

River Valley District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

rivervalley.ksu.edu

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Extension District

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SONIA COOPER TO CONTINUE IN RIVER VALLEY AS DISTRICT EXTENSION AGENT- NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY, AND HEALTH

I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Sonia Cooper. I have been a member of the River Valley Extension District team as a SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Nutrition Educator for the past eleven years.

I am excited to announce that I will be transitioning to a new role in the River Valley Extension District as Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent.

I have enjoyed going to schools in the district, encouraging healthy food choices and sharing nutritious snacks. Summer programming included a more relaxed audience of kids' in Concordia and Belleville summer recreation programs and Kid's café in the Clay Center park.

Besides the school age audience, I have programmed with adults at Pawnee Mental Health, Big Lakes, Food Commodity Distribution, and Senior Food Commodity distribution.

I graduated from Kansas State University in Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

I feel strongly about the relationship I have developed within groups in the River Valley District. In this relationship I can link the groups with Extension to provide relevant information to strengthen and support the health and wellness of individuals of the communities in the River Valley District.

My husband Brad and I have been married thirty-eight years and currently reside in Palmer. We have lived in the Clay Center area for the last twenty years. Our two daughters Crystal and Holly graduated from Clay Center High School and Kansas State University.

Some hobbies I enjoy are spending time in the kitchen, walking, tending to some favorite flowers in the garden, and family time in Colorado. Color in the yard and flower pots on our deck is a highlight in the spring, summer, and fall. As a family we like to vacation in Colorado. We often choose a destination, and search for various trails to hike in the area.

Along with this I like to visit with youth and adults about recipes they have tried, and what works for that person. It is exciting for me to get new recipe ideas that I eventually try and I do not mind adding a cooking or baking idea to my collection.

I look forward to working with all of you within the River Valley in my new role with the District. It is fair time and I look forward to seeing many of you then!



HEAT STOPS TOMATOES FROM SETTING FRUIT

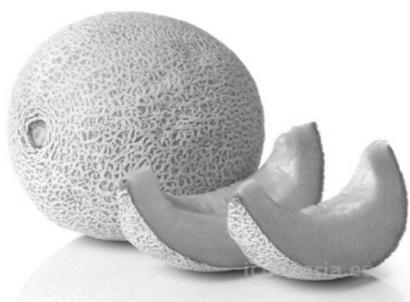
Having trouble with your tomato plants not setting fruit this year? When temperatures remain above 75°F at night and are around 95°F during the day, and with dry, hot winds, these conditions will cause poor fruit set on in tomatoes. High temperatures interfere with pollen viability and/or cause excessive style growth leading to a lack of pollination. It usually takes about 3 weeks for tomato flowers to develop into fruit large enough to notice and an additional week before tomatoes are full size and ready to start ripening. There are “heat-set” tomatoes such as, Florida 91, Sun Leaper, and Sun Master that will set fruit at higher temperatures; the difference is normally only 2 to 3 degrees. Cooler temperatures will allow flowers to resume fruit set. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.

HOW TO PICK A RIPE MUSKMELON

One of the hardest things to do when selecting a melon is to make sure you are choosing a ripe melon. Deciding when a melon is ready to be picked can be a challenge. Here are some helpful tips and tricks to help you chose a ripe melon.

Muskmelons are one of those crops that tell you when they are ready to be picked. This can help you not only harvest melons from your own garden at the correct time, but also choose good melon from a store. As a melon ripens, a layer of cells around the stems softens causing the melon to detach from the vine. This is called “slipping” and will leave a dish-shaped scar at the point of stem attachment. When harvesting melons from the garden, put a little pressure on the vine where it attaches to the fruit. If ripe, the melon will release or “slip” right off.

When choosing a melon from the store look for a clean, dish-shaped scar. Ripe melons have a pleasant, musky aroma when stored at room temperature (not refrigerated). I hope these helpful tips and tricks help you enjoy ripe melons all season long. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.



TREES LOSING LEAVES EARLY THIS SUMMER

Have you been noticing that your trees are losing leaves this summer? Well, there are three situations that may be causing your trees to loose their leaves. These situations are caused by low amounts of water and extreme temperatures. None of these situations should kill the tree immediately, but multiple years of the same conditions will have an effect on the overall health of the tree.

