

November 2026

Extension in Action



Fall is a Good Time for Soil Testing

If your pasture or hayfield is struggling, K-State Extension in Sedgwick County has resources to help.

One of the first things to check is soil fertility, says Jeff Seiler, ag and natural resources Extension agent.

Fall is the preferred period for soil testing because it allows more time for any needed lime applications to have an effect before the main growing season begins.

Read more in the Agronomy eUpdate article **Fall Soil Testing of Hayfields and Pastures** and **Fall Fertilization of Smooth Brome and Fescue**. In addition, check out the recording from last year's Small Acres Agriculture Series: **Pasture & Hayfield Management** and **Getting the Most out of your Acreage for Livestock**.

For questions about pasture and forage management, contact K-State Extension Sedgwick County agent, Jeff Seiler at **jseiler4@ksu.edu**.

Give the Gift of Health this Holiday Season



For many of us, Thanksgiving marks the start of the season of giving.

If donating to a local food pantry is on your to-do list, consider giving the gift of health by choosing nutrient-rich, nonperishable food items this year.

Here are some healthy donation ideas to help families enjoy nourishing meals throughout the holidays and beyond:

Fruit
· Fresh fruit (check with local food pantry)
· Canned fruit packed in water or 100% juice
· Dried fruit
· 100% fruit juice

Vegetables
· Fresh vegetables (check with local food pantry)
· Low-sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables
· Low-sodium soups

Grains
· Whole-grain crackers, brown rice, whole-grain pasta, oatmeal, or whole-grain breakfast cereal

Protein
· Canned or dried beans (no-salt-added or low-sodium) such as kidney, navy, pinto, garbanzo, great northern, or black beans
· Lentils
· Canned tuna, salmon, or chicken (water-packed)
· Unsalted nuts such as walnuts, pecans, or almonds
· Nut butter

Dairy
· Nonfat dry milk, evaporated milk, or shelf-stable milk

Before donating, contact your local food pantry to see what items are most needed. To learn more about which foods are safe to donate, visit this K-State Extension Fact Sheet: **Donating Safe and Nutritious Food to Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens**

For questions related to health and nutrition, contact K-State Extension Sedgwick County Nutrition, Health and Wellness Agent, Sara Sawer at **sarasawer@ksu.edu**.



Medicare Open Enrollment Is Here

Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment Period runs from October 15 through December 7.

Many beneficiaries are already aware that significant changes are coming in 2027. Changes to Medicare Advantage plans, prescription drug coverage, provider networks, premiums, and service areas have led to a much higher volume of calls and counseling requests this Medicare Annual Open Enrollment season.

As a result, many SHICK counseling locations have filled their available appointments and begun maintaining waitlists. If you would like assistance reviewing your options, do not wait to seek help. In addition to local SHICK offices and Area Agencies on Aging, some senior centers also offer SHICK counseling appointments during Open Enrollment.

Even if you have been satisfied with your current 2026 coverage, it is important to carefully read any notices received from your Medicare Advantage or Part D plan and review your options for 2027. A few minutes spent reviewing your coverage now may help avoid unexpected costs or coverage changes next year.

The **SHICK program provides free, unbiased Medicare counseling** to help beneficiaries better understand their options and make informed healthcare decisions.

For assistance, **contact your local SHICK counseling site** or nearby senior center to learn what counseling resources may be available in your area.

Before the Rush



My favorite season is finally here. The trees are beginning to change color, temperatures are cooling down, and nature reminds us that change is a natural part of life. Just as nature prepares for a new season, families can also prepare emotionally before the holiday season arrives.

At K-State Extension, we promote research-based practices that help families build healthy and resilient relationships. Numerous studies have found that positive family relationships and emotional support at home are important protective factors for the mental health of children, teens, and adults. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that young people who feel close to their parents or caregivers and can openly discuss their emotions are more likely to cope with challenges in healthy ways and develop resilience.

However, in the midst of our daily responsibilities, it is easy to focus only on our family's physical needs. We often pay close attention to doctor appointments, school schedules, and household tasks, but less frequently do we stop to assess how the people in our home are doing emotionally. Before our calendars become filled with family gatherings, school events, holiday shopping, travel plans, and social commitments, we can take time to check in on our family's emotional well-being.

Liz Brunscheen-Cartagena, K-State Extension Family Life and Resources Agent, shares more essential to help your family connect before the rush of the holiday season.

Read the article in Spanish.



K-State Extension Sedgwick County to Host Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training

The 2026 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2026, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Credits toward recertification will be available for Commercial Applicators in categories 3A and 3B.

Registration closes Wednesday, November 11th, or when all seats are filled.

Join Our Team

Are you passionate about helping families live healthier lives?

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) at K-State Extension Sedgwick County is currently hiring two full-time Nutrition Assistants. In this role, you'll provide hands on nutrition education to families and youth through interactive lessons, cooking demonstrations, and practical tips for healthy eating and increasing physical activity.



If you enjoy teaching, connecting with your community, and making a positive impact, we'd love to hear from you!

See the full job description and apply today.

Doing Good for Kansas



High School Students Invited to Explore Aviation at K-State

At K-State Salina Aviation Explorer Day, students get firsthand look at aviation education and career opportunities.

Kansas State University Salina is hosting a one-of-a-kind event for students ages 16 and up to explore education and career opportunities in aviation during **Aviation Explorer Day** on Saturday, Nov. 14.

The free event begins at 9:30 a.m. and is for prospective students and their guardians interested in all aspects of aviation, including **aviation maintenance**, **aviation management**, **professional pilot** and **uncrewed aircraft systems**. Registration is required.

Attendees will learn about K-State Salina's aviation degree programs while connecting with current students, faculty, alumni and industry professionals. The event allows students to explore the areas of aviation that interest them most and get a firsthand look at where an aviation education can lead.

Learn more and register for the free event.

K-State Extension News You Can Use



- **What to do with those falling leaves and pumpkin seeds?**
- **Fall pasture evaluations can help producers prepare for the next grazing season**
- **K-State specialist offers tips for managing holiday spending**
- **You've moved plants indoors: Now What?**
- **Kansas Profile – Now That's Rural: Huck Boyd**
- **Change in seasons may affect gardener's mental health**

Where You'll Find Us: Extension Events and Opportunities in Sedgwick County

- **Oct. 8-Dec. 2 - Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (Recurring classes)**
- **Nov. 8 - County 4-H Project Awards Ceremony, 2-4 p.m., Ext. Education Center**
- **Nov. 14 - 4-H Project Fair, 9 a.m.-Noon, Extension Education Center**
- **Nov. 18 - Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training Workshop**
- **Nov. 21-22 - Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, Rock Springs**
- **Dec. 2 - K-State Garden Hour - Wintering Your Garden Tools**

View our full list of events at sedgwick.k-state.edu/events/.







This monthly e-newsletter is intended to inform citizens of events, activities and research-based information from K-State Extension Sedgwick County.

K-State Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

K-State Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the well-being of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan.

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