



# River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

[rivervalley.ksu.edu](http://rivervalley.ksu.edu)

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Extension District

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## BYERS NAMED NEW AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES EXTENSION AGENT

Hello, River Valley District! My name is Luke Byers and I am the new Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent for the River Valley District of K-State University Research and Extension. I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to serve this community and am extremely excited to get to know so many of you.

Kansas is my adoptive home, but I originally hail from right outside the small town of Newburg, Pennsylvania. While the town itself was small even by Kansas standards (Population: 331), the outskirts were far more heavily populated and the distances between towns much smaller. South-central Pennsylvania is the heart of the state's dairy region, and I was surrounded by agriculture from a very young age. My father was the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at a local school district, and our family had many neighbors and friends who owned and managed farms. Only two universities in Pennsylvania offered degrees in agricultural economics (economics is my second vocational passion), and both presented financial challenges, so my academic pursuits turned out-of-state. I wound up attending the University of Wyoming, over 1,500 miles away from home, and graduated in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business and Economics. Graduating during the beginning of the global coronavirus pandemic was difficult, but I believe it has also positioned me well to understand and weather various kinds of adversity.



I moved to Manhattan, Kansas in August 2020 to continue my education in agricultural economics at Kansas State University. Early in my first semester, I was fortunate enough to be recruited onto an innovative research project in the department researching the relationships between midwestern row crop farmers and their farm equipment credit suppliers. I even had an opportunity to work with the Kansas Farm Management Association of K-State to help them study and interpret loan data from around the state. Some of the most important work that I have done has been in helping myself and others understand the agronomic and financial circumstances of farmers and discover opportunities to serve them. Undoubtedly, the most valuable experiences I have had in my work have been through interacting with Kansas farmers and listening to their stories.

I also was blessed to meet my future wife by moving to Kansas. My fiancé is a farmer's daughter from Westmoreland, Kansas, born and raised. I suppose you could say she has been instrumental to naturalizing me into a true Kansan. We got engaged this past July and plan to be married in February. She is incredibly supportive of me, and I am sure that whatever success I find in this position will be greatly due to her support and encouragement.

There is no other place I would rather be in this season of my life than working here in the River Valley District of K-State Research and Extension. I am looking forward to the opportunity to work alongside the other agents and the members of this community to promote a vibrant and salubrious agricultural economy. I am located in the Clay Center office, so please feel free to stop by, or reach out to me by phone at (717) 491-5259 or by email at [lsbyers@ksu.edu](mailto:lsbyers@ksu.edu).

## NOVEMBER IS AMERICAN

### DIABETES MONTH

This is a time to get educated, find resources, and evaluate our risk.

Let us first learn more about what diabetes looks like at home.

The American Diabetes Association publishes diabetes statistics by state, these are the current diabetes statistics for Kansas:

Approximately 11.4% of the adult population has diagnosed diabetes.

An additional 66,000 people have diabetes, but do not know it yet.

Approximately 35.3% of the adult population has prediabetes.

An estimated 17,314 people are diagnosed with diabetes every year .

**Total direct medical expenses for diagnosed diabetes in Kansas were estimated at \$1.7 billion in 2017.**

**In addition, another \$693 million was spent on indirect costs from lost productivity due to diabetes.**

Though these are some scary statistics, know that receiving a diabetes diagnosis doesn't have to stop you and your family from living a healthy life. **You can live well with diabetes.**

When you're managing diabetes and prediabetes, **your eating plan is a powerful tool.**

"What can I eat?" is one of the top questions asked by people with diabetes when they are diagnosed. At the American Diabetes Association, a panel of scientists, doctors, endocrinologists, diabetes educators, and dietitians reviewed over 600 research articles over the course of five years to see what diets—or eating patterns—work well for people with diabetes. The results were published in the American Diabetes Association's Nutrition Consensus Report.

