STRENGTH TRAINING PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS
BEGINNING AUGUST 1ST IN CONCORDIA

A strength training program for older adults will be available to join on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2pm, at the Concordia Senior Center, 109 W 7th St. in Concordia, KS. There will be a total of 16 classes. The program begins on Thursday, August 1st and concludes on Tuesday, September 24th.

The first class will be 90 minutes long as there will be a brief orientation and fitness assessments conducted just prior to starting the exercise class.

The program fee is $20.

Strength training is no longer just for bodybuilders. Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is an eight-week, evidence-based strength training program designed for older adults who want to improve their quality of life and stay active. The exercises are easy to learn, safe, and effective.

No need to wear special clothes—just comfortable, loose-fitting pants and shirt, along with sturdy, closed-toe walking shoes.

Participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes include warm-up exercises, eight strengthening exercises, with or without hand and ankle weights, and cool-down stretches. Over the course of the program, you will increase your strength and improve your balance. After the eight weeks are over, you can continue the strength training program in the comfort of your home or with a group. Weights will be available on-site, and a trained instructor will help you learn and do these exercises safely.

What are the benefits of Strength Training?

- Increased muscle strength
- Improved balance
- Enhanced flexibility
- Stronger bones
- Arthritis relief
- Weight control
- Mood lifted
- Reduced stress
- Reduced risks for heart disease

The class is limited to 15 participants. Please register in advance. Call the Concordia Extension Office at 785-243-8185 or email kaitlinmoore@ksu.edu
During August, most school supplies from them. Be present, turn off electronics, and ask your routines and schedules, but also take the time to seek input. In addition to these tips, talk with your children. Share the to find needed items. To help with those routines, organize so everything has a place. Maybe it’s a basket, cubby, or a hook in your house so your child knows where their school items, such as a backpack, lunch box, and shoes, go every day after school. This will help with the morning routine, so no one must take time to find needed items. In addition to these tips, talk with your children. Share the routines and schedules, but also take the time to seek input from them. Be present, turn off electronics, and ask your children about their day. Make time for conversations. A little preparation and communication can be helpful in the weeks to come as families transition back to school it can be a stressful time. Enjoy these moments with your children as parents all know the days are slow, but the years go fast.

## SCHOOL SUPPLY SHOPPING

As soon as Fourth of July ended, store shelves started filling up with school supplies. Back-to-school shopping can be a large expense for those of us with children in school. Consider these tips and tricks to ease the blow on your budget.

- **Check area resources.** Reach out to see about any backpack or school supply drives that may be able to assist with securing supplies.

- **Take inventory.** Before you do any shopping, grab that school list, and see what you have on hand. Go through supplies and clothes to determine what your child can reuse instead of purchasing new. Maybe a little deep scrub can make used things look brand new. For example, not replacing a backpack or pair of shoes can be a big savings.

- **Set a budget.** Once you know what you need to purchase, be realistic when looking at your finances to determine what you can afford. This is also a great teachable moment for young children. Give them the budget amount, supply list, and help them make smart choices to stick to the budget. Do you need that $5 designer notebook when you can purchase a generic one for $1?

- **Compare prices.** You could do this in the store, which may take more time, but you could also check prices online at multiple stores to find the cheapest option. It may take a few moments, but it can be a big savings, especially when considering purchasing more expensive items, such as clothes and shoes.

- **Consider second-hand shopping.** Check out garage sales, thrift stores, and consignment shops for gently used items. You could also consider swapping with friends or family to get new-to-you things, such as backpacks, clothes, and shoes.

- **Watch for sales.** During August, most school supplies are on sale, but if your child has clothes or a backpack they can continue to use, sometimes prices are even lower in September as stores work to sell remaining school supplies. Don’t let the expense of starting back to school put a dent in your budget. Take the time to consider all your options and be a smart shopper.

