



River Valley District

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K-State Research and Extension News

Knowledge
forLife

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FIRST EVER K-STATE RANCHING SUMMIT PLANNED FOR OCTOBER 7TH



Registration is now open for the K-State Ranching Summit. This first-time event is designed to equip managers with the skills to address the challenges of ranching in the business climate of today and tomorrow.

“Market forecasts point to declining revenues for cow-calf producers over the next several years. To ensure profitability, ranch managers will need to make a number of strategic management decisions.” said Bob Weaber, K-State Research and Extension

cow-calf specialist. “The Ranching Summit was designed from the ground up to bolster the managerial knowledge and skills of beef producers.”

Hosted by the Kansas State University Department of Animal Sciences and Industry and K-State Research and Extension, the event will be Friday, Oct. 7 in Manhattan, Kansas, at the K-State Student Union Grand Ballroom. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. and the program starts at 10 a.m.

The Ranching Summit will include a wide range of topics important for beef producers to consider. These include defining the unit of profit in cow-calf operations, evaluating new and alternative grazing opportunities, how to use a systems approach to solve complex ranch problems, an update on the projected business and farm economic climate, and how to build communities to support ranching in 2050.

The top flight speaker line-up includes, Burke Teichert, Teichert Consulting; Mykel Taylor and Dustin Pendell, K-State Department of Agricultural Economics; Rick Machen, King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management; Trey Patterson, Padlock Ranch; Allen Featherstone, K-State Department of Agricultural Economics; and Chuck Schroeder, Rural Futures Institute at the University of Nebraska.

The K-State Ranching Summit is made possible through the support of business donors including platinum sponsor, Key Feeds – Fourth and Pomeroy Associates, Inc., Clay Center, Kansas, and media partner, *Drovers*.

For more details, including registration information and a complete schedule, visit www.KSUBeef.org. For questions about the event, contact Bob Weaber at bweaber@ksu.edu or 785-532-1460; or Lois Schreiner, lschrein@ksu.edu or 785-532-1267. The early registration deadline is Sept. 30. Individuals can register for \$35 or \$60 per couple. Walk-in registration will be available at \$50 per person.

Attendees are also encouraged to attend the K-State Department of Animal Sciences and Industry Family & Friends Reunion that evening at the Stanley E. Stout Center in Manhattan. For more information about the reunion, visit www.asi.ksu.edu/familyandfriends.

LOOKING BACK ON THE PAST AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Over the last two years, many cow calf producers have had one thing in common. This one commonality can be summed up into one word, expansion. While not all cow calf producers decided it was time to expand, some decided it was the perfect time to sell heifers while the market was favorable. When looking at the past two years of cow inventory, it is easy to see that herds have expanded at a steady rate. At the time of initial expansion, prices were at an all-time high, and it was nothing short of a fun time to be in the cow calf business. When producers are making money, then it makes it a little easier to get out of bed and do chores in the morning. Even though producers were enjoying the good times, we all secretly had our subconscious wondering when these prices were going to fall. Unfortunately, producers are now seeing lower returns as a result of the increase in supply exceeding the increase in demand.

While attending many farm financial meetings over the past year, I listened with great intent. The questions going through my mind were, I am sure, very similar to my fellow producers. What is coming next? How can we get ahead on these fluctuating markets? Are the glory days truly over? How can I prepare producers for what might be coming? What education do I need and what tools can I provide to make this process easier? As those questions circulated, many programming ideas came to fruition.

Be looking for future programs coming out of the River Valley Extension District that will cover those questions. Not only are livestock extension agents a great resource for educational programs, but they are also more than willing to sit down and have a consultation about your operation. Come into the office and talk with me about your operation. We can discuss the possibilities of testing your forages, weed identification, grazing management, hosting fall field days, water management, body condition scoring, pasture leases, or any of those tough questions that one would appreciate a second opinion on. Not only are local extension agents a great resource, do not forget your local Farm Service Agency, NRCS office, or local veterinarians. We are all here to help and don't forget to use us as a resource.

As we approach times of decreased farm income, we still have bright spots to focus on. The weather the last couple months has been out of the ordinary for August and September. The rainfall has been more than adequate and the pastures are green. We have more hay than we have had in years to get through the winter time. Since the return might not be as big as last year, let's think of ways to decrease costs in other areas. As we have such a large hay supply this year, it might be time to reanalyze the most cost effective way to feed cattle throughout the winter.

