Hello to everyone in the River Valley Extension District community! I am Wade Reh and I’m the new director of River Valley Extension as well as the Community Vitality Extension Agent. I’ll be assuming the duties previously performed by John Forshee. I’m extremely excited to join the community, get to work, and learn more about the area.

I grew up in Inman, Kansas with three brothers and two hard working parents that ensured all four of us got a good education. After graduating from Inman High School, I spent four years in Stillwater earning my BS in Animal Science from Oklahoma State University. I then moved on to the University of California, Davis, where I got a MS in Animal Science and a Ph.D. in Genetics. My research during that time was on improving the efficiency of genetic engineering of the mammalian genome.

After the University of California, I worked two years doing cancer research at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Research Center then five more years at the University of Texas’s Dell Pediatric Research Institute in Austin. My research investigated the contribution of molecular DNA repair mechanisms to the prevention, causes, and cures of cancer.

In 2017, I joined K-State Research and Extension as an Agriculture-Natural Resources/ 4-H/ Community Vitality Agent in Kiowa County (Greensburg). Throughout my time there, our main focus was on revitalizing and growing Extension in the county and developing stability in rural communities.

One might ask, “So with that past, why are you now in Extension?” There is a lot to the answer of that question, and I invite you to come by and get all the details. But it boils down to having a desire for knowledge as well as a desire for service. I’ve found that K-State Research and Extension is one of the few instances where sound knowledge is imparted to patrons as a service to individuals, families, and communities to make lives better.

I met my wife Shelley while in Stillwater. We got married the summer after we graduated OSU and promptly moved to Davis, California. She’s also a scientist by training and has a MS in Comparative Pathology. Most of our spare time we’ve had over the last 20 years was spent raising and enjoying our now teenage daughters. We also like to vegetable garden and hike in the mountains. We have enjoyed our time in all the places we’ve lived, but we always missed Kansas and are thrilled to be back in the state.

I’m thankful for the unique experiences I’ve had and the path that has brought me here. I look forward to getting to know the area, and I’m eager to meet and get to know you. Please don’t hesitate to reach out. My office is in Clay Center, so drop by or give me a call. I would also be happy to make arrangements to chat with you a little closer to your home as well.