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### ONLINE SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNTS

An online Social Security Account created before September 18, 2021 use a specific username and password created by the individual to log in. Soon you will no longer be able to sign into your online Social Security account using that username and password. Instead, you will be required to create a Login.gov or ID.me account to access your SSA account.

The process is fairly simple and quick. Once you log into your SSA account using your SSA username and password, you will be prompted to create a login.gov account. After following the prompts and creating your account, it will ask to link your old SSA account to the new login.gov account. If you need assistance with this process or creating an account for the first time, please contact Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Extension Agent at 785-527-5084 or mthayer@ksu.edu.

### BACK-TO-SCHOOL PARENTING

If your family is anything like mine, you probably get a little off schedule during the summer months. Lots of activities with a later sunset means later bedtimes and wake up times. August is here, which means school is about to start. Schedules, routines, and organization can help reduce the stress of returning to school.

Establish a bedtime routine with a set time for your children to be in bed. It can be helpful to write the routine down. For younger children, you can use pictures or a chart to help them learn the routine. Routines can help children learn responsibility and build self-esteem in their ability to do tasks. Establish a morning routine as well. Getting out the door for school and work can be hectic. Consider using an alarm clock and having children wake themselves. Again, have a written routine for getting ready for the day and use pictures for younger children if needed.

Most of the time, school means homework so have a set location and time. Check in daily with your children to see what needs done. Make sure to have supplies needed to complete any work sent home from school.

To help with those routines, organize so everything has a place. Maybe it’s a basket, cubby, or a hook in your house so your child knows where their school items, such as a backpack, lunch box, and shoes, go every day after school. This will help with the morning routine, so no one must take time to find needed items.

In addition to these tips, talk with your children. Share the routines and schedules, but also take the time to seek input from them. Be present, turn off electronics, and ask your
Medicare can be confusing.
Let us help.

If you will be starting Medicare soon or already have Medicare but have questions, join Extension Agent, Jordan Schuette to learn about benefits, enrollment, eligibility, supplements, and more!

Please RSVP to the River Valley Extension District – Washington
It may be August, but that means Medicare Part D Open Enrollment is right around the corner. Information about specific 2025 Medicare Part D Plans will not be available until October. Near the end of September or first part of October, Medicare Beneficiaries with a Part D Plan will receive information from their company informing them of any changes for 2025. The Open Enrollment Period for Part D Plans will be October 15th - December 7th.

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) Counselors are available in your area to help in shopping and enrolling in 2025 Part D Plans. Appointments will be available at all four office locations in the River Valley Extension District. Be on the lookout in the September River Valley Extension District Newsletter for more information on appointment times. Some location’s appointment times fill up fast. Part D Scheduling opens on **September 16, 2024**, so make sure to call and schedule your appointment. If you are new to Medicare or have any Medicare questions, please contact either Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Agent, in the Belleville Office at 785-527-5084 or Jordan Schuette, in the Washington Office, by phone at 785-325-2121.

**NATIONAL GRANDPARENT’S DAY**

National Grandparents Day is Sunday, September 8, 2024. Mark your calendars to celebrate your grandparents! How have you celebrated your grandparents in past years? How do you plan to celebrate your grandparents this year?

This is a day to honor our grandparents. It is also a great opportunity for grandparents to show appreciation for their grandchildren and to educate grandchildren and younger generations about the knowledge, strength, and life experience the older generation has to offer (legacyproject.org).

Think about the special ways you can celebrate your grandparents. Perhaps you can plan to spend the day with them, choose an activity to do together, color them a picture, connect via technology, or share a meal with them. Happy Grandparents Day to all those celebrating in the River Valley Extension District!

On a hot summer day, there is nothing better than a cool drink of clean water to quench one’s thirst. For cattle out on pasture, their need for clean, accessible water is important for good health.

During periods of hot temperatures, water intake increases to aid in cooling the body and to replenish water lost due to sweating, respiration, and urination.