This might be the ideal year to start testing your hay, silage, and other available forages. By testing those forages, rations can be built properly and possibly create a cheaper ration

than in previous years. Rations might look a little different than those in the past as the price of commodities have changed over time. With current corn prices, this might be a commodity that can be a useful feed source this winter. Not only is overfeeding nutrients a concern, but underfeeding nutrients is also a concern. Every producer's situation is going to be different and by no means is there going to be a perfect solution for everyone.

The emphasis of this article is to step back and analyze your current management strategies, seek out the most cost effective strategies for your operation, and begin an open dialogue with your local extension agent. There are many things to be thankful for this year including: rain, forage availability, and cheaper commodities to feed cattle. Come into the Washington office and we can discuss how to cut costs and get ahead start on financial planning for the upcoming years.

Please remember that local livestock agents are here as a free resource and are more than willing to assist producers with any questions they might have. Feel free to contact Katelyn Brockus at 785-325-2121 kbrockus@ksu.edu.

FIVE OPTIONS FOR CRP LAND

When times get tough in the farming and ranching community, producers start seeking out additional resources to help them pull through. One of those resources in the past have been to put portions of land into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which is a cost-share and rental payment program under the United States Department of Agriculture and is administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency. Unfortunately, a very small percentage of requests were granted this year with regards to CRP. With the current markets, this might have been a resource that producers have been using in the past that is no longer available to them. With that said, what options do producers have for the land that has been forced out of CRP? This topic was covered well by Mykel Taylor, KSU Agriculture Economics Specialist, at a local Tuttle Creek WRAPS meeting.

If you find yourself in a situation where you have lost your CRP ground or it was not renewed, it is important to think through your options. The options for producers comes down to these five production practices: pasture, hay ground, non-irrigated cropland, non-ag revenue streams, or selling.

The first option is to turn your CRP acres into pasture ground. The first advantage to this production practice is that you pay lower property taxes for pasture land than cropland. The second advantage is that it is likely to be a fixed cash rent. With a fixed cash rent scenario, the producer knows what the expected income will be on a year to year basis. For the first few years of production, that pasture will not be able handle the average stocking rate. With time and a good range management plan, the pasture will slowly become more productive. Some of the disadvantages to putting CRP land into pasture grazing is the lack of fencing and water supply. Those are large expenses that must be calculated into the budget. An example can be discussed on this option by stopping in the Washington office.

The second option is to turn your CRP ground into hay ground. Hay is currently relatively inexpensive as these past couple of years have been good to us with regards to adequate moisture. The hay market tends to vary with regional supply and transportation costs in order to get the hay into areas of demand that are usually experiencing drought. However, just because the hay market is down this year does not mean that haying is not the best economical option. The expected costs are lower with haying than for pasture because the investment has not been made for fencing and a water source. An example has also been done for this scenario and is based off of approximate yields from the field.

The third option is to turn your CRP into cropland. As producers might expect, CRP ground is typically not the best ground which is usually why it has previously been in CRP. The expected returns for leasing this cropland will be discounted as it is typically lower quality ground. It will be of upmost importance that farmers get a soil test done if this option is the one that is chosen. Some of the factors in breaking CRP into cropland include: cash flow to pay for inputs, decrease in yields, resisting the urge to till as it could be highly erodible land, and crop rotation should be modified for the first few years to get a no till system in place. With all of this said, the economics of breaking CRP land into cropland looks unfavorable at this point. Once again, an example can be provided for this scenario.

The fourth option is to consider non-agricultural revenue streams such as governmental assistance programs, conservation easements, or recreational leases. If the producer decides to break CRP land into pasture, then look for governmental programs for providing assistance with capital for fencing and establishing watering systems. Another option is to look into conservation easements. However, these types of programs can typically have a negative impact on land value for future landowners due to limitations on use. Walk in hunting through Kansas Wildlife and Parks is a viable option; however, typically this arrangement can be low dollars per acre rents. The positive to this arrangement is there is no liability concerns for the landowner. Another option is to rent privately if there is a history of good hunting on the ground. It is important in this situation to consider liability costs. The rent can be negotiated based off of the amount of services offered.

The last option available is to sell the land. The current land value across the state is softening, but it still has value at this point. When evaluating land values in the area, high quality ground is remaining steady as the lower quality ground is slowly beginning to soften. This is a viable option at this point if this option best fits the landowner.

