



OUR IMPACT

Program Focus
Team Report

2018-2019

K-STATE
Research and Extension



From the Director for Extension

K-State Research and Extension Program Focus Teams are agents and specialists working together to develop, implement, and evaluate programs specifically designed to help Kansans improve their lives, livelihoods, communities, and state. The work conducted by these teams is categorized into the grand challenges of global food systems, health, water, community vitality, and developing tomorrow's leaders.

We encourage you to read this edition of *Our Impact*. It shows the amazing effect that just a handful of our K-State Research and Extension programs made for the people of Kansas last year. As you read these results, please remember there are many more K-State Research and Extension programs helping the people of Kansas improve their lives, livelihoods, communities, and state.

— Gregg Hadley



Producer Education Enhances Crop Production

Kansas planted nearly 13.3 million acres of corn, soybean, and sorghum last year. These crops primarily support feed resources for the livestock industry and ethanol production, which helps reduce the U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

The importance of these summer row crops to the rural Kansas economy underscores the need for educational activities to ensure that production in the widely adverse weather of Kansas is protected and profits are enhanced.

Eighteen in-depth winter corn, soybean, and sorghum schools were held in many locations across the state in order to address production issues. The programs focused on the latest crop production research and were supported by the Kansas Corn, Kansas Soybean, and Kansas Sorghum Commissions and several industry partners.

Several topics were presented by more than 15 extension specialists and extension publications entitled *Kansas Corn Production 2019* (MF3208), *Kansas Soybean Management* (MF3154), and *Kansas Sorghum Management 2019* (MF3046) were distributed. More than 1,165 people attended these schools and 88 to 90% of attendees indicated that the information received will influence their management decisions. This translates to approximately 1.1 million acres affected by this effort with an estimated economic benefit of \$9.8 million.

**Results are in
the Numbers**

Nearly **1,200** producers,
managing more than 1 million
acres, attended crop schools.



Calving Management Schools Improve Calf Health

The number of calves weaned as a percentage of cows exposed for breeding is critical to producer profitability. Calving creates stress for both the cow and calf. Too much stress may result in the failure of the calf to live to weaning or for the cow to rebreed.

Calving Management Schools provide training on the sequence of events during calving and how to provide assistance if the birth is not progressing normally. Information on improving calf health was emphasized at the school and in other media. Meetings in seven Kansas locations saw an attendance of 611.

Attendees said being able to visualize how to manipulate the calf to correct malpresentations and knowing when to provide assistance would have the greatest impact on their operations.

Attendees response on the day of the meeting:

- 96% increased in knowledge, awareness, or ability to manage issues regarding calving assistance
- 87% expected to change when they assist
- 94% expected to change how they assist

“Great meeting. The use of the camera to help us see what’s happening in the “dark” was a great benefit!”

— attendee comment



Fruit and vegetable grower training increases skills

The demand for local, fresh produce continues to grow, and there is a need for education among new and existing fruit and vegetable producers. Many produce growers are first-generation farmers with limited resources.

Kansas horticulture agents partnered with extension specialists and outside agencies to provide training on production practices, food safety, entrepreneurship, farm finances, and risk management. These programs included the Growing Growers program in Kansas City and Wichita.

More than 475 participants attended the 20 Growing Growers workshops held at the two locations. An average of 80% of workshop participants reported gaining new knowledge from the workshops. Sixteen apprentices started the Growing Growers apprenticeship programs and six graduated at the end of the season. Thirty-five existing farms served as apprentice host farms and tour locations for learning experiences.

Heidi, a 2019 Growing Growers apprentice, was engaged in the program from the beginning. A photographer and web designer, Heidi felt the program matched her desire to change career paths. She started her own farming operation while in the program, transforming her backyard into a suburban farm. She had an abundant growing season, successfully selling to friends and neighbors.

87% of livestock producers attending calving schools reported plans to change calving assistance.

More than **475** horticulture producers learned to improve management techniques.



Changing the Future of Communities One Grant at a Time

While resources available in foundations increase every year, local communities struggle to find the resources to fund projects. By participating in grant-writing workshops, citizens discover untapped resources to improve their communities.