In the summer, it is estimated that cows need to drink about two gallons of water for every 100 pounds of body weight. A nonlactating cow or bull needs one gallon of water per 100 pounds of body weight. As an example, spring-calving cows will need close to 20 to 24 gallons of water per day for themselves and another 5 to 10 gallons for their calf in these high temperature environmental conditions. Remember, some of the water will come from the feed they eat and/or vegetative grass which is high in water content. Even though calves diet primarily consist of milk, they also need to drink water to help their rumen properly digest any foods they are starting to consume.

Not only is it important to provide water access for cattle, but the quality of water is key to good health. If cattle don’t hydrate well there is potential to become more susceptible to disease such as pneumonia. One source of water for cattle on pastures is ponds. Making sure the ponds have a quality water source will help with water intake. Water quality can affect how much is consumed and the overall health of the herd. Odors or tastes can influence water intake, impacting feed intake, weight gain, reproduction, and health. Stagnant water, lakes, and ponds are ideal environments for the growth of blue-green algae, which can be toxic to cattle. When in abundance, blue-green algae gives the water the appearance that someone has dumped a bucket of light green or turquoise paint in the water. Signs of blue-green algae poisoning are diarrhea, vomiting, lack of coordination, labored breathing, seizures, convulsions, and possibly death.

Another source of water for cattle either in the pasture or in a feedlot is a water tank. Space at a water source and water flow should also be accounted for based on expected weather conditions. Typically, 1.5 inches of waterer space per animal is sufficient, however, a general guideline is that cattle require three linear inches of water space per animal during the summer months. Providing access to quality water will help cattle reach their potential of water intake during these hot summer months.
PREVENT PINK EYE THROUGH AUTOGENOUS VACCINES

K-State veterinarian discusses a novel preventative approach to control pink eye
By Jacob Klaudt, K-State Research and Extension News Service

Prevention programs for pink eye, an acute eye disease affecting cattle of all ages, are proving to be "very, very effective" for suppressing infections. "Currently, there is a big move to autogenous and prescription vaccines because there are many strains of these pink-eye-causing bacteria out there," veterinarian Gregg Hanzlicek said. "Sometimes, there is not good cross-protection from commercial vaccines."

Commercial vaccines have been available to ward off pink-eye for a long time. A recent push towards personalized programs that use farm-specific bacteria could lead to fewer outbreaks, according to Hanzlicek. "An autogenous, or prescription, vaccine is where a veterinarian collects eye swabs from affected animals, and the bacteria found are sent to a lab where they grow that bacteria colony," he said. "Then a specific vaccine is created using the organisms on that ranch. There are a lot of field reports where these products seem to be very, very effective."

The four main pink eye-causing bacteria include Mycoplasma bovis, Mycoplasma bovoculi, Moraxella bovis and Moraxella bovoculi. "We can swab healthy eyes and eyes with pink eye, and we are going to find the same bacteria," he said. "To have a pink eye case, something must break the integrity of the cornea. That allows those bacteria to enter the underlying layers of the eye, and that is when the infection starts."

Producers must remain vigilant of eye injuries within their cowherd to avoid an escalation of the infection, according to Hanzlicek. "At first, you will see runny eyes. Infected cattle are also sensitive to light, so they will hold their eyes shut," he said. "As the disease progresses, an ulcer (crater) can develop in the cornea. If the infection persists, that crater can become deeper and deeper until things in the eye – like the iris and the lens – start falling out or prolapsing, and then the eye’s shape will change. Vision never returns at that point."

He added: "It can go from mild to severe within 2-3 days. The earlier in the animals that these infections are caught, the more likely we will save the eye." Certain pests, harsh climates and how cattle consume feed can impair their eyes and ultimately lead to pink eye, Hanzlicek said. "Face flies and house flies feed on the juices around the eye," he said. "Their raspy mouth parts are very coarse and can lacerate the eye. Times of drought like we have had in the past few years create large amounts of dust that can get in the eye and damage it."

