



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Annual Program Report

2019-2020

K-STATE
Research and Extension



From the Director for Extension

K-State Research and Extension is a statewide network of extension professionals addressing critical issues through the development, implementation and facilitation of research-based educational programs to help Kansans improve their lives, livelihoods, businesses and communities. Extension professionals deliver programs categorized into the grand changes of global food systems, health, water, community vitality and developing tomorrow's leaders.

We encourage you to read this edition of our Making A Difference Annual Program Report. Each report describes the situation, what extension did and the outcomes that were accomplished. Success stories provide highlights of a program's impact on a community, farming operation, family or individual. The Making a Difference report 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

— Gregg Hadley



Empowering Seniors to Make Sound Financial Decisions

Every day 10,000 Americans become Medicare eligible. Insufficient or inaccurate information leads to late enrollment penalties, gaps in coverage, strained finances, and delayed health care treatment. Making sound financial decisions related to health insurance can free up income to meet other goals and improve health outcomes.

K-State Research and Extension professionals provided health insurance education to soon-to-be eligible, newly eligible, and long-time Medicare beneficiaries through the Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas program. In addition to learning how to navigate the Medicare maze, beneficiaries were educated about the availability of the low-income subsidy and the Medicare Savings program as well as other resources available in their communities.

During the fall open enrollment period, K-State Research and Extension educated 6,648 Kansans through Medicare plan comparisons. Participants who changed prescription drug or Medicare advantage plans to better meet their needs saved a total of nearly \$2.5 million.

Since 2011, K-State Research and Extension has educated Kansans about health insurance through 62,491 Medicare plan comparisons that resulted in more than \$33 million becoming available to help beneficiaries reach their financial goals, improve their health outcomes, and support community vitality.

RESULTS ARE IN

Kansans saved nearly **\$2.5 million** using K-State Research and Extension Medicare Plan comparisons.



Kansas Youth Explore STEM Skills with Virtual Training

Kansas 4-H quickly adapted to virtual programming during the COVID-19 crisis. Extension professionals collaborated to deliver science, technology, engineering, and mathematics experiences.

4-H Innovation Labs provide opportunities that foster science learning, promote science literacy, and generate interest in science education and careers.

Extension programs in ten counties offered a six-week virtual STEM experience during the summer called 4-H Innovation Labs. Weekly one-hour sessions engaged 100 second through fifth graders in environmental science. Topics included: the water cycle, robot building, wind energy, owl pellet dissection, rocketry, and pollinators.

Additional weekly sessions engaged 45 sixth through 12th graders on computer programming and circuits.

Using virtual discussion rooms, youth collaborated in learning and making decisions.

“This was the best thing my kids had the opportunity to participate in since we had no face-to-face meetings. Opening these programs up to all the state was great. I hope Kansas 4-H will continue to offer programs like this so youth from small or large towns can participate.”

— Parent of participant

Pandemic Homesteading 9-1-1 Videos Improve Food Security During Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted everyday life and food systems. Many families were not able to purchase foods they were accustomed to at the grocery store.

Many Kansans had not previously grown their own food, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they wanted to begin raising and preserving more of their own food. Many people who would not ordinarily be interested in homesteading became interested in “pandemic homesteading.”

Fortunately, K-State Research and Extension has high-quality resources on these topics. The Pandemic Homesteading 9-1-1 webisode series packaged these resources in an informal and accessible format.

Ten videos were posted on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube channels once a week, beginning in May 2020. Currently, the videos have reached 132,810 people through Facebook alone. These videos have reached a new audience through social media. Although we were not able to do face-to-face programming during the pandemic, we could help Kansans connect with resources and expertise in new ways.

70% of participants reported the 4-H computer programming and circuits program gave them the opportunity to explore something they cared about.

More than **132,810** people viewed our homesteading videos on Facebook.



Partnering with Communities to Create a Culture of Health

An initiative completed in August 2020 provided mini-grants to 31 teams proposing community-based strategies to support community health and well-being. The teams were comprised of extension professionals and community partners that included: public health offices, hospitals, schools, libraries, cities, and farmers' markets.