As one can see, there is no perfect answer for this situation. Every producer and landowner has different needs, resources, and abilities. The most important thing to remember is to consider all options. Some might not be viable for one landowner, but it might work perfectly for the next.

Be sure to utilize the resources available through K-State Research and Extension as we are more than willing to discuss options and go through examples in order for the producer to make an informed decision. Feel free to call or email Katelyn Brockus, kbrockus@ksu.edu 785-325-2121, with additional questions.

HARVEST SAFETY TIPS

Plan for an injury/accident free harvest by:

- *communicating with all family members & employees;
- *reviewing emergency procedures with all team members;
- *participating in trainings/operator refresher courses;
- *setting expectations for personal protective equipment;
- *planning to take regular breaks and get adequate sleep;
- *ensuring safety features/maintenance are in place;
- *watching for overhead power lines and other hazards;
- *following road rules and being aware of motorists;
- *Dressing for comfort and safety one should:
 - wear protective footwear;
 - wear close fitting clothes with no strings or frays;
 - wear gear to reduce noise, dust, and toxin hazards.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY ILLUMINATION AND SAFETY ACT

The Agricultural Machinery Illumination and Safety Act was passed four years ago based upon safety standards written by agricultural engineers from agricultural machinery manufacturers. The law goes into effect and machinery manufacturers must be in compliance by June 22, 2017.

All new equipment currently being built is in compliance with the law. The law was also passed in such a manner that anytime the ag machinery safety standards are updated then the law automatically updates to match it. Therefore, any new purchased machinery will always be in compliance.

Most operations have within their machinery line-up equipment that was constructed 20, 30, 40, 50 or even 60+ years ago. In these cases, the equipment is grandfathered in and exempt from the new illumination and safety regulations. However, for the safety of the operator and others on the roadway it is important to make sure, at a minimum that the equipment is marked with a slow moving vehicle emblem that is clean and properly located.

There are a few times and places that it will be important for local producers and owners of local welding shops to be aware of the requirements of the law. Local welding shops that are constructing new equipment for farm operations will need to make sure that equipment is built in compliance or the manufacturer and operator may be in a liability risk in the case of an accident. In addition, if a producer or welding shop takes multiple pieces of old equipment that would have been grandfathered in and reconfigures them into a new piece of equipment then that piece is likely no longer in compliance and may be at liability risk in case of a roadway accident.

So how do local producers and welding shops find the new regulations? The easiest way is to contact K-State Agricultural Engineer, Ed Brokesh by phone at 785-532-2907 or email ebrokes@ksu.edu. Brokesh discussed the law on a recent edition of Agriculture Today. The archive of that interview with K-State Research and Extension radio personality Eric Atkinson can be found at: <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/radio-network/agtoday-mp3/090816-brokesh.MP3>

CONTROLLING ANNUAL WEEDS WITH FALL-APPLIED HERBICIDES AHEAD OF CORN AND SORGHUM

With row crop harvest underway, it's time to start planning your fall herbicide applications to control winter annual broadleaf weeds and grasses ahead of grain sorghum or corn. Fall applications during late October and through November can greatly assist control of difficult winter annuals and should be considered when performance of spring-applied preplant weed control has not been adequate. Henbit and marestail frequently are some of the most troublesome weeds we try to manage with these fall herbicide applications. Fall applications have another side-benefit. While it is always important to manage herbicide drift, herbicide applications made after fall frost have less potential for drift problems onto sensitive targets.

There are several herbicide options for fall application. If residual weed control is desired, atrazine is among the lowest-priced herbicides. However, if atrazine is used, that will lock the grower into planting corn or sorghum the following spring, or leave the land fallow during the summer and come back to winter wheat in the fall.

Atrazine is labeled in Kansas for fall application over wheat stubble or after fall row crop harvest any time before December 31, as long as the ground isn't frozen. Consult the atrazine label to comply with maximum rate limits and precautions when applying near wells or surface water. No more than 2.5 pounds of atrazine can be applied per acre in a calendar year on cropland.

One half to two pounds (maximum) per acre of atrazine in the fall, tankmixed with 1 to 2 pints/acre of 2,4-D LV4 or 0.67 to 1.33 pints LV6, can give good burndown of winter annual broadleaf weeds—such as henbit, dandelion, prickly lettuce, Virginia pepperweed, field pansy, evening primrose, and marestail—and small, non-tillered winter annual grasses. Atrazine's foliar activity is enhanced with crop oil concentrate, which should be included in the tankmix.