"Later in the grazing season when the grass starts heading out, the calves and cows try to graze closer to the ground. They must go through those rough seed heads to find the more palatable grass, which can cut the eye. We also see it when bunk feeding dry total mixed rations. If there is enough of it, the hay dust – especially in alfalfa – can get into the eyes and cause a pink eye outbreak." Hanzlicek advises producers to consult a local veterinarian to determine the best pink eye prevention method for them.

PERFORMANCE RESULTS IN FROM WHEAT VARIETY PLOT

On June 5th, the River Valley Extension District hosted its annual Wheat Variety Plot Tour. Now that harvest is over, the results are in on how each variety fared at our cooperator plot in Morganville.

This year’s top yielding wheat variety was LCS Atomic AX, licensed by Limagrain Cereal Seeds, at 106.68 bu./ac., which is 124% of the plot’s average yield of 85.94 bu./ac. Atomic possesses the CoAxium trait, which makes it tolerant to the Aggressor herbicide and adds an extra management angle. However, Aggressor was not used in the management of the plot, because the plot was planted in 18-foot variety strips where not all varieties were resistant to Aggressor. In fact, the management of the plot was uniform across all varieties, so Atomic’s performance was based on its inherent characteristics relative to the other varieties given this year’s growing conditions.

Other top varieties included an AP EverRock/SY Wolverine blend by AgriPro at 100.02 bu./ac. (116% of avg.), Paradise by Polansky Seed at 98.21 bu./ac. (114% of avg.), and WB4699 by WestBred at 97.55 bu./ac. (113% of avg.). Varieties licensed exclusively by private companies swept the top five spots for highest yield. A brand-new variety developed by Kansas State University, KS Bill Snyder, took sixth spot with a 97.07 bu./ac. yield (113% of avg.).

On the flip side, the bottom three varieties for yield this year were Kivari (66.51bu/ac 77%), Guardian (64.65%bu/ac 75%), and Whistler (59.23bu/ac 69%), all developed by Colorado State University. Ironically, Whistler was the top yielding variety in many performance trials in North-Central Kansas in 2023. Clearly, the differences in growing conditions between the 2023 and 2024 wheat crops had a dramatic effect on each variety’s performance year to year.

One of the major differences in wheat growing conditions year to year was disease pressure. In 2023, very few wheat crops faced difficulties with wheat diseases such as rusts and mosaics, while in 2024 there were widespread outbreaks of...
Wheat Streak Mosaic and other diseases in north-central Kansas. The River Valley District’s Morganville Variety Plot was no exception, testing positively for Wheat Streak Mosaic, Triticum Mosaic, and Barley Yellow Dwarf. Visible crop injury was worse on the north side of the plot and gradually better moving south, as it was speculated that the source of the disease, the wheat curl mite, was transmitted by volunteer wheat growing in a neighboring field to the north. Therefore, it would seem that varieties most susceptible to these diseases, or in closest proximity to their source, would perform the worst. However, there was no significant correlation found between the advertised susceptibility of each variety to the diseases confirmed in the plot—or a variety’s relative proximity to the source of the diseases—within final yield. The only anecdotal evidence available is that the AP EverRock/SY Wolverine blend, which bookended the plot on the north and south, yielded about 5% worse on the north side than on the south. Even so, there was no statistically significant relationship between disease pressure and yield in the variety plot.

The strongest indicator of yield was found to be the adaptation of a variety to its planted location. Varieties adapted to north-central Kansas were 35% correlated with higher yield versus those that were primarily adapted for other regions. The most reasonable explanation for this is that 2024 was much closer to what we might consider “normal” growing conditions for winter wheat in north-central Kansas than the past two or three years, where average county-level yields have struggled to break out of the 30-40 bu./ac. range. Under “normal” growing conditions, one would expect varieties designed for a particular region to perform well in that region. Drought stress, which characterized this area’s wheat crops in 2022 and 2023, likely caused better performance for varieties adapted to withstand drought stress in those years, such as the Colorado State varieties.