The first situation is the tree is producing yellow leaves throughout the whole tree canopy. If the falling leaves are well distributed throughout the tree and result in a general thinning of the leaves, this is not a serious problem. Trees will often set more leaves in the spring than they can support during the summer. Heat and drought stress will cause the tree to lose leaves, due to the available amount of soil moisture. The leaves that drop are most often yellow with no discernible disease spots. However, at times, they can drop green leaves that appear perfectly healthy. As long as the leaf drop results in a gradual thinning of the leaves, the tree should be fine; just water the tree during dry periods.

The second situation is all the leaves on a tree are turning yellow and in some cases, virtually all of the leaves could drop off. Certain trees, such as hackberry, can drop all of the leaves and enter summer dormancy. We are a bit early for this to occur, but may happen later in the summer if we continue to have hot and dry weather. Trees in summer dormant should have flexible twigs and healthy buds. Usually, the effect on the health of the tree is minor and the tree leafs out normally next spring.

As long as the tree has enough stored energy reserves to make it through to the next spring, it will survive. The twigs and buds of the tree tell the story. If the buds die and the twigs become brittle, that part of the tree is dead.

The last situation is all the leaves on a tree turn brown and die, but remain attached to the tree. This can happen seemingly overnight. In such cases, the tree couldn't keep up with moisture demands and died quickly. This year, the cause may be due to the early heat and drought conditions. Like the second situation, the twigs and buds are the most important clues as to the health of the tree. As long as the buds are alive and the twigs are flexible, do not remove the tree, it still has life. If you have limited access to water and you need to choose what to water, water the trees first. They take the longest to grow, are the most difficult to grow, and are the most expensive to replace. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.



WATERING FRUIT PLANTS DURING THE SUMMER

With all the hot days we have been having this summer, extra watering will be needed this summer if we don't get rain. When the temperature exceeds 90°F, fruit plants lose water quickly. When this happens, moisture is withdrawn from the fruit to supply the plant. Stress from high temperatures, along with a moisture deficit in the root environment, may cause fruit to drop or fail to increase in size. The stress may also reduce the development of fruit buds for next year's fruit crop. If you have fruit plants such as trees, vines, canes, and such, check soil moisture at the roots. Insert a spade, shovel, a pointed metal or wood probe, or a long screwdriver into the soil about 8 to 12 inches. If the soil is hard, dry, and difficult to penetrate, the moisture level is very low, and plants should be irrigated to prevent drooping and promote fruit enlargement. Water can be added to the soil using sprinklers, soaker hose, drip irrigation, or even a small trickle of water running from the hose for a few hours. The amount of time you irrigate should depend upon the size of the plants and the volume of water you are applying. Add enough moisture so you can easily penetrate the soil in the root area of the plant.

While hot, dry weather continues, check soil moisture at least once a week to make sure your plants are receiving enough water. Strawberries have a shallow root system and may need to be watered more often during extreme weather. In addition, newly planted fruit trees sited on sandy soils may also need to be watered more often. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.

DIVIDING IRIS

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 iris every three to five years will help rejuvenate the plants and increase flowering. The ideal time to divide iris is late July through early August. 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 will normally take a year to

build up strength and reserves before flowering. 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 fertilizing. 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. Be wary of using a complete fertilizer in areas that have been fertilized heavily in the past. A growing number of soil tests show high levels of phosphorus. In such cases, use a fertilizer that has a much higher first number (nitrogen) than second (phosphorus). If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the Washington office, 785-325-2121 or khatesohl@ksu.edu.

STAY STRONG, STAY HEALTHY COMING TO WASHINGTON

Improve your health and quality of life plus have fun. Sign up for this strength building program designed for **older men and women age 60 and over**. Participants meet on Monday and Wednesday mornings for 8 weeks from 10-11am starting August 6-September 26 at the handicapped accessible **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 401 D Street in Washington.**

The last week of August we will meet on Friday, August 31st instead of a Wednesday, and we will not meet on Labor Day Monday instead the second session will be on Friday, September 7th.

Our bodies are made to move. Physical inactivity can place our health at risk for many chronic diseases. Here's the good news! The Stay Strong, Stay Healthy program is built on simple, strength-building exercises that will improve your balance, health, and state of mind. The classes build muscle strength which, in turn, improves balance, reduces fractures, decreases arthritis pain, heart disease, and depression. Other benefits may include better stress management and improved sleep quality.

