



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

REBECCA MCFARLAND  
DISTRICT EXTENSION DIRECTOR

Frontier District Friends and Supporters,

Fall is my favorite time of year. I enjoy the cooler temperatures and the transformation of the landscape with the beautiful fall colors. I also appreciate the opportunity to reflect on the incredible work our team has accomplished over the past year. Each agent reports outcomes and the impact of their work and plans for the upcoming year. Local extension programming is a deliberate, continuing sequence of planned events, activities and strategies focused on a common outcome. Those who participate in our programming gain knowledge, acquire skills, make decisions and change behaviors to improve their lives and livelihoods. We work with our program development committees to identify the needs and issues of agricultural producers, communities, businesses, families and youth, and we develop plans for the coming year. We also respond to emerging needs and issues that arise during the year. I invite you to read about our work across the district. Enjoy!

Rebecca McFarland, District Director

## Frontier Extension District Making a Difference Report

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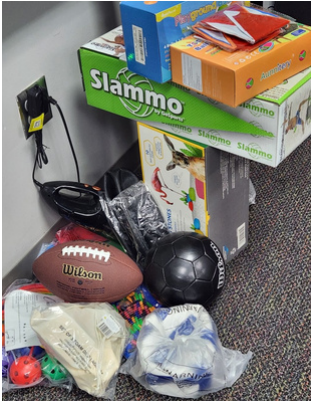
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# FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCES UPDATES

CHELSEA RICHMOND  
NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH AGENT



*These sport and recess activity bundles were provided to Garnett Elementary School classrooms through the Kansas SNAP-Ed program.*

Over the past year, the Frontier District provided nutrition education to youth, adult and older adult audiences through the Kansas SNAP-Ed program. A focus this year was to encourage physical activity among youth, as only 24.4% of children ages 6–17 in Kansas get the recommended amount of 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Research also shows that physical activity can play an important role in a child’s academic success, including their physical, social and emotional well-being.

Through the Kansas SNAP-Ed program, the Frontier District was able to provide physical activity bundles to classrooms participating in SNAP-Ed programs to reinforce physical activity. Additionally, the goal of the bundles was to increase opportunities and access for students to be active throughout the school day.

The physical activity bundle choices (rainy day, sport, recess, or brain break) were shared with teachers at the beginning of the series of nutrition education classes, and teachers selected one option for their classroom to use as a whole. The bundles ranged in value from \$90 to \$150 and included items such as balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, hopscotch runners, skip ball ankle toys, bean bags, catch and throw games and physical activity dice.

Collectively, physical activity bundles were shared in 18 classrooms across the Frontier District and were utilized by 289 students in third through fifth grades.

When asked after several months of having a physical activity bundle in their classroom, 69% of teachers reported that students were using the equipment on a daily basis and mainly during recess time. Additionally, 100% strongly agreed or agreed that the physical activity bundle was popular among their students, and 69% agreed that the physical activity levels of their students had increased with the introduction of the bundle. Both teachers and students have expressed an appreciation for being able to receive new equipment for their classroom, and teachers, in particular, appreciate options for indoor recess.

JANAE MCNALLY  
ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING and FAMILY RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT AGENT



*Adult development and aging and family resource management agent Janae McNally teaches the Matter of Balance in summer 2024. McNally partnered with the Franklin County Health Department for the eight-week program.*

According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, unintentional falls among older adults is one of the leading causes of fatal and nonfatal injuries in both the U.S. and Kansas. Hospital costs associated with injuries sustained by falls account for a substantial share of the healthcare dollars spent on injury-related care.

Falling can be a scary thing for anyone, no matter their age or physical shape. However, fall prevention education is on the rise in the Frontier Extension District with the offering of the evidence-based program, Matter of Balance. Over the summer months, Frontier District agent Janae McNally partnered with the Franklin County Health Department to offer this program for eight weeks, with a two-hour class once each week. The program has activities that are specifically designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among older adults. It enables participants to reduce the fear of falling by learning to view falls as controllable, setting goals for increasing activity levels, making small changes to reduce fall risks at home, and exercising to increase strength and balance.