For a full listing of variety performance in this year’s test plot, or to learn more about wheat variety selection for the upcoming crop year, please contact Luke Byers, River Valley Extension District Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent, at 785-632-5335 or by email at lsbyers@ksu.edu.

**DIVIDING IRIS AND DAYLILIES**

Bearded Irises are well adapted to Kansas and multiply quickly. After several years, the centers of the clumps tend to lose vigor, and flowering occurs toward the outside. Dividing irises every three to five years will help rejuvenate the plants and increase flowering. Iris may be divided from late July through August, but late July through early August is ideal. Because iris clumps are fairly shallow, it is easy to dig up the entire clump. The root system of the plant consists of thick rhizomes and smaller feeder roots. Use a sharp knife to cut the rhizomes apart so each division consists of a fan of leaves and a section of rhizome. The best divisions are made from a double fan that consists of two small rhizomes each having a fan of leaves. The rhizomes that do not split produce single fans. The double fans are preferred because they produce more flowers the first year after planting. Single fans take a year to build up strength.

Rhizomes that show signs of damage due to iris borers or soft rot may be discarded, but you may want to physically remove borers from rhizomes and replant if the damage is not severe. It is possible to treat mild cases of soft rot by scraping out the affected tissue, allowing it to dry in the sun and dipping it in a 10 percent solution of household bleach. Make the bleach solution by mixing one-part bleach with nine parts water. Rinse the treated rhizomes with water and allow them to dry before replanting. Cut the leaves back by two-thirds before replanting. Prepare the soil by removing weeds and adding some fertilizer. Fertilize according to soil test recommendations or by applying a complete fertilizer, such as a 10-10-10, at the rate of 1 pound per 100 square feet. Mix the fertilizer into the soil to a depth of 6 inches. Once the area is ready, replant the rhizomes. Then comes the hard part, waiting until next year for them to bloom!

Now let’s talk about daylilies. Daylilies are like Iris; they need to be divided every three to five years to maintain good flower production. Though they may be divided in early spring before growth starts, it is more common to divide them at this time of year. Many gardeners cut back the tops to about half their original height to make the plants easier to handle.

Daylilies have a very tough root system that can make them difficult to divide while in place. Dividing in place is practical if it hasn’t been long since the last division happened. In most cases, a spading fork can be used to peel fans from the existing clump. If the plants have been in place longer and are well grown together, it is more practical to divide them after the entire clump has been dug.

Use a spade to lift the entire clump out of the ground. Although it is possible to cut the clump apart with a sharp spade, you’ll save more roots by using spading forks back-to-back to divide the clump into sections. Each section should be about the size of a head of cauliflower. Space divisions 24 to 30 inches apart, and set each back to its original depth. The number of flowers will be reduced the first year after division but will return to normal until the plants need to be divided again. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatsohl@ksu.edu.
BLOSSOM END ROT

Do you have tomatoes with a sunken, brown leathery patch on the bottom of the fruit? If so, then you probably have blossom end rot. Blossom end rot is not a disease; it is a condition that is caused by a lack of calcium in the soil. In Kansas this is not necessarily the case, because Kansas soils are derived from limestone, which is partially made up of calcium. So, what causes blossom end rot in Kansas? Actually, there are a number of possible causes, especially on tomatoes. Let’s look at some of the other possible causes of blossom end rot.

The first possible cause could be that the tomato tops have outgrown the root system. During cooler spring weather the root system can keep up, but when it turns hot and dry, the plant tries to keep itself alive by sending water; with the calcium it carries; to the leaves and the fruit is bypassed. The plant responds to the heat and lack of calcium with new root growth which should allow the condition to correct itself after a couple of weeks.