Activities in the classes include warm-up exercises, strengthening exercises with and without weights and a cool-down period. The cost to participate will be \$20. Weights will be furnished. Participants only need to bring a heavy bath towel and bottle of water. No special clothes or equipment are needed.

The classes will be led by Deanna Turner. Call the Washington Extension Office at 785-325-2121 to pre-register and pick up a packet. Some of the forms need to be returned before the first class on August 6. **Inquire about a scholarship if you have a limited income.** For more information contact Deanna at dturner@ksu.edu or call 785-632-5335.

NEW MEDICARE CARDS IN YOUR MAILBOX SOON

New Medicare cards will offer greater protection to more than 57.7 million Americans. The cards are being mailed out starting in July to Kansas Medicare beneficiaries. Some people who are new to Medicare have already received their new card. They are a combination of letters and numbers. I have noticed that the numbers are a slightly smaller size than the capital letters on the card.

Once you receive your new card, start using it right away. The new Medicare Number is a unique combination of numbers and letters. Your new number uses numbers 0 through 9. The letters S, L, O, I, B, and Z are never used.

Medicare will never call you uninvited and ask you to give them personal or private information to get your new Medicare number and card. The exceptions are:

1. A Medicare health or drug plan can call you if you are already a member of the plan. The agent who helped you join can also call you.
2. A customer service representative from 1-800-MEDICARE can call you if you've called and left a message or a representative said that someone would call you back.

Scam artists are already at work. I have already gotten phone calls that scam artists are trying to get your personal information by contacting you about your new Medicare card. If someone asks you for your information, for money, or threatens to cancel your health benefits if you do not share your personal information, hang up and call the Kansas Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Hotline at 1-800-860-5260 or Medicare at 1-800-633-4227.

ENROLL IN A DEFENSIVE DRIVING CLASS

Sharpen your driving skills! Prevent an accident from happening. Lower your auto insurance premium too. Enroll in the upcoming Defensive Driving Course offered at the K-State Research and Extension River Valley District Office in Clay Center. The class will be Monday, September 24, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. There is a \$20 registration fee per person to pay for materials. It is due by September 17th. In order to have a class, a minimum of 15 people are required to sign up.

Many defensive driving tips will be presented by Trooper Ben Gardner from the Kansas Highway Patrol. The class is completed in one day. Participants can bring their lunch with refrigeration available or break for an hour lunch. Breaks and snacks are provided. Participants do not drive or take a test. Several insurance companies recognize the benefits of defensive driving classes and provide a 5-10% premium discount to graduates of this course. The certificate received is effective for three years.

For more information, pre-register to the Clay Center Extension Office by calling 785-632-5335. Sign up today!

ALZHEIMER'S QUESTION AND ANSWER PROGRAM

Are you a caregiver for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or want to learn more? Plan to attend the upcoming program, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia But Never Asked". It will be presented on Tuesday, September 11 in Belleville from 1:30-3 p.m. at the Belleville Library Meeting Room, 1327 19th Street. The meeting will be repeated that evening in Washington at the FNB Basement Meeting Room, 101 C Street from 5:30-7 p.m.

Alzheimer's disease currently affects- 1 in every 10 people age 65 and older. The Kansas average was 10.3% of people in 2015. Clay County reported 21.4% of men and women age 65 and over with Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia in 2015, Cloud County 11.6%, Republic 10%, and Washington County 13.3%.

Cindy Miller, Dementia Care Specialist with the Alzheimer's Association from Topeka, will present this informative program. She will answer your questions and share helpful information for those people living with a loved one with the disease or wanting to know more about Alzheimer's. Miller provides support to individuals with the disease, family members, friends, and caregivers.

Please pre-register for the Belleville meeting by calling the Belleville District Extension Office at 785-527-5084 or register for the Washington meeting by calling the Washington Extension Office at 785-325-2121. Light refreshments will be provided. The program is sponsored by the River Valley Extension District, K-State Research & Extension. For more information contact Deanna Turner, District Extension Agent, at 785-632-5335 or e-mail dtturner@ksu.edu Everyone is invited.

Get Your Grand On! A Grand Time!

