

OUR IMPACT

K-State Research & Extension provides research-based information to help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future.

Extension Education — A Timeline of Seasons and Purpose

Dr. Tim Cross, Chancellor at the University of Tennessee, Institute of Agriculture, was the 2018 recipient of the Epsilon Sigma Phi Ruby Award. The award is the organization's highest honor. His Ruby lecture had meaning for our work.

Dr. Cross used the lyrics from the Pete Seeger song, Turn, Turn, Turn to share a timeline of our nation's events and the role Extension played. You can hear his lecture at <https://epsilonsigmaphi.wildapricot.org/>. Allow me to share some highlights:

**To everything (turn, turn, turn),
There is a season (turn, turn, turn),
And a time to every purpose under heaven.**

A time to plant, and a time to reap. When the Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914 our country was transforming. The challenge was to feed and clothe our population. We needed to increase crop yields and livestock production. 4-H was established to increase our reach to more farms and farm families across the nation. Extension education was at the right place at the right time.

A time of war, A time of peace. World War I was our first opportunity to respond to a national crisis. Extension agents supported the need for more food. They assisted people to grow Victory gardens, taught youth to raise chickens and eggs. Following the war, Extension assisted with community development projects.



\$50 Million
Value of livestock and crops sold
each year from Shawnee County

27
New jobs created with Shawnee
StartUps matching loans

12
4-H Clubs in Shawnee County

180
Extension Master Gardeners

46%
of EFNEP graduates are making
changes to be more active

\$92,000
saved by comparing drug plans

A time to build up and a time to break down. The Great Depression brought challenges to “build up.” Our nation’s capacity to produce food crops and livestock was broken down along with the economy. Extension educated farmers to build up the soil by planting soil conserving crops during the dust bowl. Families were taught to better manage their money, deal with bankruptcy and supplement their farm income. Postwar, 4-H grew and created competitive events. It was a season of gaining 4-H members and volunteers. These experiences built skills of leadership, citizenship and service.

After years of programming to meet our county’s food needs, new challenges emerged. Extension responded to the call to improve diets and reduce obesity through nutrition education programs. Programs now focus on how to make healthy food choices and manage limited financial resources.

What season is next? Our grand challenges will likely take shape in the growing population and food demand, or the rural-urban divide in per capita income, health status, and access to technology. Extension must continue to grow and evolve. Addressing new grand challenges may likely require investments in new programs and new delivery methods. We must continue to demonstrate that we are indispensable to those we serve. Our greatest strength is our passion to help others. The best way to predict the future is to create it. We need to continue in our role *to be the access to the university for the people.*

The last line of the song includes words of hope and optimism. Let’s turn our attention to the season ahead as we devote our efforts to feeding the world, improving our health and well-being, developing our youth and growing our communities.

Education Helps Medicare Beneficiaries Spend Health Care Dollars Wisely

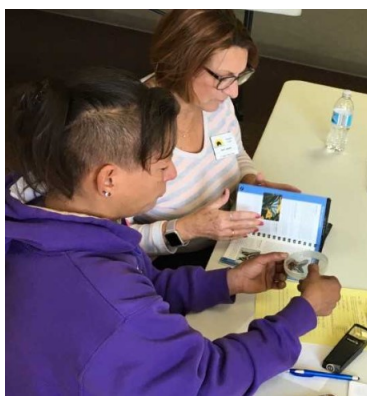
When it comes to Medicare, beneficiaries often have many questions but limited resources to obtain objective information. FCS Agent, Susan Fangman is a certified SHICK (Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas) Counselor and offers New to Medicare counseling as well as counseling during Medicare Part D Open Enrollment. At this time the need for counseling during Open Enrollment in Shawnee County is greater than what can be supplied.



During the past Open Enrollment period the Shawnee County Extension office counseled 205 individuals, helping 96 people change plans for a savings of over \$92,000. Not only does this service help residents save money, it provides peace of mind. Because of her training, Susan is able to educate beneficiaries about the many aspects of prescription drug plans giving them the information they need to make the best choice for their situation.

Training Builds Confidence for New Extension Master Gardeners

The Shawnee County Extension Master Gardener Response Line is a public resource that allows patrons to call, e-mail or come in with their lawn and gardening questions. Our volunteers are trained specifically to answer these questions as a service to the Extension Office where a large volume of these calls are received each year. In 2018, SCEMG members answered nearly 749 Response Line questions.