Atrazine residual should control germinating winter annual broadleaves and grasses. When higher rates of atrazine are used, there should be enough residual effect from the fall application to control early spring-germinating summer annual broadleaf weeds such as kochia, common lambsquarters, wild buckwheat, and Pennsylvania smartweed—unless the weed population is atrazine-resistant.

Marestail is an increasing problem in Kansas that merits special attention. Where corn or grain sorghum will be planted next spring, fall-applied atrazine plus 2,4-D or dicamba have effectively controlled marestail rosettes, and should have enough residual activity to kill marestail as it germinates in the spring. Atrazine alone will not be nearly as effective post-emergence on marestail as the combination of atrazine plus 2,4-D. Sharpen can be very good on marestail, but should be tankmixed with 2,4-D, dicamba, atrazine, or glyphosate to prevent regrowth.

If the spring crop will be corn, other residual herbicide options include ALS herbicides such as Autumn Super or Basis Blend. ALS-resistant marestail will survive an Autumn Super or Basis Blend treatment if applied alone. For burndown, producers should mix in 2,4-D, dicamba, and/or glyphosate. Aim + 2,4-D or Rage D-Tech are additional herbicide options for fall application with only the 2, 4-D component providing a very short residual.

Winter annual grasses can also be difficult to control with atrazine alone. Success depends on the stage of brome growth. For downy brome control, 2pounds/acre of atrazine plus crop oil concentrate (COC) has given excellent control, whereas 1 pound/acre has given only fair control. Volunteer wheat and brome species that have tillered and have a secondary root system developing will likely not be controlled even with a 2 pound rate. Adding glyphosate to atrazine will ensure control of volunteer wheat, annual brome grasses, and other winter annual grassy weeds. Atrazine antagonizes glyphosate, so if the two are used together, a full rate of glyphosate (0.75 pound per acre) is recommended for good control. The tankmix should include AMS as an adjuvant.

Where fall treatments control volunteer wheat, winter annuals, and early-emerging summer annuals, producers should then apply a pre-emerge grass-and-broadleaf herbicide with glyphosate or paraquat at corn or sorghum planting time to control newly emerged weeds. Soils will be warmer and easier to plant where winter weeds were controlled in the fall.

Curtis Thompson, KSU Weed Specialist

Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services

KAMS provides confidential assistance for Kansas farmers, ranchers, and their lenders.

KAMS provides support in times of financial crisis through:

- ⇒ Ag Credit Mediations
- ⇒ USDA Adverse Decision Mediations
- ⇒ Agricultural Financial Counseling
- ⇒ Legal Assistance

1-800-321-FARM

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RIVER VALLEY EXTENSION DISTRICT

OFFICE HOURS

7:30AM-12:30PM

and

1:30PM-4:30PM

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

KANSAS INCOME TAX INSTITUTE

The Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics invites you to attend the 68th annual Kansas Income Tax Institute. The program is intended for tax professionals and is designed to provide up-to-date training on current tax law, regulations, and updates. This year's program will review recent cases and rulings and key legislation, provide an in-depth review and analysis of a number of tax areas, and cover newly enacted regulations and procedures critical to tax practitioners. The program stresses information to facilitate the filing of individual, small-business, and farm returns.

The Kansas Income Tax Institute will begin at 8:00 a.m. and adjourn at 4:30 p.m. each day, with registration and sign-in at 7:30 a.m. Lunch will be served on-site each day at 12:00-1:00 p.m. There will be a morning and afternoon break each day.

The dates and locations are: October 24-25, Garden City; October 25-26, Colby; October 26-27, Hays; November 1-2, Topeka; November 2-3, Salina; November 3-4, Wichita; November 9-10, Overland Park; and November 14-15, Pittsburg.

Find information and registration at www.agmanager.info

AVOID BEING CAUGHT IN THE PAYMENT LIMIT

As little as 1,000 crop acres may exceed 2016/17 Farm Service Agency's (FSA) payment limit. A farm with as little as 1,000 acres (2,000 acres if farmer and spouse both have a limit) may not want to risk losing some of the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and/or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments that will be paid in the fall of 2017 by using up some of their payment limit with Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) payments. Farmers who enrolled their wheat, corn, and sorghum base acres in PLC and ARC need to plan for next year's payment now! Because all commodity payments including LDP's, ARC, and PLC on the 2016/17 crop are included in the \$125,000 limit, **as little as 1,000 crop acres** can put farmers over the 2016/17 payment limit.

