

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

## Answering the Call to Address Grand Challenges in Communities



Seaman Knapp is considered to be the father of the Cooperative Extension Service, which was established by Congress with the Smith-Lever Act in 1914. His vision was to extend education to the masses and to feed the desire to create a better life through knowledge and personal empowerment. He believed successful individuals would be the underlying components of thriving communities. With building better lives and livelihoods as our mission, it is imperative that Extension educational programs change with the issues of the day.

The Extension system was *designed* to have grassroots input. We listen to the community by electing 24 members to local program advisory committees that guide educational efforts in Community Development, 4-H and Youth Development, Family & Consumer

*K-State Research and Extension is dedicated to a safe, sustainable, competitive food and fiber system, and to strong, healthy communities, families, and youth through integrated research, analysis and education.*

Sciences and Agriculture and Natural Resources. Since no entity can be everything to everyone, we structure our work around five grand challenges of Water, Global Food Systems, Health, Community Vitality and Developing Tomorrow's Leaders.

Our direct educational partner is Kansas State University, since research at land grant universities across the nation creates new knowledge for Extension educators to share. Our local partner is Shawnee County. We are grateful for the support we receive by county commissioners so we can work together to improve the quality of life and standard of living for Shawnee County residents.

The staff with K-State Research & Extension — Shawnee County is proud to serve our county and work as a team in direct education as well as facilitating the work of hundreds of volunteers who carry out our mission and greatly extend the impact of our programs.

Dr. Gregg Hadley, Director for K-State Research & Extension, recently said, "We all empower the people we serve through education. Is there a better calling in the world? I think not."

As we share the impacts of Shawnee County Extension education programs for 2019 in this publication, we thank our county commissioners, volunteers and agency partners who help us achieve our mission and build a better community we all call home.

## Agriculture Remains #1 Driver of the Shawnee County Economy

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Kansas and Shawnee County has a strong agricultural and Agribusiness base to serve as the number one driver of our economy. Shawnee County has 847 farms with 201,662 acres in farm ground and the average size of farm was 238 acres. This is a 3% increase in numbers of farms, a 4% increase in acres and a 1% increase in farm size. This is the first time in many years of an increase in these three numbers.

Over 100 farmers and ranchers attended the spring Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation series meetings. 100% of the participants gained knowledge, with 100% ranking the programs as excellent or very good. The group collectively represented farm businesses with 20,378 crop and hay acres, 9,534 acres of pasture, and manage 1,519 head of cattle/calves.



Agriculture, food and food processing has a direct output of approximately \$1.83 billion and supports 4,808 jobs in Shawnee County. Shawnee County has two K-State Research farm

The class topics were Open Communication Between Land Owners and Tenants, Weather Extremes-Dealing with Drought, Cold, Flood, Ice Snow, etc., Blue-Green Algae/Pond Problems, Old World Bluestem and the Top Ten Problem Weeds, and Small Acreage/Small Business Maintenance. All participants reported learning recommendations that will be reflected in changes to their operations. Producers shared:

locations in the county that plants nearly 30 test plots each year to test seeding rates, cover crops, varieties, compaction of soils, fertilizer rates and timing, planting dates and chemicals used all with the ultimate goal to increase production and efficiency.

- ◇ "I plan to improve the lease contract as a facilitator of communication with my farm renter and to make sure my leases are sound."
- ◇ "I plan on being more aggressive with identification and treatment of noxious weeds and will share information with friends and relatives about weed control."
- ◇ "I plan to use cover crops to benefit my farm for erosion and cattle grazing."

Since 1950, Kansas crop production per acre has doubled for grain sorghum, soybeans and wheat and increased more than four times for corn. Production of corn increased from 29 bushels per acre to 128, grain sorghum from 21 to 60, soybeans from 13 to 30 and wheat from 18-38.



**\$183**  
Billion

Value of agriculture, food and food processing each year from Shawnee County

**4x's**

Corn production has increased from 29 to 128 bushels per acre since 1950

**100%**

Of program participants reported knowledge gained to help them improve their farming/ranching operation

**4,808**

Jobs in Shawnee County are supported by agriculture

## Improving Lives Through Horticulture

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### Horticulture Response Line Calls Increase

In 2019, Shawnee County Extension Master Gardeners answered 847 calls on the Extension Master Gardener Response Line. This is a 14.5% increase over calls in 2018.