Reaching nearly 24,274 Kansans, these teams addressed mental health, substance abuse, food insecurity, income inequities, adverse childhood experiences, dietary quality, and physical activity issues. Outcomes included enrolling children in KanCare, developing community gardens, installing micro-food pantries, offering incentive vouchers for SNAP-EBT recipients at farmers' markets, coordinating summer meal programs in rural communities, providing water bottle filling stations in schools, installing exercise equipment in a low-income housing area, building walking trails and sidewalks, and providing opportunities to support the behavioral health needs of Kansans youth.

Achieving a culture of health is a shift that takes persistence, ongoing effort, fruitful partnerships, and funding. K-State Research and Extension is dedicated to this pursuit and community teams have sustainability and growth plans in place. An additional \$840,045 has been secured by the community teams to support or expand culture of health strategies, community health and well-being.

First Impressions – Boosting Community Vitality

For communities to thrive, they must present themselves as desirable places to live. The First Impressions program allows communities to see themselves through the eyes of a first-time visitor. With this information, communities can develop a plan to create a more desirable place to live.

Communities are paired and teams of volunteers are trained to visit the matching community. Volunteers are given a questionnaire to evaluate the appearance, access to services, and other community attributes. Results are presented to the community and include recommendations for improvement.

Communities reported that:

- 94% of volunteers stated First Impressions resulted in a greater awareness of local needs.
- \$7 million was raised through donations, fundraisers, and grants to support local needs.

“First Impressions has given our projects leverage as we can validate that outside sources thought these items were issues that needed addressed. Having a group from our community travel to the other city has helped open the eyes of several community members to show them what other ideas are out there and allows us to work together with the same vision.”

— Cheney resident

\$840,045 will be used to support community health and well-being.

Between June 2015 to October 2020, **108 communities** have participated.



Farm Financial Skills for Kansas Women in Agriculture

There are 25,611 women producers in Kansas who farm more than 14 million acres. This demographic is important to the vitality of agriculture and rural communities across Kansas.

This four-part program was broadcast from the K-State campus to 32 Kansas locations. Six hundred eighty-five participants enrolled in the series while 75 local unit extension professionals facilitated the local sites. Each night, a different financial topic was discussed, and agents facilitated a hands-on activity for participants to apply what they learned

After the series concluded and the COVID-19 pandemic hit, project directors again reached out with two webinars to inform producers what was happening with agricultural markets, how they should adjust operational financial management plans, and how to manage stress and uncertainty.

More than 87% of participants stated they plan to develop a balance sheet for their farm every year, more than 75% stated they would develop an income statement and cash flow statement every year, and 63% plan to make a family budget.

"I have always loved numbers and appreciate neat tidy bookkeeping – doing the books for our small farm business. Yet I had a frustration, my big take away was I finally know what this balance sheet is telling me!"

— Participant

Garden Webinar Draws New Audiences, Highlights Expertise

During the 2020 pandemic, the Horticulture Program Focus Team observed a surge in new gardeners that followed stay-at-home orders. The team has a wide array of expertise and noted that a statewide program would reach more people than they could individually in their local networks.

The team sought to use digital communication resources with in-house horticulture expertise to reach stakeholders navigating their new world of gardening. An additional need was the ability to engage with existing stakeholders lacking adequate outlets for gardening interests and activities. The team created a weekly webinar series "The K-State Garden Hour" featuring topics covering the breadth of horticulture.

More than 9,000 registrants viewed the 24 presentations. Participants from 18 states and three countries logged on to the learning opportunities.

