

# WALNUT CREEK EXTENSION OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

[www.walnutcreek.k-state.edu](http://www.walnutcreek.k-state.edu)

## Lane County Office

144 S. Lane, Courthouse  
P O Box 487  
Dighton, KS 67839  
620-397-2806

- Lacey Noterman, Director and Agriculture Ext. Agent - [lnote@ksu.edu](mailto:lnote@ksu.edu)
- Chelsey Shapland, 4-H Program Assistant - [cshapland@ksu.edu](mailto:cshapland@ksu.edu)
- Kendyl Wells, Office Professional [kgwells@ksu.edu](mailto:kgwells@ksu.edu)

## Ness County Office

503 S Pennsylvania Ave  
Ness City, KS 67560  
785-798-3921

- Robyn Trussel, 4-H and Youth Agent - [rdeines@ksu.edu](mailto:rdeines@ksu.edu)
- Kristen Schmidt, Family Community Wellness - [kbschmidt@ksu.edu](mailto:kbschmidt@ksu.edu)
- Randae Rufenacht, Office Professional - [rrufenac@ksu.edu](mailto:rrufenac@ksu.edu)

## Rush County Office

702 Main, P O Box 70  
Lacrosse, KS 67548  
785-222-2710

- Jared Petersilie, Agriculture Ext. Agent - [jaredp11@ksu.edu](mailto:jaredp11@ksu.edu)
- Berny Unruh, Office Professional [bunruh@ksu.edu](mailto:bunruh@ksu.edu)

## Upcoming Events

### October

- 4-10 - National 4-H Week - The theme is "Next is NOW"
- 6 - Local Food Workshop - Hays
- 7 - Kristen program at Joy Center- Part D
- 7 - Lane County Cloverbuds - Dighton
- 8 - Kristen at Ness City Leisure Years - 12 noon
- 8 - Kristen at Wheatview Apts - 1 pm
- 10 - 48 Hours of 4-H - Bicycle Rodeo at Ness City High School - 10 am
- 12 - Office Closed for Columbus Day
- 12 - Rush Co Junior Leaders  
Rush Co 4-H Council meeting
- 14 - Kristen program at Ransom Go-Getters -11:30
- 15 - SW Area FCE Meeting - Dighton
- 17 - Rush Co 4-H Achievement Banquet - 6:30 pm
- 18 - Ness Co 4-H Achievement Banquet - 2: pm
- 20-22-Agents at Annual Conference in Manhattan
- 26 - Deadline for FCW Mystery Tour registration
- 26 - Walnut Creek District Board meeting - 6:30
- 27 - Kristen Rush Co. Part D - call for appointment
- 28 - Kristen Lane Co. Part D - call for appointment
- 29 - FCW Mystery Tour - sign up & pay by 10/26/26
- 29 - Livestock Emergency Training - Dodge City
- 30 - Kristen Lane Co. Part D - call for appointment

### November

- 1 - Lane County 4-H Achievement Program
- 3-5 - Annual Ag Tour to Lincoln Nebraska
- 10-11 - Land Owner Conference - Manhattan
- 19 - Deer Processing Program - Drew Ricketts



Walnut Creek District board voted to hire a part time program assistant to be based in the LaCrosse office.

Contact Lacey Noterman (620-397-2806 or email [lnote@ksu.edu](mailto:lnote@ksu.edu)) for more information.

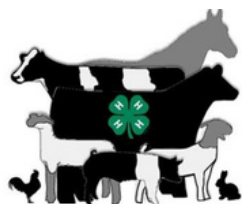
K-State Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contact, Walnut Creek Extension District, four weeks prior to the start of the event at 620-397-2806 or email [lnote@ksu.edu](mailto:lnote@ksu.edu). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.



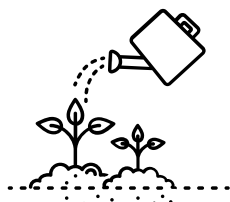
# Walnut Creek District 4-H DOES THAT?

Joining 4-H allows your child to experience opportunities that help them learn and grow. Being a part of 4-H is; being a part of a family that helps teach life skills, such as leadership civic engagement, hands on learning, public speaking and responsibility.