In March, Extension staff trained 45 new and experienced Shawnee County Extension Master Gardeners in three separate trainings for the Response Line. When surveyed, 86% of the trained volunteers reported that they were “Extremely Likely” to participate on the Response Line after receiving training with the remaining 4% reporting that they were “Moderately likely” to participate.

A major factor for the increase in Response Line clients is due to an increase in the number of volunteers willing to participate. Our volunteers enthusiasm and commitment to research make the Response Line a reliable source of information that community members seek again and again!



### Statewide Master Gardener Conference Brings Recognition to Shawnee County

Master Gardeners from across the state gathered in Topeka for a two day training for Extension Master Gardeners. Planned by the Shawnee and Douglas County Horticulture Agents, this is the first time the conference has left Manhattan since the early 1990’s. Courses focused on natives and pollinators, edible plants, water and leadership. On the second day of the conference, participants toured Ward Meade Botanical Garden, Ted Enslay Gardens and the Native and Perennial Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens at the Governor's Residence.



### Plant Sale Sells Out

The 2019 Master Gardener Plant Sale sold out in 2 hours and 45 minutes. This event serves as the primary fundraiser for the group and also allows us to connect with our community, promote our educational programs and answer gardening questions in real time!

**The 2020 Kansas Garden Show will be February 21-23!**

**847**

Gardening questions answered on the Master Gardener Response Line from April-October 2019

**140**

Attended a statewide Master Gardener conference planned by Shawnee and Douglas County Extension staff

**1,051**

Pounds of produce donated to local food banks from the Extension Master Gardener Community Garden in 2019

**8,089**

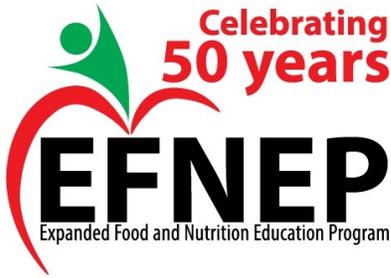
Volunteer hours donated in 2019 by Shawnee County Extension Master Gardeners

## Families Eating Smart and Moving More

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### EFNEP Turns 50



Many Shawnee County families struggle every day to make ends meet, and every day EFNEP is there to help them lead healthier lives.

For 50 years, educators from the nation's land-grant universities including Kansas State University have brought EFNEP – the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program – to low income Americans, giving them the tools they need for better eating and health.

Shawnee County EFNEP served 235 families this year, reaching 899 family members.

### Breastfeeding Welcomed at Kansas Statehouse

Breastfeeding is the normal way to feed babies, and breastfeeding improves the health of Kansans. Employers, businesses, public and non-profit agencies can make a difference in the lives of breastfeeding mothers and infants by providing clean, comfortable and private accommodations for feeding babies and expressing breastmilk.

Rep. Jim Ward, D-Wichita convened a meeting with interested parties to locate and furnish a lactation room at the state Capitol. Members of the work group included Rep. Eileen Horn, D-Lawrence who was a recent

breastfeeding mother, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Kaw Area Breastfeeding Coalition, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Statehouse

representatives, KC Healthy Kids and K-State Research and Extension-Shawnee County. A small room was selected and furnished, and a ribbon cutting ceremony was held on January 11, 2019 right before the legislative opening session. Governor-elect Laura Kelly officiated. The Kansas State Capitol is now a 21st century employer and family-friendly statehouse for the people of Kansas.



### SNAP-Ed Improves Access to Fresh Produce



Putting Healthy Food  
Within Reach

USDA  
Supplemental  
Nutrition  
Assistance  
Program

Shawnee County SNAP-Ed works with 31 community gardens, providing fresh produce to members and donating the excess to food pantries.

For more information, visit <https://www.shawnee.k-state.edu/snap-ed/CommunityGardening.html>

# 93%

Of EFNEP graduates improved the quality of their diet

# 76%

Of EFNEP graduates increased their physical activity

# 86%

Of EFNEP graduates improved in food safety practices

# 82%

Of EFNEP graduates improved in food budgeting

## Building Community Leaders and Entrepreneurs

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### Changing the Future of Communities One Grant at a Time

Non-profits, educational and government organizations struggle to find the resources they need to fund priority projects. K-State Research & Extension created grant writing workshops to help communities and funders with the same priorities find each other and create change. Nancy Daniels, KSRE Community Vitality Specialist, teaches the workshop at many sites across Kansas annually.