The main finding? **Everyone's body responds differently to different types of foods and diets, so there is no single "magic" diet for diabetes. You can follow a few simple guidelines to find out what works for you to help manage your blood sugar:**

- You have choices—lots. Many different eating patterns can help you manage your diabetes—from Mediterranean to low-carbohydrate to vegetarian. **Whatever you choose, be sure to include lots of non-starchy vegetables, minimize added sugars and refined grains, and choose whole, minimally processed foods.**
- Carbs are not one-size-fits-all. While there is growing evidence to show that low-carbohydrate eating patterns can benefit people with diabetes and prediabetes, **there is no one definition for "low carb."** For some, following an eating pattern lower in carbs (26–45% of total calories from carbohydrate) showed better blood sugars and a reduction in diabetes medications, among other benefits. **Work closely with your doctor and RDN if you choose a lower carb approach to minimize risks (such as hypoglycemia) and maximize success.**
- Weight loss works. **Losing modest amounts of weight (start with 5%) can improve your blood sugars and other diabetes outcomes in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.** There are lots of ways to lose weight, from changing your diet to getting more exercise, taking medications or even surgery. A focus on lifestyle changes is the preferred starting point, but it's important to be familiar with all valid options.
- Tweaking your food choices can help reduce risk factors for complications. **Food swaps are easy ways for people with diabetes to reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease and kidney disease. For example, consider replacing foods high in saturated fat, such as butter and fatty beef, with foods rich in unsaturated fats, like olive oil and fish.**

Source: <https://diabetes.org/healthy-living/recipes-nutrition>

*An upcoming Dining with Diabetes class will be held in Hanover at the Kloppenberg Center on Tuesday evenings in January 2023. The time will be from 5:30-7:30pm.*

Questions can be directed toward Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Agent. 785-243-8185. [kaitlinmoore@ksu.edu](mailto:kaitlinmoore@ksu.edu)



## 2023 MEDICARE PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS

Now is the time for Medicare beneficiaries to compare Part D Prescription Drug Plans. The open enrollment period for Medicare 2023 Part D Prescription Plans will continue only until December 7th. A limited number of appointments with a SHICK, Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas, Counselor are available. Appointments can be in person or via telephone. Contact your local River Valley Extension District Office about available appointments in your area.

### DATES AVAILABLE FOR SHICK APPOINTMENTS

<b>November</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
	1. Clay Center Concordia Washington	2. Belleville Clay Center	3. Clay Center Concordia	4. Clay Center
7. Washington	8. Concordia Washington	9. Belleville	10. Clay Center Concordia	11. OFFICE CLOSED
14. Washington	15. Clay Center Concordia Washington	16. Belleville	17. Clay Center Concordia	18. Clay Center
21. Washington	22. Clay Center Concordia Washington	23. Belleville	24. OFFICE CLOSED THANKSGIVING	25. OFFICE CLOSED THANKSGIVING
28. Washington	29. Clay Center Concordia Washington	30. Belleville		
<b>December</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
			1. Clay Center Concordia	2. Clay Center
5. Washington	6. Clay Center Concordia	7. Belleville		

## 2023 MEDICARE PART D PLANS

There are 23 Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans available for 2023 in Kansas. Plan Premiums range from \$2.80 - \$112.60 in 2023. There are two new Prescription Drug Plans in 2023 and one Prescription Drug Plan which is discontinuing coverage. All members of the discontinuing plan will be automatically moved to a different Part D Prescription Drug Plan.

### Discontinued/Non-Renewing Plans

**Cigna Essential Rx (PDP) S5617-303**

### New 2023 Plans

**Cigna Save Rx (PDP) S5617-374**

**Mutual of Omaha Rx (PDP) S7126-126**

\* Reference to any specific commercial products, process, service, manufacturer, or company does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation.

# 2022 CENTRAL KANSAS BEEF SUMMIT

Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 a.m. in Salina, KS



HEAR FROM INDUSTRY SPECIALISTS AND ASK OUR CRISIS MANAGEMENT PANEL QUESTIONS!

## Program Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Registrations / Coffee & Donuts
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductions
- 9:10 a.m. **Weather Summary and Outlook- Chip Redmond, Kansas Mesonet**
- 9:40 a.m. **Managing Pasture & Grasslands Through Drought - Doug Spencer, NRCS**
- 10:30am **Market Outlook & Update – Dr. Glynn Tonsor, KSU**
- 11:00 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:10 a.m. Breakout Sessions
1. **Introduction of the Office of Farm and Ranch Transition- Ashlee Westerhold, KSU**
2. **Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) & Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage (PRF) – Dr. Jennifer Ifft, KSU**
3. **Blue Green Algae – Dr. Joe Gerken, KSU**
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Break Out Sessions (Same as above)
- 2:10 p.m. **Crisis Management Panel**
- 2:50 p.m. Wrap Up

Scan the code with your phone camera to register!