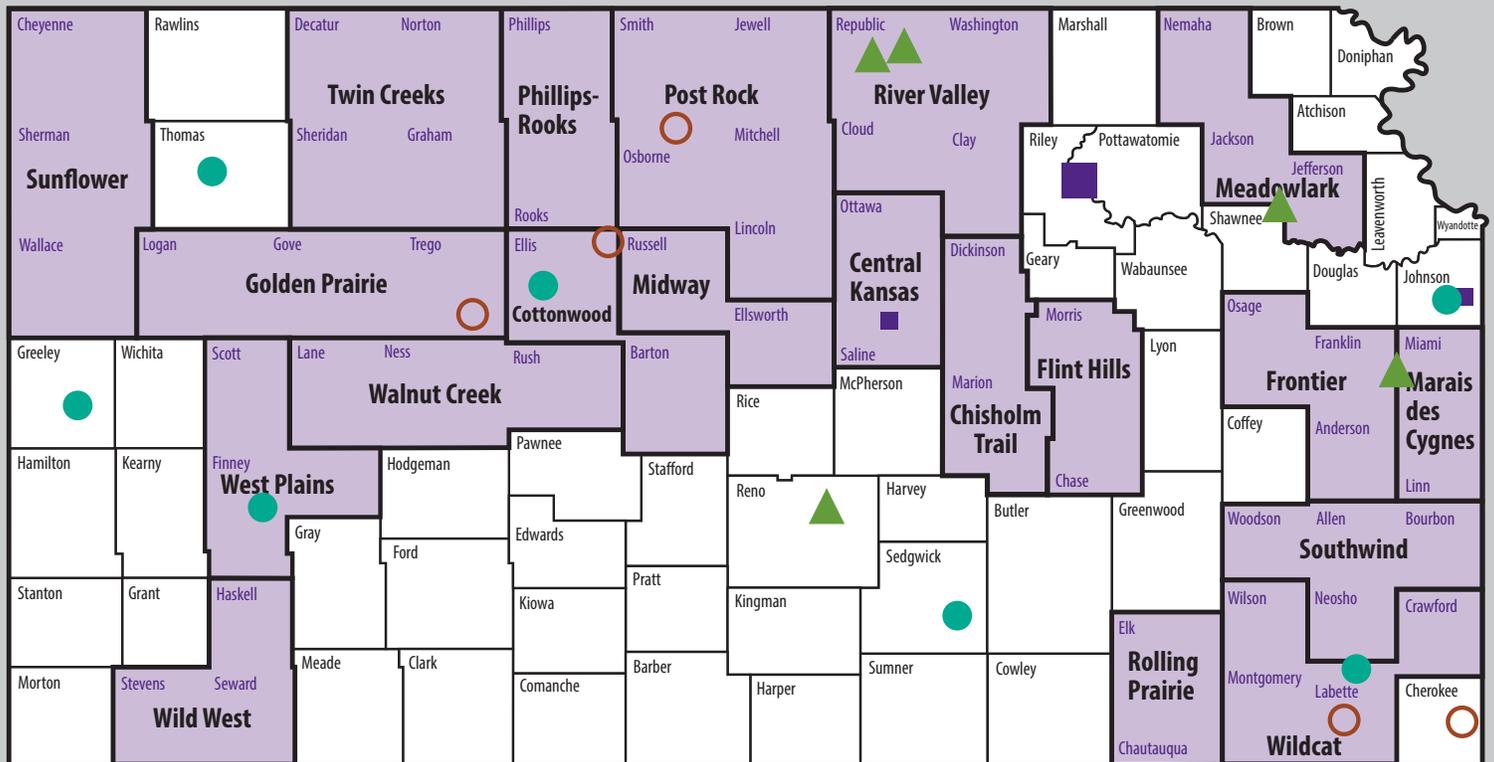
Evaluations reported that 81% of participants rated their level of knowledge as low to average before attending the K-State Garden Hour series webinars. After participating in the webinars, 80% of participants rated their level of knowledge as high or very high. In addition, 82% of participants reported they planned to make changes to their gardening practices as a direct result from information learned in the webinars.

75% of participants planned to improve their farm record keeping.

9,000 people in **18** states and **three** countries learned about home gardening.

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.



7/2020

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

698,509 direct educational contacts made by extension professionals and volunteers on campus, regional centers and in all 105 county offices

747,121 indirect educational contacts made by staff through social media, videos, newsletters, etc.

151,574 hours invested by community volunteers

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