In 2018 Daniels shared her expertise with 48 participants in Topeka and returned in 2019 to a crowd of 71 people representing government, private business and non-profits. Fifty-eight people completed surveys in 2019 with 100% expressing confidence to write a grant, 99% reporting they learned new sources of data and 97% reporting they learned new sources of funding.

Two participants in the 2018 workshop reported their success. Dorothy Bryan is the president of the Auburn City Council and shared, "Coming to the grant workshop spurred me on, and I thought, 'I can do this.'" She wrote her first grant for fitness park equipment and received



\$55,000 from Momentum 2022. She reports proudly, "That equipment is busy morning, noon and night."

Juliet Swedlund, the director for the Topeka Doula Project, wrote four grants for \$60,000 and was fully funded. Julie said, "The workshop contributed to my ability to speak about my cause and give me a compelling narrative." Using the same skills, Juliet wrote for two scholarships and received \$1,550 of free training.

### Community Board Leadership Series Builds New Leaders

Board Leadership training is often for persons already elected to a board, but this program is designed for anyone interested in learning how to participate more effectively on a community board.

Thirty-three people attended one or more of the four sessions in 2019 and reported these impacts:

- ◆ "I feel prepared to serve as an effective board member" increased from 38% before the workshop to 100% after the workshop.
- ◆ 31% indicated they didn't know how to make a motion prior to training; 93% indicated they could make a motion after the workshop.
- ◆ The participants that understood legal and ethical issues affecting a board increased from 40% prior to training to 93% after training.
- ◆ Those who reported they could effectively manage conflict on a board increased from 64% to 100%.

# 100%

Of grant workshop participants reported increased confidence in writing grants

# 33

Community members trained for leadership roles

# 1

Talented youth won an honorable mention and \$1,250 in the state Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

# 6

Local entrepreneurs were sponsored by Shawnee StartUps to attend Destination Bootcamp

## Extension Education Impacts Financial Wellness

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### Extension Offers Free Unbiased Medicare Education

Decisions regarding health care in retirement can have permanent financial effects. It is important that “new to Medicare” beneficiaries carefully analyze all health insurance choices.



There are many things to consider including life-time penalties for late enrollment, and delays or gaps in coverage if not enrolled at the proper time. Susan Fangman is a certified Senior Health Insurance Counselor for Kansas (SHICK). She helps “new to Medicare” beneficiaries navigate the complex and sometimes confusing Medicare program through individual and group counseling sessions, as well as through group programs.

This past year Susan counseled 36 “new to Medicare” beneficiaries and counseled 197 individuals during Medicare Part D open enrollment. During open enrollment she helped 105 beneficiaries change drug plans saving them a total of just over \$64,000.

This fall Susan provided educational programs to Medicare beneficiaries at Brewster Place and the Shepherd’s Center highlighting the importance of comparing prescription drug plans each year.

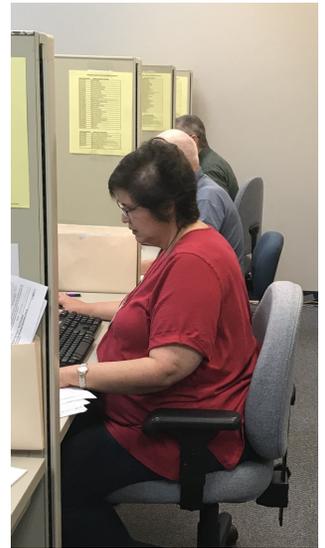
### Volunteers for the Asset Building Coalition Provide Tax Preparation and Education

Susan leads the Asset Building Coalition in Shawnee County. This coalition represents VITA and AARP tax volunteers, as well as educational, government and social service agencies.

Together, 74 VITA and AARP volunteers staffed 11 free public tax assistance sites in 2019 to serve low to moderate income taxpayers in the county. Volunteers filed 6,156 federal tax returns for Tax Year 2018 saving approximately \$1,385,100 in tax preparation fees and helping taxpayers to receive \$6,354,900 in federal refunds.

Volunteers are also trained to help taxpayers understand their return and to provide education about tax credits to make sure taxpayers claim all the credits that are due to them.

Free tax assistance not only helps the taxpayers served, but has a public value for all Shawnee County taxpayers. Federal and state refunds stabilize the county tax base, stimulate the local economy, and reduce the demand for public assistance by helping low and moderate income taxpayers to first access the money they are legally entitled to through refunds.