The second possible cause could be heavy fertilization, especially with ammonium forms of nitrogen, which can encourage this condition. Heavy fertilization encourages more top foliage growth than root growth causing the ammonium form of nitrogen to compete with calcium for uptake through the roots to the fruit.

The third possible cause could be anything that disturbs the plant roots such as hoeing too deep. Mulching your plants will help because it keeps the soil surface cooler and reduces weed growth and promotes a better environment for root growth.

The fourth possible cause could be inconsistent watering. Keep soil moist but not waterlogged. Mulching can help by keeping the soil moisture level consistent over time. Even so, there are some years you do everything right and the condition shows up due to the weather. In such cases, remember that blossom-end rot is a temporary condition, and plants should come out of it in a couple of weeks. You want to pick off affected fruit to encourage new fruit formation.

Even though blossom end rot is most common on tomatoes, it can also affect squash, peppers and watermelons. If you are noticing that you have a lot of blossom end rot occurring, go through the possible causes and see if you can find what might be causing the problem. If you have any questions please contact Kelsey Hatesohl at the Washington Office at 785-325-2121 or at khatesohl@ksu.edu.

TOMATO CRACKING

Tomatoes often have problems with cracking caused by pressure inside the fruit that is more than the skin can handle. Cracks are usually on the upper part of the fruit and can be concentric (in concentric circles around the stem) or radial (radiating from the stem).

Tomatoes have a root system that is very dense and fibrous and is quite efficient in picking up water. Unfortunately, the root system can become unbalanced with the top of the plant. Early in the season, it may be small in relation to the top growth resulting in blossom-end rot during hot, dry weather. Later it may be so efficient that it provides too much water when we get rain or irrigate heavily after a dry spell. This quick influx of water can cause the tomato fruit to crack.

Therefore, even consistent watering can help with cracking. Mulching will also help because it moderates moisture levels in the soil. However, you can do everything right and still have problems with cracking in some years. If you have any questions please contact Kelsey Hatesohl at the Washington Office at 785-325-2121 or at khatesohl@ksu.edu.

RVED FALL FLING

The River Valley Extension District is hosting this year’s Fall Fling, formerly hosted by the Clay County Homemaker Extension Unit Council. It is scheduled for Monday, October 14th, at the Clay Center Event Center at the Clay County Fairgrounds. Fellowship and fun will be a large part of the Fall Fling. All interested men and women in the area are encouraged to attend.

Everyone is asked to bring a salad for the noon luncheon. Refrigeration is available upon arrival at the meeting and tableware and beverages will be provided.

Two programs will be presented at the Fall Fling. The first program, “Strain of Stress” will be presented by Monica Thayer, Family Resource Management Agent. Along with this program, she will be teaching participants how to make homemade hand scrubs. Be on the lookout in the September Newsletter for the subject of the other presentation and more important details about the Fall Fling.

RIVER VALLEY EXTENSION DISTRICT OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2024 FOR LABOR DAY
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<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 29-Aug. 3</td>
<td>1-2pm</td>
<td>Republic County Fair</td>
<td>Concordia– Concordia Senior Center, 109 W 7th St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1-Sept. 24</td>
<td>10am-1pm</td>
<td>Strength Training Program for Older Adults (Tuesday’s and Thursday’s)</td>
<td>NCK Fairgrounds-West side of Commercial Building</td>
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<td>Aug. 3</td>
<td>6:30pm</td>
<td>Free Health and Cancer Screening</td>
<td>Clay Center– FNB Basement, 101 C Street</td>
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<td>Aug. 27</td>
<td>8am-4pm</td>
<td>Medicare Basics</td>
<td>River Valley District Offices Closed</td>
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<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>8am-4pm</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
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<td>Sept. 8</td>
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<td>National Grandparent’s Day</td>
<td>Salina– Tony’s Pizza Event Center, 800 The Midway</td>
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<td>Oct.15-Dec. 7</td>
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<td>Medicare Part D Open Enrollment</td>
<td>Appointments available in all RVED Offices</td>
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