It has been 16 years since Kansas farmers received any LDP payments (not good news), but in the old program, LDP had a separate payment limit of \$75,000 and it didn't include the other commodity payments. Also, some farmers will remember Congress doubled the \$75,000 LDP payment limit in some years to avoid the additional administrative cost caused by farmers taking out the loan to avoid the limit. The current program retained the provision that allows farmers to avoid the payment limit on LDPs by using the marketing loan provisions. It is our understanding that any change to this new combined commodity program payment limit would require Congress to re-open the Farm Bill, and we don't expect that to happen.

More information can be found at the following link: <http://www.agmanager.info/avoid-being-caught-payment-limit>

Art Barnaby, KSU, Ag Economist

KS CROP INSURANCE WORKSHOP

This workshop being held Thursday, November 10 at the Bicentennial Center in Salina will help crop insurance agents, agricultural lenders, farmers/ranchers, and other financial consultants provide better risk management information and advice to their clients that apply to their farm-ranch. If you are involved in the crop insurance industry, either as an agent, a producer, or an ag lender, you should consider attending. For more information and registration details visit www.agmanager.info

TIME TO PLANT SPRING FLOWERING BULBS

With fall quickly approaching it's hard to think about next spring, but now is the time to plant those spring flowering bulbs we all love. The best time to plant spring flowering bulbs is in late September through October. It is an excellent time to plant spring-flowering bulbs such as crocus, tulips, and daffodils. These plants need to develop roots in the fall and must meet a chilling requirement over the winter in order to bloom in the spring.

Choosing the right planting location can make a difference on how well your bulbs do in the spring. You need to pick a planting site that has full sun to partial shade. The ideal soil should be a sandy loam mix, but even if you don't have that you can add organic material such as peat moss, compost, or aged bark to improve your current soil. For example, a heavy clay can be amended by mixing in 1/3 to 1/2 organic material. The planting depths of bulbs will vary depending on the type and size of the bulb. For example, tulips and hyacinths are set about 6 inches deep, and daffodils are put 6 to 8 inches deep. As a rule of thumb, bulbs are planted two to three times as deep as they are wide. The planting depth is the distance from the bottom of the bulb to the top of the soil. Large bulbs are normally spaced 4 to 6 inches apart, and small bulbs about 1 to 2 inches. You can plant bulbs in clumps or irregular masses produce a better display, or you can line the edge of your flower beds by planting single bulbs in a row.

After placing the bulbs at the proper depth, you want to slowly replace the soil so you can be sure to have good bulb to soil contact. First replace half the soil back into the hole and add water. Wait until the water is soaked in and then add the remaining soil and water the area again. This process will settle the soil around the bulbs, and will create good aeration as well as good drainage for proper root development. Although there will be no top growth in the fall, the roots are developing, so soil needs to be kept moist but not wet. Mulch can be added after the soil has frozen to prevent small bulbs from being affected by the alternating freeze and thaw of the soil throughout the winter. Even though you don't see immediate effects of planting bulbs, they will provide you with that pop of spring color, and will add different dimensions to your flower beds.

WORK GARDEN SOIL IN THE FALL

Fall is right around the corner, with vegetable gardens starting to slow down and come to a stop its time to start thinking about what needs to be done for next year's garden. Fall is the preferred time to prepare garden soil for next spring. Spring is often wet making it difficult to work soil without forming clods that will remain for the rest of the season. Fall usually is drier allowing more time to work the soil. Even if you work soil wet in the fall and form clods, the freezing and thawing that takes place in the winter will break down the clods, leaving a smoother soil for the following spring.

Another reason to work the soil in the fall is to get rid of any insects and diseases you might have had from the previous year. Insects often hide in garden debris. If that debris is worked into the soil, insects will be less likely to survive the winter. Diseases are also less likely to overwinter if old plants are worked under. Garden debris will also increase the organic matter content of the soil.