Plan to Attend the Sunflower (Senior) Fair
Tuesday, September 18
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Salina Tony's Pizza Event Center
(Formerly: Bicentennial Center)

Cost: To Be Determined Includes Lunch
Sponsored by :

North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging

Educational Workshops
Informative Exhibits
Inspiring Speakers
Health Screening

Meet new friends and visit with old ones. You will learn while having fun! Watch for the registration details to be released this summer.

Medicare Basics Workshop



This free educational program is designed for anyone interested in learning more about the Medicare maze, particularly those who are nearing age 65, who are soon to qualify because of a disability or who are helping family members with insurance and financial matters. We will cover Medicare eligibility, how and when to apply, what is covered by the various parts, and how to fill the gaps. We will also explain programs available to assist low income individuals and how to watch out for Medicare fraud.

Hosted By River Valley Extension District

River Valley Extension Office
 Monday, August 13
 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
 322 Grant Avenue
 Clay Center

Concordia Senior Center
 Tuesday, August 14
 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
 109 W. 7th Street
 Concordia

To register for Clay Center Workshop call the Clay Center District Extension Office at 785-632-5335 ; Concordia Workshop call the Concordia Extension Office at 785-243-1885. Or call the Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or e-mail Deanna Turner at dturner@ksu.edu

Medicare Basics is one of a series of Answers for Older Kansans (AOK) workshops sponsored by the North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, an Aging and Disability Resource Center. Other AOK workshops focus on community living and aging in place. Call Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or 785-776-9294 for more information.



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 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 67431. Phone 785-632-5335.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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Drop Of A Hat

Friday, August 3
 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Apollo Towers
 Community Room
 330 West Court
 Clay Center

Jay & Leslie

Juggling
 & Other
 Nonsense



Kids of All Ages Young & Older

You are invited to attend

Drop Of A Hat Laughing Matters

By
 Jay & Leslie Cady
 Mime, Magic & Comedy

Snacks & Fun

For more information contact
 Deanna Turner,
 River Valley
 K-State Research & Extension
 785-632-5335
 or
 Amber Bowser
 Apollo Towers
 785-632-5767

This Event is sponsored by:
 Clay County Wellness Council
 River Valley Extension District,
 K-State Research & Extension
 In cooperation with
 Clay County Task Force

K-STATE River Valley
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THE HOT SPOT OF HOT PEPPERS

If you eat foods with hot peppers, you likely know the spiciness, or heat, can vary a lot.

The heat comes from a group of compounds called capsaicinoids, including the well known capsaicin. This fiery compound causes “chemesthesis” in which the receptors inside the mouth react to pain, touch, and heat. Some may call it pain, others call it pleasure.

Chile pepper varieties have a varying amount of heat and can also be quite different within the same variety. Growing conditions will also determine heat in peppers. If the plant is stressed, the peppers will produce more capsaicin.

The pith, or white membrane, contains a majority of the heat from capsaicin. Simply cut out the pith, as well as the seeds, to cool down the heat. Save these to add back to a recipe if more heat is desired. The size of pepper makes little difference in heat pungency.

Source: The Science of Good Cooking, Cook’s Illustrated

DOES PECTIN EXPIRE?

In a word, yes.

It is not a food safety issue. It is a quality issue. If pectin is past the expiration date on the package, the product made with this pectin will not gel or work as it should. This is true for both liquid and dry pectin.

Dry pectin is made from citrus peel. Liquid pectin is made from apples. They are not interchangeable in recipes. For best results, use the type of pectin listed in the recipe.

www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/jam-jelly.html

The ripeness of fruit will affect the gelling properties. Under-ripe or over-ripe can affect how a jam or jelly gels.

-by Karen Blakeslee

NIH BODY WEIGHT PLANNER

The [NIH Body Weight Planner](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/bwp) (BWP) has moved from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) SuperTracker webpage to the NIDDK website at the new link www.niddk.nih.gov/bwp.

The BWP is a free, interactive tool developed by NIDDK researchers that can help people create physical activity and calorie plans to reach their goal weight and maintain it afterward. The tool uses science-based technology to tailor recommendations to individual users and accurately calculate how their bodies adjust to changes in diet and activity.

If you have not yet tried the Body Weight Planner, we invite you to visit the new page to practice using the tool. A short instructional video can be found at:

<https://youtu.be/v1gluQwieog>.

