Introducing our Summer Engagement Interns

Hello! My name is Amy Foos, and I am currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in agricultural business at Fort Hays State University!

I grew up in Ness County, being actively involved in the local 4-H program, which has grown my leadership in wanting to help others.

I am excited to have this opportunity to educate the youth while actively being involved in my local and surrounding communities. My love for agriculture and STEM will give students various skills and knowledge to broaden their learning experience. Knowing I can grow our next generation of leaders is a pure blessing!

Hello! My name is Alexa Reinhardt. After I graduated from Ness City high school in 2022, I spent the last two years working towards a degree in elementary education at Sterling College. I have wanted to be a teacher since I knew the words to say so!

Next school year, I will teach 4th grade in Lyons, KS, while I finish my degree at Sterling. My love for health and wellness, reading, creativity, and making learning fun will shine through the lessons we teach!

I am excited to further my knowledge and experience in education through this program, and I cannot wait to help your kiddos grow!

K-State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
It’s County Fair Prep Time

County Fair time will be here before we know it; are you ready to be part of these great community events?

Lane County - July 17-20
Catch the Fair Bug
Ness County - July 23-27
Kid Praising and Barn Raising
Rush County - July 31-Aug 3
Take Me to the Fair -150 years

A county fair is an event where there are displays of goods and animals, amusements rides, games, and competitions. The county fair is a time to come together and celebrate the harvest, embrace agriculture and support your local 4-H Youth! In general most county fairs have events and activities for the young and old and everyone in between.

So the question is how can you get involved?

- Support the 4-H and Fair Board with a financial donation.
- Come out and enjoy the events.
- Plan to eat lunch and supper with the local vendors, FREE Meals and Ice Cream Socials
- Exhibit - grow something, bake something, make something - Win a Ribbon!
- Market Wheat Show- Share your 2024 Wheat Harvest Story with the community
- Create a parade float (Lane and Ness)
- Volunteer your time to help run an amusement ride or game, help with the judging process
- Come out and watch the livestock shows and the evening entertainment.
- Play mud volleyball, cornhole, be a part of the tractor pull
- Don’t miss out it’s the best thing happening in your community that week!

What and When Can I Exhibit

Indoor exhibits at all 3 county fairs need to be checked in on Wednesday morning from 8 am -9 am in Lane, 8 am -10 am in Ness & Rush
Grab a fair book or copy of rules at the local Extension Office
- Baked Goods (cakes, breads, pies, cookies)
- Food Preservation (jams, jellies, pickles, etc.)
- Quilts and other Fiber Arts (knitting, crochet, cross-stitch, weaving, etc)
- Arts - (painting, drawings, ceramics, leather, jewelry, wreaths, Legos, other crafts)
- Photography
- Home grown Garden Products
- Crops and Market Wheat Show
- Largest Zucchini
- Home grown Flowers
- Woodworking Projects

Who do I ask if I have a Question?

- The local Extension Office staff can help you with many of your exhibit questions and the rules to follow when exhibiting.
- The County Fair Boards can help you with the details to events and activities that are not 4-H related.
- All of your 4-H questions can be answered by reading your fair packets, checking the fair book or talking to the Extension Staff.
- There are several community volunteers that are an active part of the county fair and can help you, if you have questions.

Lane Fair Board President: Joy Peck
Ness Fair Board President: Amy Murray
Rush Fair Board President: Mark Goodheart
Lane Amusement: Chanda Bush
Ness Amusement: Laurie Dinges
Rush Amusement: Dee Bartonek
Summer Extension Youth Programs
RSVP at least 3 days in advance to the class you want to attend

RSVP or Questions
All Ness Co 785-798-3921
All Rush Co 785-222-2710
All Lane Co 620-397-2806

Babysitting Clinic
June 1: Rush Co Extension
June 3: Ness Co Fairgrounds

Protein Power Snacks
Lane Co Fairgrounds
June 6 @1:00pm-3:00pm

Reading Makes Cents
Collaboration with Community Libraries
Otis -June 5, 12, 26, July 3 @ 9:30am-11:30am
Lane - June 13, 20, July 11 @9:30am -11:00am
Ness City - June 11 @10:00am - 2:00pm