From November 2016 through November 2019, local agents hosted 48 grant-writing workshops reaching 1,379 people. By working together, participants gain support networks and lose their fear about asking for money. Fifty percent of grant workshop participants had never written a grant before; 29% had written local grants.

The workshop receives high marks from participants for “knowledge gained.” Of the participants who responded to the survey 6 to 12 months after their grant workshop, \$11.9 million of grants were written with \$6.7 million of successful grants to fund programs that improve communities.

Dorothy Bryan, president of the Auburn City Council, said, “Auburn has been stagnant for so long, my sister and I decided to change that. Coming to the grant workshop spurred me on, I thought, ‘I can do this!’” She wrote her first grant for fitness equipment at the park and received \$55,000. Bryan said, “That equipment is busy morning, noon, and night.” Bryan has her eye on two more grant possibilities and says, “I’m just getting started!”

4-H Youth Development Military Partnerships

At both Fort Riley Army post and McConnell Air Force base, extension staff work to support 4-H club programming and experiences for the youth participating in after-school and summer programs. These experiences include project clubs where youth focus on a specific 4-H project for six weeks. Projects include foods and nutrition, photography, computers, and robotics. The project experiences include development of leadership skills and community service components that help youth develop concern for their community. Other opportunities for military 4-H members include a military 4-H club day at McConnell and a project showcase opportunity at Fort Riley.

Extension staff also worked to provide positive youth development training for military after-school program staff. Training reached nearly 155 contacts through the multiple sessions conducted at each installation. Training subjects included positive youth development, STEM and coding, diversity, project planning, and curriculum.

These trainings and 4-H experiences help military youth develop critical 21st century life skills. Not only are they mastering project-related skills, but they are also exploring future career interests and learning about their community, all while developing a sense of belonging within their 4-H clubs and groups.

Kansas communities received more than **\$6 million** in grant funding to support community projects.

80,200 Kansas youth participated in 4-H programs this year.



Staying Active in Aging Improves Health and Well-Being

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's physical activity recommendations encourage strengthening activities at least two days each week to help reduce falls and improve physical and mental health. Only 9.7% of Americans 65 and older meet those guidelines due to fear of injury, expense of fitness centers, and lack of access to experienced professionals.

K-State Research and Extension enables older adults to improve and maintain agility, balance, flexibility, and strength through Stay Strong, Stay Healthy. The program provides participants a structured exercise program capable of building muscle and increasing bone density, thereby decreasing frailty and risk of falling. In 2019, trained extension professionals conducted 60 eight-week, courses totaling more than 960 classes reaching 739 participants.

Three months later, participants reported that:

- 61% continue strengthening exercises
- 66% meet and continue stretching recommendations
- 80% improved strength and flexibility
- 75% sleep better, and
- 96% see overall health improvement

"I feel stronger and more confident completing chores, walking the dog, and getting out of the house by myself."

- Post Rock District participant

Commitment to Preserving Kansas Water Supplies

The Ogallala Aquifer is in decline. Many producers are seeking ways to extend the usable aquifer life and limit the economic impact of loss of aquifer pumping capacity.

Several producers approached K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Water Office to offer their farms to demonstrate the testing of the latest irrigation technologies. In 2016, three water technology farms were established, and by 2019 there were 15 across the state.

Water technology farms are a three-year public-private partnership where irrigation technology is demonstrated, related research is conducted, and water conservation is supported. As demonstration areas were established further east of the Ogallala Aquifer, the focus has shifted from new irrigation technologies to management techniques and cropping patterns implemented on a larger scale.