Participants were able to engage in group discussions, problem-solving exercises and exercise training. Participants also learned the importance of exercise in preventing falls and practiced exercises to improve strength, coordination and balance.

Seventy-five percent of participants reported the materials presented were useful and informative. Over half reported that, as a result of participating in this class, they feel more comfortable talking with others about their fears of falling and plan to make changes in their environment. One participant shared that because of this class, they now have less fear of falling as they now know better ways to prevent falls or cope with life after a fall.

Additional topics covered included home safety, assertiveness, developing positive strategies for change, reducing barriers to exercise, identifying physical risk factors for falls, personal action planning, recognizing misconceptions about falls and moving from self-defeating to self-motivating thoughts.

# AGRICULTURE and LIVESTOCK UPDATES

## ROD SCHAUB LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION AGENT

Approximately 90 individuals from across Kansas and neighboring states gathered in Garnett on September 10 to get an up close look at agricultural uses of unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly called drones. Speakers covered issues from herbicide application to research uses and natural resource conservation sensing. In addition, Spencer Schrader, flight operations manager for K-State Salina's Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) program, gave an overview of topics that included regulations, types of drones and their uses and making aerial applications with a drone. Schrader also flew a drone with various cameras and filters for participants to observe.

Agricultural producers continually look for new ways to increase yields and maximize productivity, and one tool receiving significant attention at this time is the drone. Technology has always impacted agriculture, and the release of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to the public for civilian use in 1983 and other technologies have led to many farming changes, including combine yield monitors (1992), farm variable rate technology (1993), tractor guidance systems (1997) and boom controls (2006). Now, drones, incorporating GPS technology, are being used to scout and monitor plant health/pests, soil moisture and nitrogen levels. They are also being used to plant and seed crops, make spray applications, monitor cattle movement and health, observe watering sites for livestock, provide farm security and much more.

A common theme from those in attendance was: great meeting, great location, great staff and great information.



*Spencer Schrader, K-State Salina UAS flight operations manager, prepares to launch a drone for demonstration purposes at the Sept. 10 meeting in Garnett.*

## RYAN SCHAUB CROP PRODUCTION and FARM MANAGEMENT AGENT

Broomsedge bluestem questions are very popular during the fall months because the plant becomes easy to identify and find in hayfields as it turns a bronze or orangish color. Broomsedge bluestem is a relatively short-lived perennial grass, also known as poverty grass. It is a very opportunistic plant that takes advantage of poor fertility soils or soils with a low pH. While it is a native plant, animals will basically refuse to eat it unless it's early in the spring when the plant is young and tender.

While controlling broomsedge in introduced pastures such as fescue or brome can take some time and patience, it is doable with the use of fertilization. One of the first steps is to take a soil sample to identify any deficiencies in Phosphorus (P), Potassium (K) or pH levels.

Controlling broomsedge in native hayfields, though, is more difficult! Native grasses don't respond to fertilizer as efficiently as cool season grasses do. But, research out of Oklahoma State recently showed a 70% reduction of broomsedge after a fall controlled fire in some Bermuda plots. The idea with fire is that it stresses the broomsedge as it is preparing for winter and also burns the seeds on the plants.

Frontier District agriculture agents Rod Schaub and Ryan Schaub have had research plots in some native hayfields since 2021. In these plots, they have taken soil tests to check pH, P and K levels and to establish a baseline as they started their research. In the plots, the agents have applied lime to change the pH in some, fertilized some, and used a combination of lime and fertilization to see if they could reduce the pesky broomsedge. This fall, on September 4, the agents, along with landowner Tom Young and Asa Young, conducted a fall burn on the broomsedge plots. Results of this treatment will be known next year.