## Kansas 4-H Projects



Animal  
Science



Horticulture &  
Landscape Design



Electric &  
Renewable Energy



Fiber  
Arts



Geology



Woodworking



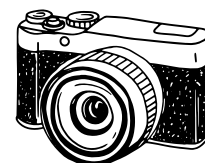
Reading  
Adventures



Sewing &  
Textile Design



Veterinary  
Science



Photography



Rocketry  
Astronomy



Foods &  
Nutrition



Shooting  
Sports



Visual  
Arts



Wildlife

**We hope you will JOIN a 4-H club near YOU!**



# Walnut Creek District

## Lane County Clubs

### **Eager Beavers 4-H Club**

Nick Noterman

Katie Riffle

### **Shields Jayhawks 4-H Club**

Rene Roberts

Tia McClure

## Ness County Clubs

### **Busy Beavers 4-H Club**

Brittany Nichapor

Amanda Wittman

### **Clever Clovers 4-H Club**

Laurie Petersilie

## Rush County Clubs

### **Lone Star Rangers 4-H Club**

Paula Shaw

Allison Gradig

### **Otis Go Getters 4-H Club**

Maggie Tracy

Renae Lumpkins

### **Rush Co Road Runners 4-H Club**

Erin Petersilie

Jared Petersilie

### **Walnut City 4-H Club**

Heather Ross

Sandy Showalter

**Contact: Robyn Trussel, 4-H Youth Development Agent**  
**for more information: [rdeines@ksu.edu](mailto:rdeines@ksu.edu)**  
**cell: 785-798-5020 or office 785-798-3921**

## **How do you join 4-H?**

In Walnut Creek Extension District (Lane, Ness & Rush Counties) you can contact your local Extension Office, email Robyn Trussel, 4-H Youth Development Agent - [rdeines@ksu.edu](mailto:rdeines@ksu.edu) or contact a Club Leader.

## **How much does it cost?**

The annual membership fee is \$15 per member, which is picked up by sponsorship. Some projects might cost something to get started—like, if you want to do photography, you'll need a camera and money to get pictures developed.

## **Does it matter where you live?**

4-H has projects everybody can do, in the city or the country or anywhere in between. You don't have to have livestock and you don't have to cook. We have over 40 projects to choose from.

## **How old do you have to be?**

Any youth age 5 to 18 can join on or after October 1st. Members 5-6 years of age are Cloverbuds, Traditional members are 7-18 (by Jan. 1, 2027), and volunteers can be anyone 6th grade to 100!





Kristen Schmidt  
Family and  
Community Wellness  
kbschmidt@ksu.edu

## 2026 Mystery Tour - October 29

Mark your calendars -The annual Walnut Creek District Mystery Tour will take place on Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>!

Each year we plan a day of sightseeing, food, and time to visit and explore a few places our great state has to offer. The best part - where we are going is a mystery! This year we will meet at Rush Center at 8:45 a.m. to begin our adventure. Clues are handed out prior to each stop - Can you figure out where we are headed?

The cost of the tour this year is \$35 per person and includes admission fees, food and fuel. Deadline to register and pay is Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Contact Family and Community Wellness Agent Kristen Schmidt at 785-798-3921 for more information or to sign up.

## Medicare Part D Open Enrollment

Open enrollment for Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage) begins October 15<sup>th</sup> and ends December 7<sup>th</sup>. Medicare drug plans change yearly, so now is the time to compare drug plans to find the best plan to meet your needs. K-State Extension can navigate you through the comparison and enrollment process from start to finish.

As a trained SHICK (Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas) Volunteer, I can educate and assist you one on one in making an unbiased, informed decision best for you. Appointments are available in Ness City, LaCrosse, Dighton and Otis.

For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call Family and Community Wellness Agent Kristen Schmidt at 785-798-3921.

When you come to your appointment, please bring: your Medicare card, log-in information for your medicare.gov account, your actual prescription bottles and your current Part D prescription card.