Volunteers were trained specifically on using our paper resources (books and publications), using online resources (KSRE's Common Plant Problems page), using a tree dichotomous key, and on insect identification. Volunteers partnered to work through common and uncommon Response Line questions. *Prior to training, 68% of volunteers indicated that they were either "Not so confident" or "Not at all confident" about working the Response Line. After training, 100% of volunteers responded to being either "Somewhat confident" 68%, "Very confident (25%) or "Extremely confident (6%).*



Sick Plant Clinic Brings K-State Expertise to Local Clients

In 2018, 76 residents visited the Sick Plant Clinic to get answers to their tree, weed, lawn and garden questions. K-State Specialists, local experts and Shawnee County Extension Master Gardeners answered numerous questions on insects, trees, diseases, environmental stress, lawn, flowers, indoor plants and weeds. Due to the extreme heat, many problems were the results of environmental stress and insects.

Extension Education: Reliable Information to Increase Ag Profitability

Agriculture is important to the economy at the local, state and national levels. Extension educational programs reached 300 farmers and ranchers this year to help them make their businesses more profitable while providing consumers with a safe and affordable food product. 100% ranked the classes highly and reported improvement in knowledge.

- ◆ The KSU Kaw Valley Research Farm runs 30-35 test plots annually as a basis of recommendations for the best farming methods, fertilizer choices, herbicide and pesticide selections, and what crop varieties are the most productive.
- ◆ The annual Farm Show provides educational classes by Extension agents on livestock, crops, water quality, disease and insect control, transferring the farm to the next generation and more.
- ◆ Extension works with partners to identify threats to our food supply. Pictured at the right is John Welborn, Noxious Weed Director for Shawnee County, speaking to a group of farmers and ranchers on the threat of Old World Bluestem. John shared how to identify and eradicate the weed.
- ◆ Shawnee County has 826 registered farms and ranches with over \$50 million dollars of livestock and crops sold each year. Agriculture, food and food processing sectors have a total direct output of \$2.73 billion, or roughly 28.41% of the economy, supporting 8,981 jobs or 7.63% of the entire workforce in the county.



Camp Friendships Last

Each year Shawnee County 4-H'ers camp with 4-H'ers from seven other counties. They are all mixed in their housing assignments, so they can meet youth from other parts of the state. It is important for youth to learn how to live with new people for the week of camp, and sometimes long-lasting friendships are formed.

In September, the Rossville Football team played Southeast of Saline for their homecoming game. The visiting school had to travel two hours for the game. The older members of the Rossville Rustlers 4-H club knew many of the players and cheerleaders from Southeast of Saline because of 4-H camp. It was going to be a night for football, but also a night to see camp friends.

The club realized that when the game was over only one convenience store would be open when the opposing team would be making a long trip home. So, the Rossville Rustlers 4-H club created a service project titled the "Stay Awake Station." This station was for the opposing fans, players and coaches to get a snack, some coffee, pop or water before getting in their cars to head home. The Rossville athletic director contacted the Southeast of Saline athletic director to spread the word for after the game. The younger club members took flyers to the opposing crowd during the 3rd quarter so the fans knew they could get coffee before they headed home.

At a football game where competitiveness can be the theme, I applaud the relationships made at camp for leaving the game on the field and taking care of friends before a long drive home. Thank you, Rossville Rustlers, for making your community service project about serving another community!



Eating Smart, Moving More

Nutritious meals and physical activity have lifelong health benefits for everyone, but they are often a challenge for many low-income families. Working multiple jobs, lack of transportation, and inadequate childcare are barriers that prevent families from cooking and eating at home and being active. Instead resorting to convenience and fast food is the default choice when feeding a hungry family. The Shawnee County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps clients navigate around these barriers to healthy lifestyle behaviors by providing classes on healthy eating on a budget, feeding kids, food safety and physical activity.



A total of 213 families including 111 pregnant women, were enrolled this year in EFNEP, reaching 752 family members. Graduating families totaled 161.

Graduates saved a total of \$5,849 on food purchases; 46% reported planning meals more often before shopping; 44% reported eating vegetables more often each day; 39% reported cooking dinner at home more times a week, and 46% reported changes to increase their activity level. We are pleased that 31% improved having enough food for their families.