### REGISTRATION

[https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_b8lp048Nb410aZ8](https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8lp048Nb410aZ8)

OR

Contact any local extension agent listed below.

### COST

Cost is \$10 if you register by November 22nd.  
Late registration at the door will be \$15.

### LOCATION

Saline County Livestock & Expo Center - 4H Building - 900 Greeley Ave, Salina, KS

Central Kansas: Justine Henderson (785) 392-2147

Post Rock: Blaire Todd (785) 738-3597

Phillips-Rooks: Rachael Brooke (785) 425-6851

River Valley: Kaitlyn Hildebrand (785) 243-8185

Cottonwood: Alicia Boor (620) 793-1910

Midway: Clinton Laffin (785) 483-3157

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Justine Henderson (785) 392-2147.  
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service  
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## DROUGHT AND THE IMPACT ON FALL CALVING HERDS

Dying trees, brown grass, and cracked lawns are all visible signs of a lack of rainfall. Along with the landscape disadvantages, a lack of rainfall is detrimental to establishing crops and growing pasture grass, which can lead to negative consequences for the beef cattle that graze those fields and pastures. This will have a major effect on fall calving herds compared to spring-calving cows. In a drought, the fall-calving herds can be at a real disadvantage as they will require more inputs to maintain than normal. What is normally considered an advantage to fall-calving cows because of the ability to come off summer grazing months with a very good body condition score of 6 or better. Are now looking at a body condition score of 5 or less because the summer pastures dried up sooner than a typical year due to lack of rain.

Fall-calving cows normally had the ability to lose some condition over the fall and winter months without it being detrimental to reproductive performance and will be able to regain lost condition inexpensively on pasture next summer. During a drought that is not the case as cows are at their highest nutritional demands due to lactation requirements from the nursing calf. Grazing crop residue or winter annual forages alone will not meet the nutrient requirements of a lactating cow needing to add body condition. The key to maintaining an acceptable body condition score is by supplementing with high energy and protein feedstuffs. However, this is going to provide an increase in expenses as high energy and protein feed types are not cheap to supply based on the tonnage needed.

Producers should take and analyze forage samples so the amount of nutrients available, not just pounds of hay or silage, are known. Specific diets should be developed for each class of cattle on the operation. Seek help from nutritionists and extension staff to help develop diets for cattle. Plan on feeding a considerable amount of supplement to fall-calving cows during fall and winter in drought years. Conventional feedstuffs are likely to be expensive as demand is high and supply may be low. Look for alternative feeds such as failed crops, spent grains from local breweries, fruit and vegetable waste from local supermarkets, etc. Try to source alternative feedstuffs locally to cut down on costs. Any untapped waste stream that provides rumen-digestible, safe feedstuff that is less expensive per unit of energy (TDN) will be advantageous during drought.

Some management practices to consider during a drought. Fall-calving cows should be body condition scored before or at calving and feeding strategies should be developed based on BCS and available feeds. This year, consider alternatives to normal replacement-heifer development. It may be better

to sell all heifer calves this year and source bred replacement heifers as needed. Alternatively, development of replacement heifers could be outsourced to producers in the Midwest and East. Look into relocating the herd to an area of the country that has more readily available grass and feedstuffs, but consider that costs come with that choice. Another option is to reduce the herd size by selling some of the cows. As painful as it is to say, reducing the number of mouths to feed will help extend your feed resources.

Getting through the drought will require new management strategies and creative thinking. The earlier decisions are made, the more options will be available. Ranchers are encouraged to seek consultation on cattle diets and marketing decisions. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me in the Concordia office, 785-243-8185 or [khildebrand@ksu.edu](mailto:khildebrand@ksu.edu).

