

News Release for Immediate Use or Next Issue
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River Valley Extension District
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Sonia Cooper Set to Retire from River Valley Extension District

Sonia Cooper, K-State Research and Extension - Extension Agent for Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health will be retiring with her last day in the Clay Center office set for July 31, 2021. To celebrate with her and to say good luck, we will be holding a public, come-and-go reception for Sonia on July 29th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Clay Center Extension Office.

Sonia began her service with the River Valley Extension District as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - nutrition educator and served 11-years in that role. During that time, Sonia spent much of her time in classrooms around the district teaching children the ins and outs of healthy food choices. She educated on healthy food alternatives and often encouraged children to try foods samples that were new to them.

In July of 2018, Sonia took over her current position as the Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health extension agent, widening her educational reach and breadth. As she took on the broader responsibilities of an agent, she continued to oversee SNAP-education in the district. She was also part of a team that worked to expand River Valley Extension's education on mental health. Sonia was quite active in the K-State Research and Extension system serving on several teams and committees.

During the recent pandemic, Sonia worked hard to adapt to the challenges of reaching her audiences. She stepped into technology creating video content for social media and found ways to video conference into the school classrooms. She was also instrumental in getting Mark Potter to speak on depression at Cloud County Community College this past spring.

Though I only had the pleasure to work with Sonia for the last six months, it was obvious she had a great rapport with everyone, especially her clientele. She is extremely kind and patient and has a great capacity for listening. She is always seeking ways to serve others, whether it be clientele or her coworkers. As we worked across the district, children would often exclaim to Sonia, "hey I know you, you taught us about...." This is a great testament to the breadth and impact of her programming.

Sonia is going to be missed greatly by the River Valley District community and her coworkers. Please plan to come by on the 29th to wish her well.

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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