Call for an Appointment  
in the Dighton Office  
**620-397-2806:**

October 28  
October 30  
November 4  
November 13  
November 20  
December 2  
December 4

Call for an appointment  
in the LaCrosse Office  
**785-222-2710:**

October 27  
November 3  
November 10  
November 17  
November 24  
December 1

Schedule with the Otis  
Library 785-356-4803  
for November 5

Appointments in the  
Ness City office will be  
scheduled on days that  
Kristen is NOT in the  
Dighton or LaCrosse  
offices.  
Please call **785-798-3921**  
to set up a time to meet  
with Kristen.



## Theileria

As calves make the migratory route to Kansas from eastern locations, *Theileria orientalis* (ikedai), a protozoal organism is coming with them. This can be a very difficult sickness to combat in calves dealing with the stresses of weaning and shipping.

This organism, which primarily affects cattle, infects red blood cells. The immune system attacks the infected cells, resulting in anemia. The disease is primarily spread by the invasive Asian longhorned tick.

It was first diagnosed in a cow-calf herd in Virginia in 2017. The first Missouri case was detected in June 2023 and we now have cases in eastern KS. While the ticks and the infected herds aren't found in our proximity, producers that are backgrounding calves originating from the Eastern U.S. are seeing *Theileria*, often pronounced as Ther-ella.

With mild infections, cattle may show elevated temperature, depression and pale mucous membranes. With severe infections, they can show severe depression, and the mucous membranes around eyes and the vulva appear jaundiced with a yellow tinge. Pregnant animals may abort, and animals will lose body condition. Some will display unusually aggressive or wild behavior.

Most cattle that become infected never show symptoms, and death loss rates are typically less than 5%. However, some herds experience much higher rates of illness and death loss than is reported in the literature. Some groups of calves suffer very high percentages of loss when an outbreak persists, especially if they are mixed groups of carriers and naïve calves.

### Symptoms sometimes confused with anaplasmosis

The symptoms are similar to those of anaplasmosis. A key difference is that anaplasmosis symptoms are rarely seen in cattle less than 2 years old, but symptoms associated with *Theileria* can be seen in both calves and adults.

### Disease transmission

The main route of transmission is through the Asian longhorned tick, an invasive species found in many states. The tick acquires the protozoa while feeding on an infected animal and later transmits it to other animals through its saliva. Because of the asexual reproduction of the tick, it is very hard to control. Other insects, such as biting flies have been linked to transmission as well.

Blood-contaminated equipment can also transfer the organism from infected to uninfected animals. This would include needles, dehorning, castration and tagging equipment.

Once infected, symptoms appear in 1-8 weeks. Infected animals will become lifelong carriers of the organism but are unlikely to show symptoms of disease again. Testing the entire group or herd is not financially feasible but testing those showing clinical signs is. Often the protocol is to test a percentage of the group upon arrival. Kansas State can test for *Theileria* thru the Diagnostic Lab at the Vet School.

### Treatment, prevention and control

We would typically say that there are no antibiotics available in the U.S. labeled to treat or control *Theileria*, but the first one(s) are just coming to market. Tetracyclines, which are commonly used to treat and control anaplasmosis in cattle, do not appear to be effective against this disease. Recommendations for managing clinical cases include minimizing stress and providing supportive care.

There are currently no vaccines available to prevent the disease. The best option is to control Asian longhorned tick populations. Our dry climate, colder winters, and 'tree-less' pastures are all going to keep populations here limited, but this is another reason to keep the red cedar trees in check.

While treating new animals with ticks is a must, usually that is not the issue here. Instead, we see calves that are from herds where the disease is already present, so changing needles between animals and disinfecting equipment that may be blood-contaminated is very, very important! As one Veterinarian stated, if you don't have a 5-gallon bucket of used needles, you aren't getting them changed enough.

Finally, seek guidance from your veterinarian, who can recommend the best strategy for preventing or controlling the disease in your herd.



Jared Petersilie  
Agriculture Agent  
jaredp11@ksu.edu

## Wheat Planting: Tips for Good Stand Establishment

Fall wheat planting is just around the corner, and getting the crop off to a good start can make a big difference. Seeding depth, planting speed, soil conditions, timing, fertility, and residue management all play a role in establishing a strong stand.

