

News Release for Immediate Use or Next Issue
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River Valley District
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Garden to Plate: Food Safety for School and Community Gardens

Kids and families who grow their own produce are more likely to eat the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor. Because gardening is an effective strategy for healthier food consumption, the number of school and community gardens is increasing across the state of Kansas. However, fresh produce has also been linked to outbreaks of foodborne illness. Fruits and vegetables can be contaminated any time from planting to eating. Most pathogens are killed by cooking, but they are very difficult to wash off produce that will be eaten raw.

Participants will learn the importance of good practices for keeping produce safe from garden to plate.

Objectives include:

- How to select and maintain safe soil.
- How to practice personal hygiene with gardening.
- How to select and maintain safe water.
- How to practice food safety procedures in harvest and post-harvest.

This lesson is not just for school and community garden volunteers, educators, and teachers. This lesson would be beneficial to anyone, with or without an edible garden. Every consumer should know at least a little about their food's journey from field to fork!

There will be four times to catch this event, Tuesday, March 22 at 10:00 a.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Washington and 2:00 p.m. at the Clay Center Extension Office and Thursday, March 24 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cloud County Resource Center in Concordia and 2:00 p.m. at the Belleville Public Library.

If you have questions regarding produce safety or food safety please reach out to Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent. You are welcome to call her at 785-243-8185 or email her at kaitlinmoore@ksu.edu.

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