Fall is an excellent time to add organic matter. Not only are organic materials (leaves, rotten hay or silage, and grass clippings) usually more available in the fall but fresher materials can be added in the fall than in the spring because there is more time for them to break down before planting. As a general rule, add 2 inches of organic material to the surface of the soil and till it in. Be careful not to over till the soil. You should end up with particles the size of grape nuts or larger. Working the organic material into the soil allows it to break down throughout the winter and nutrients that your vegetable plants will need next summer will be ready at spring planting.

FALL YARD CLEAN-UP

It's about that time of year again when leaves will be 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, 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. Composting is a great way to handle the refuse. Compost can then be used in the vegetable garden and flowerbeds. If you do not compost, you can mow leaves with a mulching mower and let shredded leaves filter into the turf canopy. Mowing is often the most effective when the leaves aren't too thick.

Fall is also traditionally a time for cleaning up flower beds. Normally, we recommend cutting down dead stems to help control insect and disease problems. But, with herbaceous perennials that have been pest free, you might want to consider leaving some in the garden to provide winter interest, crown protection from the winter elements, and food and protection for wildlife and birds. Ornamental grasses near structures like your house, or sheds should be cut to the ground because when they get dry they could become a fire hazard.

FARM AND FOOD CONFERENCE

The Kansas Rural Center will host its annual Farm and Food Conference November 18 and 19, 2016, in Manhattan, Kansas, featuring three renowned keynote presenters. Embodying the theme "Transforming Our Farms, Our Food and Our Future: Building the Road as We Go," keynote speakers will emphasize the importance of pollinators, diversified farming systems, and community organizing and local social networks.

Kicking off the event, Dr. Jonathon Lundgren will speak on the importance of pollinators and diversified farming to the health of farming overall and to the food system. Lundgren is an award-winning entomologist and agroecologist who worked for USDA ARS before starting his current project, Blue Dasher Farm, a research and demonstration farm.

Jennifer Hopwood, Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, will speak on the role and importance of pollinators in a healthy, sustainable agricultural system and how ecologically-based farming systems help support pollinator populations.

The second day will welcome Dr. Liz Carlisle, author of *Lentil Underground*, a non-fiction book recounting her research and experience working with Montana's sustainable, organic and local food movement and the social networks that organized to make it all work. Dr. Carlisle was a lecturer at the Berkeley Food Institute's Diversified Farming Systems Project before heading to Stanford University as a lecturer in the Thinking Matters Program in the School of Earth, Energy and Environmental Science this fall. She will discuss how successful alternative food networks are built on broad-based moral economies and social support networks.

The program will highlight conservation and diversified farming systems with an emphasis on pollinators and soil health on day one, and local food systems and how collaboration and networking are critical to developing a successful local and regional food system on day two.

With over 25 breakout sessions across the two days, the conference offers a broad spectrum of topics ranging from very practical how-to's for farmers and ranchers, to community organizing ideas for community leaders, to policy analysis and issue presentations. Farmers, community and organizational leaders, and state agencies from all over the Midwest will join panels and presenters. New this year, North Central Region – Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education is co-sponsoring an entire track of SARE funded farmer research project sessions titled "*The Farmer Forum*."

Each day will include a lunch from locally-sourced ingredients and will offer conference attendees time for networking and visiting exhibitor booths.

Cost to attend the conference is \$65 per day or \$120 for both days. Registration includes access to all presenters, lunch and snacks both days, and a Friday evening social hour. Scholarships may be available. Registration forms and information on scholarships can be found at the conference website at: <http://kansasruralcenter.org/conference-2016/> or by calling Natalie Fullerton at 866-579-5469 Extension 701 or email info@kansasruralcenter.org.

PLANNING FOR COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP & FIX-UP EVENTS

When one drives into a town they have never visited before, one of the first things we notice is if the town is neat and clean. Every town has those properties that need cleaned up. You know, that eyesore abandoned building on Main Street with broken windows, or that broken and unpainted park equipment. For those living in the town, they drive by these places every day and become so desensitized to them that they no longer even notice. Every once in a while it is good just to drive through town with that “new-to-town” mentality and take stock of what needs to be done.

Fall is a great time to conduct a Community Cleanup/Fix-up Campaign. It is a great time to look around with a fresh set of eyes and identify those places where a bit of cleanup and fix-up could really improve our communities. Nadine Sigle, K-State Research and Extension Community Vitality Specialist has recently authored a bulletin MF931 entitled “Conducting a Community Cleanup Fix-up Campaign.” This is a great tool to help a community conduct an event.