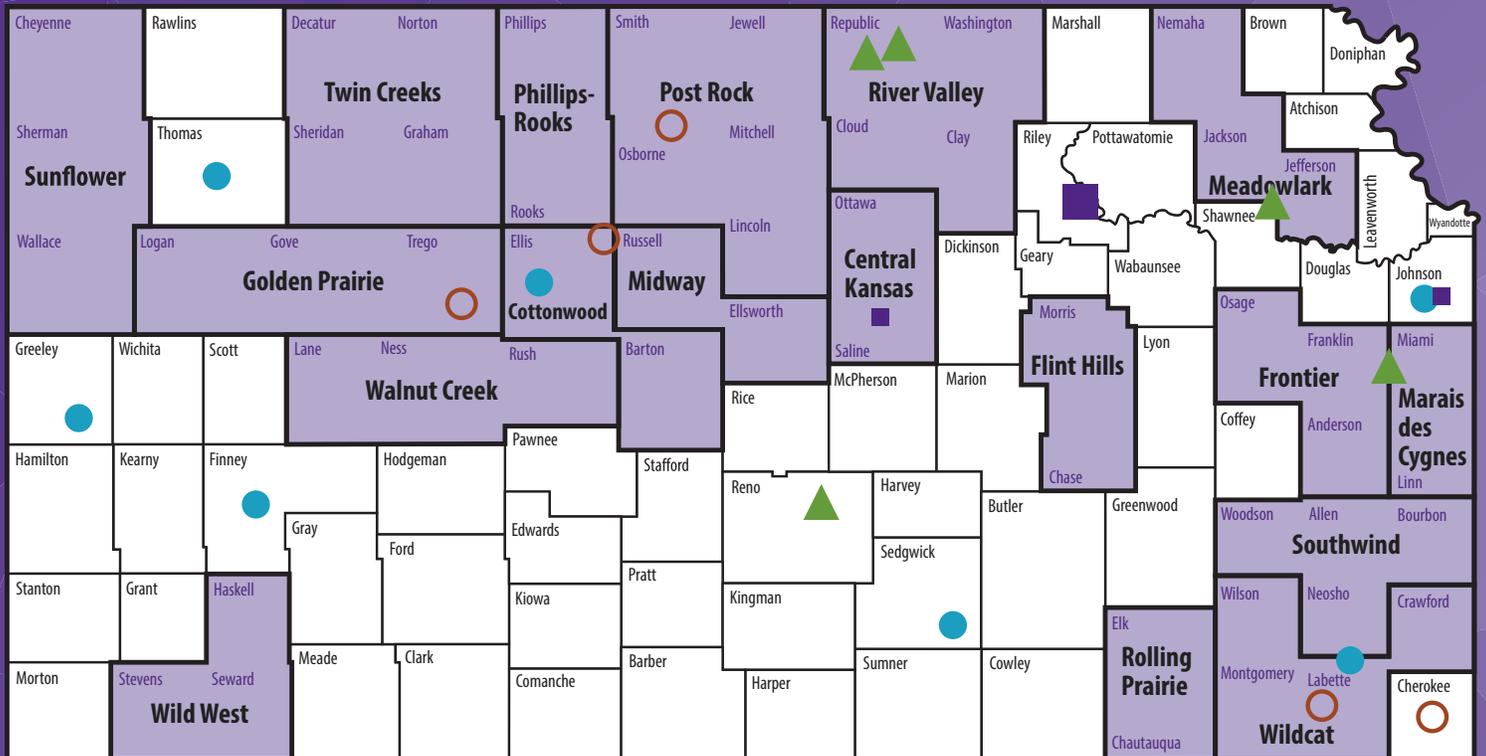
Field days on each farm highlighted and assessed the performance of the innovative technologies and management practices with almost 400 producers attending each year. In addition to the field days, there have been tours on the farms throughout the year, representing the Kansas Legislature, national commodity groups, national and regional media correspondents, and a variety of international and local visitors. Invitations for researchers to speak at regional and national forums have also occurred.

739 older adults increased flexibility and strength through Stay Strong, Stay Healthy.

15 water demonstration farms showcased irrigation technologies and management practices.

A Presence in all 105 Counties

K-State Research and Extension agents live and work in every county to help Kansas residents. Agricultural research facilities are located throughout the state to accommodate climate and soil variability.



Kansas State University
 Districts
 Satellite Stations
 Experiment Fields
 Research-Extension Centers

1,246,128 direct educational contacts made by staff and volunteers on campus, regional centers and in all 105 county offices

310,104 hours invested by community volunteers

K-STATE
 Research and Extension
ksre.k-state.edu

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, J. Ernest Minton, Director.