## 2022 KSU SWINE DAY

Make plans now to attend the 2022 KSU Swine Day. The 2022 KSU Swine Day will be hosted Thursday, November 17, at the KSU Alumni Center. The schedule for the day includes:

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Trade Show

9:15 a.m. Welcome

*Dr. Mike Day, Department Head, Animal Sciences, and Industry*

9:30 a.m. Latest Update on K-State Applied Swine Nutrition Research: 15-minute rotation including topics on Swine Nutrition, Management, Feed Processing, and Feed Safety

*K-State Swine Faculty*

11:30 a.m. Lunch with Trade Show

1:30 p.m. Latest Update on K-State Applied Swine Nutrition Research (continued)

2:30 p.m. A Look Back While Preparing for the Future of our Industry

*Dr. Steve Pollmann, DSP Consulting LLC*

3:15 p.m. Question and Answer Session

3:30 p.m. Reception with K-State Ice Cream

**Pre-registration fee is \$25 per participant by November 10, with registration at the door \$50 per participant.** There is no charge for any students if they are pre-registered. The complete schedule and online registration information can be found at [www.KSUswine.org](http://www.KSUswine.org). For more information, contact Lois Schreiner at [lschrein@ksu.edu](mailto:lschrein@ksu.edu) or 785-532-1267

## **FREE MEDICATION DISPOSAL**

### **BAGS AVAILABLE**

With the upcoming holidays, don't be the drug dealer for your visiting family and friends. Over 115 Americans die daily from an opioid overdose. With the opioid epidemic growing, properly disposing of unused and expired medications is important.

All four offices in the River Valley Extension District have medication disposal bags available for free to the public. They can hold 15 pills, 2 ounces of liquid, or 2 patches. The disposal is as easy as 1 – 2 – 3.

1. Open the pouch and place unused medication inside.
2. Fill the pouch halfway with warm water and wait 30 seconds.
3. Seal the pouch tightly, gently shake, and dispose of the pouch in the trash.

Help stop the opioid epidemic and dispose of your unused and expired medications today. Stop by a River Valley Extension District office to start cleaning out your medicine cabinet.

For more information on the opioid epidemic and medication disposal bags, please visit our website at <https://www.rivervalley.k-state.edu/foods-health-nutrition/health.html> or call your local River Valley Extension Office.

## **FALL YARD CLEAN UP**

It's that time of year again when leaves are falling from deciduous trees. Now is a good time to stop and think about options for handling the leaf litter. Although a scattering of leaves won't harm the lawn, the excessive cover of leaves for an extended period will prevent sunlight from reaching the turfgrass causing the grass to be unable to make the carbohydrates needed to survive the winter.

There are other options for dealing with the fallen leaves rather than bagging them up and putting them out for the trash collector. The first option is composting. Composting is a great way to handle the refuse. The compost can then be added to your vegetable garden and/or flowerbeds, to increase the amount of organic material in your soil.

Another option is to mow the leaves with a mulching mower and let shredded leaves filter into the turf canopy. (A side-discharge mower also will work, but it won't shred the leaves as thoroughly). This method will be most effective if you do it often enough that leaf litter doesn't become too thick. Be sure to mow while you can still see grass peeking through the leaves.

While you are working to keep the leaves from piling up on your turf, you can also decide what needs to be cleaned-up in your flowerbeds.

Fall is traditionally a time for cleaning up flowerbeds. Normally, we recommend cutting down dead stems to help control insect and disease problems. With herbaceous perennials that have been pest free, you might want to consider leaving some to provide winter interest to your garden. For example, ornamental grasses can be attractive even during the winter months. Those near structures like your house, or sheds should be cut to the ground because when they get dry they could be a fire hazard. Perennials with evergreen or semi-evergreen foliage can provide color and structure.

Foliage can be left for a few other reasons as well. For instance, foliage left on semi-hardy plants will act as mulch to protect from harsh winter winds and help to ensure overwintering of the plant's crowns. Another reason to leave some foliage in your beds is because of wildlife. Birds will eat seeds from the perennials, and others will use the plants as shelter.

This fall take the time to look around your yard and see what you can do to prepare your landscape for the winter months. 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](mailto:khatesohl@ksu.edu).