Pictured are Nutrition Assistants Margarita Munoz and Janice Jones.

Education Trains the Next Generation of Agriculture Producers and Consumers

Shawnee County Extension staff train and certify youth each year to work on farms and ranches and to raise livestock and crops. At Tractor Safety training youth learn to safely drive tractors, ATV's, and Skid Loaders. Through the workshop Youth for the Quality Care of Animals, youth learn to work with chemicals, livestock and grain bins to support animal well-being. In preparation for livestock and crop shows, Leroy Russell, Agriculture Agent, works with the youth to have the most efficient gains on their livestock and at the same time produce a quality, nutritious food product. We strive to make sure our next generation of farmers and ranchers will have a successful career as a Shawnee County Farmer and Rancher. Shawnee County youth have had no serious injuries or fatalities of youth certified at these trainings over the last 25 years.

Throughout the year educational programs teach our city youth where their food comes from and how farmers produce nutritious and affordable foods. Programs including 4-H in the Classroom. From Farm to You, the History and Environmental Fair, and the Water Festival reach over 9,000 youth annually.

Pictured is the 2018 tractor safety class.



Safe Food Preservation Techniques Evolve

While the practice of preserving food has existed for thousands of years, the methods have evolved to keep up with today's food safety issues. Recommendations to preserve food at home are based on science. Foods canned using unsafe procedures can lead to foodborne illness. One such illness is Botulism, a life-threatening disease caused by the ingestion of a potent neurotoxin, even a microscopic amount can cause illness or death.

K-State Research and Extension Shawnee County is a go-to resource for science-based food preservation education. Susan Fangman, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent answers many questions throughout the year regarding the safe preservation of food. The office has a large number of publications available on the topic, as well as timely information posted on the county website. Susan educates the public through presentations, classes, newsletter articles as well as Facebook posts. Another service the Extension Office offers is that they are able to test most Dial Gauge Pressure Canners free of charge, ensuring food gets canned at the correct pressure. This year approximately 20 people took advantage of this service.



A Demonstration Community Garden for All Spaces and All Abilities



So far, over 300 pounds of fresh produce from the Shawnee County SNAP-Ed/Extension Master Gardener demonstration community garden have been donated to community agencies serving low income Shawnee County residents. These agencies include I-Care Food pantry, Catholic Charities, Westside Baptist Church, Valeo Behavioral Health, East Topeka Senior Center and the Blessing Boxes located around the city of Topeka. Besides food donations, the produce was also used in food demonstrations during nutrition education classes.

The community garden is located next to the demonstration vegetable garden on the Kansas Expocentre grounds. The idea for this type of garden was conceived when the SNAP-Ed Garden to Plate program was launched and Extension Master Gardener community garden committee members wanted a teaching garden to assist with establishing more community gardens in Shawnee County.

In this first year, two sixty-foot rows were tilled, and the soil amended for the planting of tomatoes, peppers, sweet potatoes and pumpkins. The garden will continue to expand and will include container gardening and raised beds for people with disabilities. *(Photo used with permission from W. Atlee Burpee Company)*

4-H in the Library is Back!

After a two-year hiatus the Shawnee County Jr. Leaders decided to bring back 4-H in the Library. Shawnee County Jr. Leaders is a group of 4-H'ers in 8th to 12th grade from all Shawnee County 4-H Clubs. They have one countywide service project a year, and in 2018 they choose 4-H in the Library.



The first Saturday of every month the youth feature a 4-H project with a craft or game and pass out information about 4-H. It is a great partnership with Topeka Shawnee County Public Library. We add to their Saturday line up of youth programs, and our youth get a chance to promote their favorite 4-H projects. Our program draws between 20 to 40 youth every

session. While the youth are busy doing the activity, parents can ask questions about 4-H and learn about community clubs near them. The Jr. Leaders are doing a great job of promoting the 4-H program!



- ◇ Shawnee StartUps made three loans creating 13 full-time jobs and 21 part time jobs in our community.
- ◇ Six local businesses were sponsored to attend marketing training at Destination Bootcamp. One business owner credits the experience with increasing his sales by 27%.
- ◇ Three people attended FabLab Bootcamp to learn about the growing trend of Makerspaces.



Shawnee County K-State Research and Extension
www.shawnee.ksu.edu

K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. K-State Research and Extension is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants.