Lane County Tech Club
June 13, 20, July 11 @ 11:30am -2:00pm

Elder Connection
Mondays Ness LTC
@9:00am to 11:00am
June 10, 17, 24
July 1, 8,15, 22, 29

Never Stop Learning Activities
Rush County Extension Office
June 10, 17, 24
July 1, 8, 15
@ 1:00pm to 5:00pm

26 Books, 26 Miles
Reading and Healthy activities
collaborated with Ness Library, Ness City Pool, USD303 Rec and Ness County Health Dept.
Remove Blossoms on Newly Planted Strawberries

Newly planted strawberries have limited energy which should be directed towards developing runners rather than fruit production. Be sure to remove blooms from young spring-bearing strawberries to promote strong runners early in the plant’s life that will produce berries the following year. Failure to do so will result in weak runners and small/fewer fruit.

Remove fruit from young everbearing strawberry plants for the first four to six weeks after planting, so energy will be directed to root development.

Bagworms

We are currently in the growing season when bagworms, Thyridopteryx ephemeraeformus, start to appear on broadleaf and evergreen trees and shrubs.

Bagworm larvae feed on conifers but they also feed on a wide range of broadleaf plants, including: elm, flowering plum, hackberry, honey locust, linden, maple, oak, rose, sycamore, and wild cherry. Apply insecticides when bagworms are ¼ of an inch long or less to maximize effectiveness of insecticide applications and reduce plant damage.

There are several insecticides labeled for use against bagworms; however, the insecticides recommended to manage bagworm populations early in the season are Bacillus thuringiensis. Kurstaki and Spinosad. These active ingredients are commercially available and sold under various trade names, including Captain Jack’s DeadBug Brew, Monterey Garden Insect Spray.
White heads have been popping their ugly heads. Sometimes the white heads are just single tillers scattered throughout part or all of the field.

Heads may be completely white starting from the stem or might have just partial bleaching.

There are many causes of white heads. Listed below are the most common causes:

1. Freeze injury to stem or crown. Depending on the stage of growth at the time of a late spring freeze, parts of the head or all of the heads may die and turn white.
2. Hail. Hail can cause a white head to appear when it breaks the connection between the steam and the head. Hail can also cause damage just a portion of a head, and cause that damaged portion to turn white.
3. Heat Stress. Heat stress can scorch wheat heads and make them turn white, usually starting from the top moving downwards. Depending on the level of heat stress, entire tillers may be scorched in a given plant.
4. Dryland Foot Rot (aka - Dryland Foot Rot) This disease, caused by the Fusarium fungus, causes white heads and often turns the base of the plants pinkish. As with take-all, dryland root rot causes all the tillers on an infected plant to have white heads. This disease is usually most common under drought stress conditions and is often mistaken for either drought stress or tak-all.
5. Head Scab. Periods of rainy weather while the wheat is flowering, as seen across North Central and Northwest Kansas this growing season, some heads may become infected with Fusarium head blight and turn white.
6. Take-All. This disease often causes patches of white heads scattered throughout the field. It occurs most frequently in continuous wheat, and where there is a moderate to high level of surface residue.
7. Sharp Eyespot. This disease is common in Kansas but rarely causes significant yield loss. Sharp eyespot causes lesions with light tan centers and dark brown margins on the lower stems.
8. Wheat Stem Maggot. Damage is common every year in Kansas, but rarely results in significant yield loss. It usually causes a single white head on a tiller, scattered more or less randomly through part or all of a field.

Additional information and photographs of white heads can be found at: [https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/eu_article_prep.php?article_id=3442](https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/eu_article_prep.php?article_id=3442)
I heard the comment made that “I’m hauling cattle to pasture” as we’d normally say “going to grass”, but with the dry conditions, there isn’t a lot of grass to be had. However, that hasn’t slowed the thistles and a fast start to spring has them almost setting seed as I submit this the 20th of May.

Thistles are annual to biennial in growth form. They reproduce solely by seed and are prolific seed producers. The seed remains viable in the soil for many years. At maturity, these spiny weeds have basal rosettes, purplish disk flowers, and flowering stems that are highly branched. Distinguishing features by which individual species can be identified include plant size, appearance of phyllaries (involucral bracts), and the hairiness and shape of the leaves.