*Agriculture agents Ryan Schaub and Rod Schaub discuss the planned Broomsedge bluestem burn with Asa Young.*



*A fall burn is underway on Sept. 4 in a native hayfield in anticipation of controlling broomsedge bluestem.*

# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

JESSICA FLORY  
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENT

For many years, Anderson County 4-H members involved in the beef project have had the opportunity to become aware that the way they raise and manage their beef herds has a large impact on their final beef products. This opportunity, the Carcass Contest, is possible because of the involvement of many community members who serve as sponsors and volunteers.

Each year at the fair, youth can nominate their animals for this contest, which is intended to help youth understand what happens after their animals sell. Following the fair, the nominated animals are shipped to the Tyson Plant in Garden City. After processing, the Garden City Community College meats judging team coach grades and ranks each carcass, and a report is then sent to Anderson County. In the meantime, those who work with the contest have gathered monetary donations to award a cash prize to each youth with a carcass ranked in the top five. Along with an awards banquet, additional learning opportunities are provided for the youth, such as meat judging, touring a local meat processing plant, or explaining the meat grading report.

In 2024, 19 animals were sent to the Tyson plant; these produced 11,154.75 pounds of meat, approximately 33,464 servings of beef cuts. The contest's 13 sponsors provided \$950 for the cash prizes. In this way, the sponsors are encouraging the youth to dig deeper into the beef project and become aware of how their feeding practices impact the final product and the meat industry. A sponsor this year also provided \$600 to pay for the shipping of the animals to the processor, and several volunteers gave approximately 24 hours of their time throughout the 4-H year to help the youth with their beef project and the learning process.

As 4-H agents, we are tasked with helping youth learn about raising, caring for, and managing livestock. Members enrolled in the beef project need hands-on activities that show them the real-world application of their project learning, and this long-running program is an excellent learning tool for our Anderson County members enrolled in the beef project.



*A tour of the new processing plant in Williamsburg was part of the learning for 2024 Carcass Contest participants and their families.*



*Two of the 2024 Carcass Contest winners were Brett, Seekers Not Slackers 4-H Club, and Hope, Lucky 13 4-H Club.*

[Visit our Frontier Extension District website at https://www.frontierdistrict.k-state.edu/](https://www.frontierdistrict.k-state.edu/)

and

[Join us on our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/FrontierExtensionDistrictKSRE/](https://www.facebook.com/FrontierExtensionDistrictKSRE/)

**KOFO**  
103.7FM/1220AM

**Frontier Extension District**  
**Radio Recordings**  
or listen LIVE

**Family & Consumer Sciences**  
**Director Update**  
**Community Vitality**  
Mondays - 6:40 a.m.

**4-H Youth Development**  
Wednesdays - 6:40 a.m.

**Agriculture**  
Fridays - 6:40 a.m.

# HORTICULTURE UPDATE

LAUREN GAMMILL  
HORTICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES AGENT

Beginning in July, I initiated a project through the Extension Master Gardener (EMG) program to integrate natural, native beauty back into the community. Native gardening is growing in popularity due to its low maintenance and high potential outcome. Naturally occurring plants are the best prepared biologically for Kansas droughts, freezes, hot summers, high winds, and other climatic events. This means growers spend less time and money watering, clipping, and protecting their garden beds. This type of low maintenance works especially well throughout private or public city property. Prairie gardens have high outcomes not only due to their diverse beauty, but because they attract native pollinators, beneficial insects, and hold onto water deeper in the soil.

The EMGs and I first worked on the Prairie Spirit Trail at the Garnett Depot in Anderson County. An existing pollinator garden was lacking diversity and had become overrun by a singular sunflower species. The group tore up the garden from the roots to create the perfect canvas for a new, diverse ecosystem to grow. A few native plants, including butterfly milkweed, pale purple coneflower, and showy partridge pea, were doing well and were worked around; eventually, a few more coneflower plants were added to encourage that species to spread. Seeds were collected from all these plants with hopes to give away or grow native plants indoors to share with community members. A kiosk that sits beside the garden plot, which is a great stopping point for families using the trail, was refreshed with information on seasonal plants, updates in the garden, agricultural fun facts, and other topics.

