the week. To warm your soil up quicker try putting down black plastic mulch. This plastic mulch should warm up your soil enough for you to get that early jump on planting your tomatoes.

The second precaution that should be taken is to harden off plants that you are transplanting into your garden. Plants moved directly from a warm, moist greenhouse to the more exposed and cooler conditions outside may undergo transplant shock. Transplant shock causes plants to stop growing until they are acclimated to the weather. Plants can be acclimated to outside conditions by placing them outdoors in a location protected from wind and full sunlight for a few days before transplanting. The best conditions for transplanting is an overcast, windless day; well as close to a windless day as we can get in Kansas.

The third precaution that should be taken is to protect your tomatoes from frost. Tomatoes cannot tolerate frost. Watch the weather and cover the plants if frost is predicted. A floating row cover or light sheets can be used for protection. A floating row cover can be left on the plants for two to three weeks to increase the rate of growth and establishment of your tomato plants.

Here are a few other tips for getting your tomato plants off to a fast start. Use smaller stockier plants rather than tall spindly ones. The smaller plants tend to form roots and become established faster than the tall overgrown plants. Don't mulch your plants as soon as you plant them; give them time to start growing well, then mulch. By mulching too early, it will prevent the soil from warming up, and slowing down the growth of the tomato plants. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.

River Valley District Offices will be Closed on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 for Staff Training

PROPER TIMING FOR CRABGRASS PREVENTERS

As the weather starts to warm up, it is time to think about preparing your lawn for the summer months. Did you have a problem with crabgrass last year? If so, it's time to put down a crabgrass preventer. Crabgrass preventer is another name for preemergence herbicides that prevent crabgrass seeds from developing into mature plants. Preemergence herbicides do not kill the weed seed. However, they do kill the young plant after it germinates. Therefore, they do not prevent germination but prevent the plant from emerging. Crabgrass preventers are just that-preventers. With a few exceptions, they have no effect on existing crabgrass plants. Therefore, preventers must be applied before germination.

Additionally, preventers do not last forever once they are applied. Microorganisms and natural processes begin to gradually break down the herbicide soon after it is applied. If some products are applied too early, they may have lost their strength by the time they are needed. Most crabgrass preventers are ineffective after about 60 days, but there is considerable variation among products.

For most of Kansas, crabgrass typically begins to germinate around May 1 or a little later depending on the spring weather patterns. April 15 is normally a good target date for applying preventer because it gives active ingredients time to disperse in the soil before crabgrass germination starts. An even better way to tell when it's time to apply your preventer is with the bloom of ornamental plants. The Eastern Redbud tree is a good choice for this purpose. When the trees in your area approach full bloom, apply crabgrass preventer. Depending on what chemical you decide to put down you may have to do a follow-up application. Products that do require a follow-up application about 8 weeks later include Pendimethalin (Scotts Halts) and Team (Hi-Yield Crabgrass Control). If you are using Dimension or Barricade, a follow-up will not be needed.

Dimension and Barricade are the only two products that give season-long control of crabgrass from a single application. In fact, they can be applied much earlier than April 15 and still have sufficient residual strength to last the season. Barricade can even be applied in the fall for crabgrass control the next season.

Dimension can be applied as early as March 1. Because of the added flexibility in timing, these products are favorites of lawn care companies who have many customers to service in the spring. Though Dimension is usually not applied as early as Barricade, it is the best choice if it must be applied later than recommended. It is the exception to the rule that preemergence herbicides do not kill existing weeds. Dimension can kill crabgrass as long as it is young (two-to-three-leaf stage). Dimension is also the best choice if treating a lawn that was planted late last fall. Normally a preemergence herbicide is not recommended unless the lawn has been mowed two to four times, but Dimension is kind to young

tall fescue, perennial ryegrass, and Kentucky bluegrass seedlings. However, read the label of the specific product you wish to use to ensure you are applying it correctly.