## **RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED**

**November 11th for Veterans Day**

**November 24th & 25th for Thanksgiving**

## WINTERIZING ROSES

Now that the temperatures have been getting colder, it's time to think about preparing your landscape for the winter months. Most shrub roses are hardy to our Kansas winters, but a few types of roses could have problems adjusting to our winters. For example, the hybrid tea roses have certain species in their ancestry that originated in the warm climate of southern China. These roses need protection to survive Kansas winters. One way to help protect your roses is by mounding the soil about eight to ten inches high around each plant. When using soil, bring it in from another location. You do not want to pull from a part that has disease problems. Do not pull it from in-between plants because this can damage the roots or make them more susceptible to the cold.

Mounding is normally done by Thanksgiving. After the ground has frozen, add a 4-inch layer of mulch. The mulch can be made up of straw, leaves or hay for further protection. A small amount of soil may be spread on top of the mulch to keep it in place. Do not add the mulch before the ground freezes or mice may invade and feed on the roses over the winter. The purpose of these coverings is not only to moderate the cold, but also to prevent warm days during the winter or early spring from stimulating growth that is tender to returning cold weather.



If your roses have excessively tall canes they can be pruned to a height of 36 inches or tied together to prevent them from being whipped by strong winter winds. Wind can cause major damage to the crown of the plant by loosening the surrounding soil. Next spring, remove coverings from the crown before new growth starts. Wait until after the ground thaws, as the temperatures are more consistent. If you remove the coverings too soon the tops may begin growing before the roots can provide water to the new growth. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or [khatesohl@ksu.edu](mailto:khatesohl@ksu.edu).

## TUCKING YOUR LAWNMOWER IN FOR THE WINTER

If you are done mowing for the year, be sure to service your mower before putting it away for the winter. Make sure you drain the gas tank of gasoline-powered engines or use a gasoline stabilizer. Untreated gasoline can become thick and gummy. If your equipment has a battery, you will want to clean the battery terminals. They sometimes corrode throughout the season; a wire-bristle brush is a good tool for this. The battery can then be removed or connected to a battery maintainer to keep it charged over the winter. Be sure to keep the battery in a protected location for the winter (a cool basement works best).

Now is also a great time to sharpen the mower blades so they'll be ready for next spring. Sharpening rotary mower blades is fairly straightforward but the following steps will guide you through the process.

1. Check the blade for major damage. If you can't fix it, the blade will need to be replaced.
2. Remove grass and debris from the blade with a moist cloth. Be sure to dry the blade before sharpening the cutting edge.
3. Remove nicks from the cutting edge by using a grinding wheel or hand-file.
4. If using a grinding wheel, match the existing edge angle to the wheel.
5. Grind or file until the edge is 1/32 inch. Sharpening the blade to a razors edge may result in the edge folding over during the next season causing a poor cut.
6. When using a grinding wheel, avoid overheating the blade as this might warp it.
7. Clean the blade with solvent or oil for optimum winter storage. Don't use water because it will promote rust.

Following these tips this winter will keep your mower in great shape and save you time next spring. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or [khatesohl@ksu.edu](mailto:khatesohl@ksu.edu).

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<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Oct.15-Dec.7		Medicare Part D Open Enrollment	RVED– Call for Appointment
Nov. 11		RVED Offices Closed for Veterans Day	
Nov. 17	8-4pm	2022 KSU Swine Day	Manhattan- KSU Alumni Center, 1720 Anderson Ave.
Nov. 29	8:30-3pm	2022 Central Kansas Beef Summit	Salina- 4-H Building, 900 Greeley Avenue
Nov. 24 & 25		RVED Offices Closed for Thanksgiving	
Dec. 13	8:30-3pm	Farm and Ranch Transition Conference	Colby- City Limits Convention Center, 2227 S. Range
Dec. 14	8:30-3pm	Farm and Ranch Transition Conference	Salina– Tony’s Pizza Event Center, 800 The Midway
Dec. 15	8:30-3pm	Farm and Ranch Transition Conference	Erie– Neosha Valley Event Center, 321 N Wood
Dec.26		RVED Offices Closed for Christmas	
Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31	5:30-7:30pm	Dining With Diabetes	Hanover– Kloppenberg Senior Center, 512 East North Street