A community cleanup campaign can be broken down into seven planning areas that help the efforts be successful and sustainable. The areas are:

- Organizing for success
- Establishing clear goals
- Developing a plan
- Advertising your event
- Recruiting volunteers
- Project execution
- Sustaining the effort

Community Cleanups can improve the physical appearance of a community that helps to instill a sense of community pride. A clean community makes a good first impression for prospective businesses and employers as well as professionals and others looking a potentially moving to a community. It can improve community health by eliminating places where insects and rodents live and breed. It is a great way to engage residents in projects that show immediate and visible results.

There are several pieces that I really like about this new resource. First, it gives a nice list of potential planning committee members to make sure that we have a broad base of support for the event. Secondly, there is a nice checklist that helps us identify those things that we have become so used to looking at that we see right past them. There is a great chart where we can list the goal, develop four strategies, assign the strategy to a person or team, identify resources needed and a timeline to complete, develop a budget and finally list the follow-up required. With this chart there is little opportunity for something to slip through the cracks. Finally, there is a great checklist to make sure we have not forgotten anything.

As with everything worthwhile, there must be a plan to sustain the effort. The resource has a great section of ideas to maximize the lasting effort of a community clean-up.

Contact John Forshee or stop by any River Valley Extension Office to pick up this new bulletin.

COMMUNITY BOARD LEADERSHIP SERIES

The River Valley Extension District in cooperation with the K-State Research and Extension Community Development Program Team will once again be offering the Community Board Leadership Series in 2017. The series provides an opportunity to give community-based boards — elected, appointed, or recognized by local units of government — affordable training to be effective and efficient with their responsibilities.

The four-night series will be held February 21, February 23, February 28, and March 2, 2017. Sessions run from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. with a light meal served. A presenter will be linked into all sessions being held across the state via Zoom technology. John Forshee will serve as the local facilitator and will lead the local group in a variety of hands-on activities throughout the evening. The agenda will include:

February 21 Roles & Responsibilities of Board Members/Effective Meetings

February 23 Fundraising and Fiscal Responsibilities/Legal and Ethical Issues

February 28 Understanding Fellow Board Members/Conflict Resolution

March 2 Strategic Planning

Registration will be \$40 per individual seat at the series.

Group rates may be negotiated for boards sending multiple individuals or boards may buy one seat and send a different individual to each session.

Mark your calendars now and watch future newsletters for the location that is yet to be determined. Contact John Forshee at the Clay Center Office for more information or to negotiate rates for your group.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT UPDATE

May 18, 2016 the Department of Labor published the final rule for the Minimum Standard Salary Level for Overtime Exemption to take effect December 1, 2016.

The final rules increases the minimum salary level for qualified workers to be exempt from overtime from the previous level of \$23,660 to \$47,476 per year. The rule ensures minimum wage and overtime pay protection for most employees covered by the Act. Since 1940, the Departments regulations have required that each of three tests must be met in order for overtime exemptions to apply. The tests are generally: 1) the employee must be paid a fixed and pre-determined salary; 2) the amount of salary must meet a minimum specified amount; and 3) the employee’s duties must be primarily executive, administrative, or professional in nature.

The new overtime rules will affect a large number of local businesses and farmers, so it is vital to make sure you understand the regulations.

For complete details go to the Department of Labor site: <https://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/final2016/>

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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT
“2016 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Oct. 5		2016 KSU Ag Lenders Conference	Manhattan
Oct. 7-Nov.4	10-11:30am	Master of Memory (Fridays)	Wakefield-Medura Congregational Church
Oct. 7	9:30-4:30pm	K-State Ranching Summit	K-State Student Union Grand Ballroom
Oct. 10	10:30am	Fall Fling	Clay Center-4-H Conference Center-Fairgrounds
Oct. 10-14		Fall 2016 Arborists Training Course	Manhattan-Pottorf Hall, Cico Park
Oct. 11	9-4pm	Ranching for Profit Workshop	Phillipsburg-Phillips County Fair Building
Oct. 12	9-4pm	Ranching for Profit Workshop	Colby-Thomas County 4-H Building
Nov. 1-2		Kansas Income Tax Institute	Topeka
Nov. 2-3		Kansas Income Tax Institute	Salina
Nov. 10		Crop Insurance Workshop	Salina
Nov. 17	8-4pm	Swine Day 2016	K-State Alumni Center

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 John Forshee, Director, River Valley Extension District # 4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335.