Watch planting speed and depth. Match drill speed to field conditions. Excessive speed, especially in hard soils or heavy residue, can cause openers to ride up and place seed too shallow. Aim for a uniform 1- to 2-inch planting depth. When planting deeper to reach moisture, consider the variety's coleoptile length.

Plant into a firm seedbed. Loose, fluffy soil can settle after rainfall, leaving wheat crowns too close to the soil surface. Good seed-to-soil contact and proper drill closing pressure can help prevent this problem.

Plant during the recommended window. In general, wheat should be planted around the Best Pest Management Planting (BPMP) date, formerly known as the Hessian fly-free date. Planting more than three weeks after the BPMP can reduce fall tillering and root development. For late-planted wheat, consider increasing seeding rates by 25% to 50%.

Pay attention to fertility. Applying 20 to 30 pounds of nitrogen per acre before or at planting can support early growth and tillering. If soil tests indicate low phosphorus or potassium, applying those nutrients at planting can also help early development.

Consider residue and disease risks. Heavy corn residue can create challenges with seed placement and may increase the risk of diseases such as Fusarium head blight. Selecting varieties with good disease tolerance and using a seed treatment can help protect the developing crop.

Taking time to check drill performance, planting depth, soil conditions, fertility, and timing before planting can help establish a uniform wheat stand going into winter.



Lacey Noterman  
District Director  
Agronomy/  
Horticulture  
lnote@ksu.edu

## Scout for Fall Armyworms this Fall

Fall armyworm activity is increasing across western Kansas, making scouting important for late-planted sorghum, early-planted wheat and triticale, and stressed pastures.

Fall armyworms migrate into Kansas each year and can cause significant crop damage. Late-planted sorghum is currently at risk during grain fill, when caterpillars can consume developing grain. Early-planted wheat and triticale should be scouted weekly until the first frost.

### Scout Early

Fall armyworms grow rapidly, and most feeding occurs during the later stages. Caterpillars less than ½ inch long are easier to control, while larger caterpillars cause more damage and are more difficult to manage.

Treatment thresholds include:

- Sorghum: 1–2 caterpillars per head during flowering to soft dough can reduce yield 5–10%.
- Pasture/Brome: Treat when there are 3–5 caterpillars per square foot.
- Wheat: Look for “window-paning” on leaves. If 25–30% of plants show damage, scout frequently and treat when there are 2–3 active larvae per square foot.
- Alfalfa: 1–2 caterpillars per square foot can damage seedling alfalfa, while 10–15 per square foot can damage established 12-inch plants.

Regular scouting can help identify infestations before caterpillars become large and cause significant damage. Producers can also monitor weekly fall armyworm trap counts by county through the Great Lakes and Maritimes Pest Monitoring Network.



## Bark Shedding on Trees: What's Normal?

As trees grow, their trunks and branches continually increase in diameter. This secondary growth produces new layers of wood and bark. On some trees, older outer bark naturally sheds, peels or exfoliates as the trunk expands.

This is especially noticeable in the fall on trees such as sycamore, London plane tree, eastern redbud, lacebark elm, river birch, and several maples.

### When Bark Shedding Is Normal

Natural bark shedding usually occurs across larger sections of the trunk and branches. Bark may peel away in large, irregular patches or strips, sometimes curling or rolling upward along the edges. The exposed layer underneath may be bright orange, green or another temporary color, depending on the tree species.

If new bark is visible underneath the shed bark, the process is generally a normal part of tree growth.

### When to Be Concerned

Bark loss may indicate a problem when:

- Shedding is limited to one area or one side of the tree.
- Bark loss exposes bare wood or large cracks extending into the wood.
- Bark pieces are uniform in size or shape, which can indicate wildlife damage.
- Bark is shedding at unusual times of year, rather than during periods of active growth.

Before assuming a tree has a disease or other serious problem, consider the tree species and the pattern of bark loss. Natural exfoliation is a normal characteristic of many trees and is often most noticeable in the fall.

