

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension develops and delivers practical, research-based solutions to challenges faced by all Kansans, which includes the grand challenges:

- Global Food Systems
- Water
- Health
- Community Vitality
- Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

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## Grand Challenge: Global Food Systems, Water, Health & Community Vitality

Title: Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation Series for Ag Producers

### Why is this issue important?

Agriculture and agribusiness are the number one industry in Kansas. Shawnee County has 847 farms with an average size of 238 acres and a total of 201,662 acres in farm ground. Shawnee County has a total of 9,108 jobs and \$1.83 billion dollars in the agriculture, food and food processing sectors. Today's American farmer feeds 155 people. In 1960, a farmer fed just 26 people. Today's farmer grows twice as much food as their parents did- using less land, energy, water and fewer emissions. The local farmers have had numerous challenges in the last several months with the COVID- 19 shutdown of the local and national economy and keeping food products supplied to the American public.

### How did Extension address this issue?

Shawnee County Extension and the Shawnee County Conservation District held four meetings this winter to address issues facing farmers and ranchers. The topics covered included:

- \*Lease Law/Fencing Law
- \*Pond Maintenance; Aquatic Problems - Fish, Plants
- \*Forestry Care and Maintenance
- \*Weeds in Crops and Pastures



### What was the impact?

Approximately 115 farmers and ranchers attended the spring *Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation* series meetings. 100% of the applicants gained knowledge with 99% ranking the programs as excellent or very good. All participants reported learning recommendations that will be reflected in changes to their operations. The group represented farm businesses with 15,097 acres of cropland and 10,781 in pasture acres. We have continued to answer farmer and rancher questions and identify weeds and insects as needed during the pandemic as agriculture is considered essential for food production.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service  
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