## \$64,000

Saved by comparing Medicare prescription drug plans

## 74

Volunteers staff 11 free tax assistance sites

## \$1,385,100

Saved in tax preparation fees

## \$27,338

Average income of taxpayers using free tax assistance at Shawnee County sites

## Building Tomorrow's Leaders with Help from Local Partners

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### Livestock Committee Sponsors Agriculture Field Trip with Project Enhancement Grant

The Shawnee County 4-H Livestock Committee wanted to add a new educational experience for the youth interested in livestock projects. The committee applied for dollars from a project enhancement grant and was awarded funds. With their grant they planned a field trip to the Kansas State University Veterinary School and the Meat Science Lab.

The field trip was planned for a Saturday during spring break, which is typically a difficult time to get kids to a program. The committee used their grant funds to charter a bus from Topeka to Manhattan and to feed the participants lunch. Youth purchased their own shirts.

The Committee's goal was to have 20 youth attend, but they ended up with 30 registered! The youth enjoyed the behind the scenes tour they got of the Veterinary School, and the presentation about the Meat Science program.



The youth had a good time and on the way home were asking if we were going to do this again next year!

### Community Partners Help Provide Youth a Summer Camp Experience

For four days in June Shawnee County 4-H'ers have the opportunity to explore, learn and grow at Rock Springs 4-H Camp. Shawnee County camps with seven other Kansas 4-H units, and youth make new friends from across the state.

*Johnsonville Sausage and the Capitol Federal Foundation give generous financial support to provide camp scholarships and transportation that make attending camp affordable.*

Overnight camping is one of the ways youth learn both belonging and independence in the 4-H program.

Camp is more feasible for families because of scholarship dollars offered by Johnsonville Sausage and round trip transportation sponsored by the Capitol Federal Foundation. Both of these partners are the reason Shawnee County sent 60 youth to camp this summer!



**3,394**

Volunteer hours spent on the Shawnee County 4-H program  
Oct. 2018 -Sept. 2019

**12**

4-H Clubs in Shawnee County

**4x**

More likely to give back to their communities than their non-4-H peers.  
\*Tufts Study of PYD

**8%**

Increase of 4-H enrollment from the 2017-2018 to the 2018-2019 4-H year

**Chad Bullock** is the Managing Partner of Premier Farm and Home. Chad was elected to the Agriculture and Natural Resources PDC serving four years, and also served on the Executive Board as Treasurer, then as President in 2018. He has often used his experience with Extension programs to describe the value of our work to county commissioners. Chad shares his expertise by serving as a speaker at local agriculture meetings and frequently serves as an expert at the annual Sick Plant Clinic. He trains new Master Gardeners in identification and management of weeds. Premier Farm and Home has been a frequent donor to support 4-H School Enrichment programs. Chad, representing Premier Farm and Home, was selected in 2018 to attend Destination Bootcamp with sponsorship by Shawnee StartUps. He has since shared information about his success with decision makers and businesses. He is a model for how you can both participate in Extension programs and give leadership to the work we do for the community.



**Ed Dillingham** has been a Shawnee County Extension Master Gardener since 2014. Ed plays an integral part of nearly every Master Gardener event. He leads the set-up and take-down of the annual plant sale, works the construction crew at the Kansas Garden show, teaches educational programs and annually volunteers for Extension's *From Farm to You*, which gives youth a peek into the importance of agriculture. After every monthly meeting, Ed writes a synopsis of the meeting's educational speaker that is published in the Master Gardener newsletter for those who may have missed the meeting. Since joining the organization, Ed has received the President's Volunteer Service Award three times. This award is given to Master Gardeners who have donated more than 100 hours of volunteer service in a single calendar year. Ed does not wait to see if someone else will take on projects, but steps into leadership to provide structure and order to the Master Gardener group. Ed is always working toward the mission of "improving our community through horticulture."

**Shannon Weber** was recently recognized as the North Central Region 4-H Volunteer of the Year after first achieving county and state recognition. Shannon is the club leader for Silver Lake 4-H Club. She works to provide all families a chance to lead the club in some way. As a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Shannon uses her knowledge to help any Shawnee County 4-Her with their animal projects. She has held project meeting for bucket calf project members and given talks about animal health and vaccinations. Shannon joined 4-H when she was seven years old and says it shaped her into the person she is today. A club parent wrote, "The mentor-learner relationship comes natural to Shannon. Her heart is to train and teach others. She speaks words of encouragement to the officers of our club and guides them in how they are to do their office. She will come alongside anyone who needs guidance from project work to record books. She takes the time to give every child a meaningful 4-H experience."