Products containing Dimension and Barricade may use the common name rather than the trade name. The common chemical name for Dimension is dithiopyr and for Barricade is prodiamine. Remember, when using any pesticide, read the label and follow instructions carefully. It is recommended to apply crabgrass preventers before fertilizer so that the grass isn't encouraged to put on too much growth too early.

HENBIT AND CHICKWEED IN LAWNS

Do you have little purple flowers popping up in your lawn? What about little white flowers? The little purple flowers are a weed called henbit, and the white flowers are a weed called chickweed. The easiest way to tell the difference between the two plants is to look at the stems. If the stem is square rather than round it is henbit.

Both these plants are winter annuals that start to grow in the fall. They spend the winter as small plants and go mostly unnoticed until they start to flower in the spring. Since they are winter annuals, once they flower, they are at the end of their life cycle. Trying to use chemicals to kill either one at this late stage is an ineffective control measure. Since henbit and chickweed are both winter annuals, they will die out as soon as the weather turns hot. The best thing to do is keep the lawn mowed and wait for mother nature to warm things up.

If you are wanting to use herbicides to control these winter annuals, fall is the best time to apply chemicals. Henbit and chickweed are relatively easy to kill in the fall and that is the best time to treat for dandelions as well! Dandelions produce new growth/plants in the fall and herbicides will be translocated to the roots and will kill the plant from the roots up. You can either use a preemergence herbicide or a postemergence herbicide to control fall growing weeds.

There are two different options you can go. The first option would be to apply a preemergence herbicide in early to mid-September. This will prevent henbit, chickweed, and other winter annuals from germinating. Preemergence herbicides labeled for both henbit and chickweed include prodiamine (Barricade), dithiopyr (Dimension), isoxaben (Gallery), pendimethalin (Halts and others). The second option is to wait until late October or early November (after most henbit has germinated) and use a postemergence broadleaf herbicide like 2,4-D, Weed-B-Gon, Weed Free Zone, or Trimec. When using herbicides, most of the henbit and chickweed will be killed, but small amounts will continue to germinate through the late fall and winter, as some plants will be missed. As with all weed control, the best control is a dense, healthy lawn. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact Kelsey in the in the Washington office, 785-325-2121.

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PERMIT NO. 3****Address Service Requested****RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT****“2024 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Mar.31-May 25		Walk Kansas 2024	Statewide Program
Apr. 2		RVED Offices Closed for Staff Training	
Apr. 3	12:15pm	Cut the Clutter & Get Organized	Concordia– Chamber Office, 207 West 6th Street
Apr. 4	1:45pm	Who Gets Grandma’s Yellow Pie Plate?	Belleville– Belleville Public Library,1327 19th Street
Apr. 6	7-10am	Washington County Health Fair	Hanover– Community Building, Fairgrounds
Apr. 8	6pm	A Caregiver’s Guide to Finances	Clay Center-Extension Meeting Room, 322 Grant St.
Apr. 8-12	Noon	America Saves Week	Daily posts @ https://www.facebook.com/RVED4
Apr.15-June 5	10-11am	Stay Strong Stay Healthy	Washington– Good Shepherd Church, 200 West 4th St.
Apr. 18	12:15pm	Cut the Clutter & Get Organized	Washington– FNB Basement, 101 C Street
Apr. 20	10am –Noon	Mushroom Cultivation Workshop	Clay Center– 4-H Conference Center, Fairgrounds
Apr.25	5:30pm	Medicare Basics	Belleville– Belleville Public Library, 1327 19th Street
Apr. 27	8-4:30pm	Safe Tractor & Machinery Operation Training	Washington– Bruna Implement, 1613 Quivira Road
Apr. 29	5:30pm	Medicare Basics	Clay Center– Extension Office Meeting Rm., 322 Grant Ave.
May 8-June 12	6-7pm	MED Instead of MEDS	Wakefield– Library, 205 3rd Street