## Market Wheat Show State Fair Results

During the 2026 wheat harvest, local producers were encouraged to have local grain elevators collect samples for the 2026 Market Wheat show. Samples were exhibited at county fairs and winning samples were exhibited at the Kansas State Fair. Luke Smith from Wichita County exhibited the Grand Champion sample with an entry of Bill Snyder Wheat. Allen Baker, Agricultural Extension Agent of Wichita County had the most winning entries per county. The other winners include:

| Class 02 All HRW Blends |                   |                 |       |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------|
| 1                       | Royden Derstein   | Ford County     | Blend |
| 2                       | Aiden Ochs-Lohrey | Rush County     | Blend |
| 3                       | Jessi Blasi       | Pratt County    | Blend |
| 4                       | Maryn Ochs-Lohrey | Rush County     | Blend |
| 5                       | Lavern Potuzak    | Republic County | Blend |

| Class 05 All KSU HRW Varieties |                     |                 |                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1                              | Luke Smith          | Wichita County  | Bill Synder     |
| 2                              | Vance Ehmke         | Lane County     | Ks Homestead    |
| 3                              | Marlyn Spare        | Stafford County | Ks Providence   |
| 4                              | Logan Leiker        | Ellis County    | Ks Western Star |
| 5                              | Kenneth Gerstberger | Wichita County  | Oakley          |

| Class 03 All Other Private HRW Varieties or Hybrids |              |                 |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1                                                   | Drew Smith   | Wichita County  | T-158     |
| 2                                                   | Tony Bleumer | Gray County     | Wolverine |
| 3                                                   | Troy Strnad  | Sumner County   | Bob Dole  |
| 4                                                   | Lynn Gleason | Hodgeman County | Wolverine |
| 5                                                   | Ruth Feight  | Republic County | Rockstar  |

| Class 06 All Other Public HRW Varieties |              |                |            |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------|
| 1                                       | Chadd Wilson | Edwards County | Guardian   |
| 2                                       | Max Edwards  | Scott County   | Canvas     |
| 3                                       | Cole Ehmke   | Lane County    | Guardian   |
| 4                                       | Jim Katz     | Edwards County | Doublestop |
| 5                                       | Wilson Koehn | Gray County    | TAM 115    |

### Class 04 All Westbred/Monsanto Varieties

|   |               |                 |         |
|---|---------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1 | Earl Smith    | Wichita County  | WB 4595 |
| 2 | Dan Thompson  | Pawnee County   | WB 4792 |
| 3 | Leland Higbie | Edwards County  | WB 4792 |
| 4 | Jacob Milton  | Stafford County | WB 4792 |
| 5 | Justin Langer | Ness County     | WB 4792 |

Sponsors for the Market Wheat Show include;

- Kansas Grain Inspection Service
- Kansas Wheat Commission
- Stafford County Flour Mills.





# JOIN US!

## 2026

# MYSTERY TOUR

## OCTOBER 29TH

A FUN DAY OF SITE SEEING, FOOD, AND  
TIME TO VISIT AND EXPLORE A FEW  
PLACES OUR GREAT STATE HAS TO  
OFFER HAS BEEN PLANNED

CONTACT FAMILY AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS AGENT  
KRISTEN SCHMIDT FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP  
AT 785-798-3921

DEADLINE TO PAY/REGISTER IS MONDAY, OCTOBER 26TH

**KANSAS STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

Extension  
Walnut Creek District

**\$35 FEE TO PARTICIPATE**

**\*\*FEE INCLUDES BRUNCH, ADMISSION FEES, AND FUEL\*\***

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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

# **66<sup>th</sup> Annual Walnut Creek District AG Tour Lincoln, Nebraska November 3-5, 2026**

Lincoln is the capital city of Nebraska, so we plan to visit another state capitol to add to the list of those visited on previous Ag Tours. It is home to the University of Nebraska which houses the only Tractor Test Lab in the US and is home to the International Quilt Museum.

A chartered bus and the hotel have been booked. We will stay near the Haymarket District which is UNL's "Aggieville" and breakfast will be included each morning. Tour participants will pay a one time fee to cover most of the known expenses (bus, lodging, meals and admission fees). The estimated cost is \$550 per participant (single occupancy) and \$450 per person (double occupancy). Additional tours have been booked and this will be the cost for this year. IF you would like additional information (registration form, etc.), please email Jared at [jaredp11@ksu.edu](mailto:jaredp11@ksu.edu) or call 785-222-2710