-by Karen Blakeslee

IT’S MELON SEASON! SERVE THEM SAFE!

Summer and fresh, juicy melons are a perfect match! Whether you grow them or buy from somewhere else, handling and prepping them safely at home is important.

It is easy to forget that melons grow on the ground. They are exposed to pests and microorganisms from the soil. Here are some tips to safely prepare your melon.

- Select a melon with no imperfections. Damage to rinds can cause mold growth or other bacteria to travel to the inside of the melon.
- Before cutting the melon, wash your hands. Be sure equipment and utensils are clean and sanitized, including your sink.
- Place the melon under running water and scrub the outside rind with a produce brush.
- Cut the melon and rinse the pieces as you go. Serve immediately. Store any cut melon leftovers in the refrigerator.

How to Prepare a Melon—video by Iowa State University at <https://youtu.be/gQNai8ASBEs> -by Karen Blakeslee

THE CHANGES ARE COMING TO NUTRITION FACTS

The Food and Drug Administration is updating the Nutrition Facts label and changes will be required starting Jan. 1, 2020. The updates include:

- Added sugars will have a separate line directly under “Total Sugars.”
- Serving sizes are based on what people actually eat at one time. These figures are being updated for the first time since 1993.
- Calories will be more noticeable in bigger and bolder font, you can’t miss them.

Updated Daily Values reflects how much of the nutrient is needed in a 2,000-calorie diet. Five percent is considered low, 20 percent is considered high.

Exhibiting Fruits, Vegetables, & Flowers at the Fair

Monday, July 9th 2018

6:30 pm

4-H Building

Clay Center Fairgrounds

205 S 12th Street

Clay Center, KS 67432

K-STATE

Research and Extension



Tuesday, July 10th

6:30pm

South Commercial Building

Washington County Fairgrounds

Washington, KS 66968

Wednesday, July 11th

6:30pm

Commercial Building

Cloud County Fairgrounds

Industrial Rd.

Concordia KS, 66901

Thursday, July 12th

6:30pm

4-H Building

NCK Free Fair Fairgrounds

901 O Street

Belleville, KS 66935

River Valley Horticulture Agent
Kelsey Hatesohl will be talking
about how to prepare your
produce for the fair

4-Her's as well as anyone
wanting to exhibit in Open
Class are welcome to attend

Please **RSVP** for the meeting
you are attending by **July 6th**
Meetings without rsvp's will be
canceled.

Questions contact Kelsey at
785-325-2121 or
khatesohl@ksu.edu

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PERMIT NO. 3****Address Service Requested****RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT****“2018 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
July 9	6:30pm	Exhibiting Fruits, Vegetables & Flowers at the Fair	Clay Center –4-H Building, Fairgrounds
July 10	6:30pm	Exhibiting Fruits, Vegetables & Flowers at the Fair	Washington-Fairgrounds, South Commercial Building
July 11	6:30pm	Exhibiting Fruits, Vegetables & Flowers at the Fair	Concordia-Fairgrounds, Commercial Building
July 12	6:30pm	Exhibiting Fruits, Vegetables & Flowers at the Fair	Belleville-Fairgrounds, 4-H Building
July 17-22		Washington County Fair	Washington
July 18-22		Clay County Fair	Clay Center
July 24-28		Cloud County Fair	Concordia
July 30-Aug. 4		NCK Free Fair	Belleville
Aug. 3	1:30-3pm	Drop of a Hat	Clay Center-Apollo Towers Comm. Room, 330 West Court
Aug. 6-Sept. 26	10-11am	Stay Strong, Stay Healthy	Washington- TBD
Aug. 13	6-8pm	Medicare Basics	Clay Center-RVD Office Meeting Room
Aug. 14	6-8pm	Medicare Basics	Concordia-Concordia Senior Center, 109 W. 7th
Aug. 18-19		Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes	
Sept. 11	1:30-3pm	Alzheimer’s Question and Answer Program	Belleville-Library Meeting Room, 1327 19th Street
Sept. 11	5:30-7pm	Alzheimer’s Question and Answer Program	Washington-FNB Basement Mtg. Room, 101 C Street
Sept. 18	8am-4pm	Sunflower Senior Fair	Salina-Tony’s Pizza Event Center
Sept. 24	9-3pm	Defensive Driving Class	Clay Center-RVD Office Meeting Room