Thistles are highly competitive and persistent plants. Given suitable conditions, these weeds rapidly invade rangeland, pastures, abandoned fields, roadsides, and disturbed sites. A high density of thistles reduces availability of quality forage and the diversity of desirable grass species.

Thistles establish readily on disturbed or neglected sites, especially along roadsides, railways, ditchbanks, and waste areas. Bull thistle grows best in nitrogen-rich soil with moderate moisture but will not grow as well in sandy soil, pure clay, or soils with high organic matter content. Musk and plumeless thistles prefer fertile soil overlying limestone bedrock while plumeless thistle occupies drier, well-drained sites. Thistle seed is easily dispersed by wind, water, birds, and other animals. Seed can be carried long distances by adhering to surfaces and undercarriages of vehicles and ATV’s and UTV’s. Thistles may also be introduced to new areas via seed in hay and many bales have moved many miles. We have experienced drought for 2-3 years in varying intensities, so while we don’t like excessive grazing, its what we have dealt with and that favors thistle growth. In spring, thistles develop a large rosette base that shades the soil and reduces competition from other emerging plants. Additionally, some thistles have allelopathic properties that slow or prevent growth of desirable plant species, thereby allowing these thistles to thrive. Since all thistle species addressed are prolific seed producers, high priority for thistle management should be directed toward preventing establishment and eliminating new plants as soon as they are found. Small infestations rapidly become large problems.

Manual methods of control include: hand pulling, hoeing, grubbing, or cutting. These may be done any time of year; but these methods are most effective if done before development of flower heads occurs. Thistle plants should be severed 2 to 4 inches below the soil surface to prevent re-sprouting from the root crown. For isolated thistles or small infestations, seed heads of individual plants may be clipped and placed in bags for disposal. Even the most advanced plants might need the heads removed while spraying or digging to keep the seed contained. This will prevent further seed dispersal or seedling establishment while the rest of the plant is dying or drying out.

Herbicide treatment is most common in our area. Each office has copies of the 2024 Chemical Weed Control Guide or you can find it HERE. There are a multitude of options to use but dependent on individual circumstances. Read and follow labels especially for pastures being grazed or application of herbicides beyond spot spraying.

For additional information contact us at the offices within the Walnut Creek District or go online to the KSRE website for publications or to the USDA site for additional reference. For producers or landowners that need to purchase restricted use herbicides, visit one of our offices for the initial test for private pesticide applicators.
Beware of Uninvited Party Guests: Foodborne Germs

It’s the season of outdoor parties, buffets, picnics and gatherings. Amidst the food and fun, foodborne germs can crash your buffet and make people sick with food poisoning.

When cooking, preparing, or serving food for large groups, follow these steps to keep food safe:

- Keep your hands and surfaces clean. Washing your hands is one of the most important prevention methods to prevent foodborne illness.
- Separate raw meats from other foods. Prevent cross contamination by using separate or clean utensils and dishes. Keep raw meat packed in their own package and even a separate ice chest.
- A food thermometer is your friend! Use it to check doneness of meats and to keep foods out of the temperature danger zone between 40-140°F. Keep these three temperatures in mind – 145°F for steaks, roasts, chops; 160°F for all ground meat; and 165°F for all poultry.
- Check the clock and use the 2-hour rule to keep hot foods hot and cold foods. A food thermometer is a handy tool for this step! Discard foods left out at room temperature more than two hours. When outside in temperatures above 90°F, discard foods left out more than one hour.
- Store leftovers promptly and divide large amounts of food into smaller containers before placing them on ice or in the refrigerator.

When the topic of canning arises, you may have visions of grandma’s basement full of beautiful canned jars of fruits and vegetables. While some things never change, some things DO!

Please read the latest information on food preservation at: https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/
Look on the left side for Food Preservation and check out Karen Blakeslee’s videos on canning.

Karen writes a “You Asked It” newsletter each month that has all the latest information on food safety. Karen Blakeslee, Londa Nwadike, and Susan Mills-Gray from Missouri University and Kansas State University are the Home Food Preservation Newsletter team. You can subscribe to receive the newsletter automatically by signing up at: https://extension2.missouri.edu/programs/food-preservation