The second garden bed is at the historical Old Depot Museum in Ottawa in Franklin County; it sits next to the road and runs perpendicular to the Prairie Spirit Trail, which makes it another great educational site along the trail. This area has struggled to keep healthy landscaping due to the soil and amount of dust and trash from the street. Native plants were also placed in this bed in an effort to keep the green area alive with stronger plants that will hopefully take root and withstand the environment.

Throughout the process of prepping the garden beds, restarting the kiosk, collecting seed, and planting new native flowers, many people who walk the trail have shown excitement and curiosity about the projects. Conversations have given us the opportunity to talk about what we are doing, why we are doing it, and the impact the improvements will have on the community. Although the answer is broad, it's also simple: to promote healthier ecosystems, educate the public, and beautify the cities with species that Kansas has known for centuries. The intent is to see more butterflies and bees, brighter blooms, and more family interactions at these points on the trail; an additional hope is that families become interested in having their own native gardens. Stayed tuned for a native plant and seed giveaway coming in early spring!



*Extension Master Gardeners clear the existing overrun pollinator garden at the Garnett Depot in preparation for it to become a native flower garden.*



*Butterfly milkweed, pale purple coneflower, and showy partridge pea were saved as Extension Master Gardeners cleared the existing pollinator garden at the Garnett Depot.*

**Remember, soil tests and radon tests are always available for purchase!  
Contact your local Extension Office for more information on our services.**

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Lyndon, KS 66451  
785-828-4438

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1418 S. Main, Suite 2  
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785-229-3520

**Garnett Office**  
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Garnett, KS 66032  
785-448-6826

# COMMUNITY VITALITY UPDATE

REBECCA MCFARLAND  
DISTRICT EXTENSION DIRECTOR

With help from the K-State 105 Initiative, K-State Research and Extension is building capacity in its system for skilled facilitators. Facilitation is appropriate for engaging groups and communities in dialogue. Facilitation helps groups reach goals, especially when there are different points of view, conflicting interests and an absence of alternatives to mitigate a problem. Facilitative dialogue brings all voices to the table, which increases the likelihood that participants will commit to and follow through with the decisions that the group makes.

The first Facilitation Initiative Intensive Training was held in April 2024. Frontier Extension District director and family and community and wellness agent Rebecca McFarland participated in the training. Since participating in the training, McFarland has facilitated locally and regionally. She facilitated Delivering on the Promise sessions in June in Emporia, as well as rounds 1 and 2 local consult workshops to discuss implementation of regional water plans. The workshops were held in Lawrence, Pittsburg and Leavenworth and hosted by the Kansas Water Office, Kansas Department of Agriculture and Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

As a member of the K-State Research and Extension Facilitation Team, McFarland will have numerous opportunities to respond to requests for facilitation in eastern Kansas. If you or your group is interested in facilitation, please contact McFarland at 785-229-3520 or [rmcfarla@ksu.edu](mailto:rmcfarla@ksu.edu).



*On Sept. 26 in Leavenworth, Rebecca McFarland facilitates a local consult workshop related to the implementation of regional water plans.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**November 6** - [K-State Garden Hour: Rabbit, Mole, and Deer Mitigation](#)

**November 11** - All Frontier District offices are closed

**November 18-December 14**, Dining with Diabetes online; [register](#) by **November 15**

**November 28-29** - All Frontier District offices are closed

**December 1** - 4-H Enrollment due; projects finalized by May 1

**December 4** - [K-State Garden Hour: Home Hydroponics](#)

**December 25-January 1** - All Frontier District offices are closed

**January 7** - Backyard Poultry 101, Overbrook Public Library, 7:00 pm

**January 8** - Land Values and Lease Agreements, Garnett Community Building, 5:30 pm

**Jan. 21, 28, Feb 4, 11** - Leaving a Lasting Legacy for Midwestern Farm Women: A Succession Planning Series, Grace Community Church, Overbrook, 5:00 - 8:00 pm each evening

## CONNECT WITH US



Frontier Extension District



<https://www.instagram.com/frontierextensiondistrict/?hl=en>



KSRE - Frontier District



Frontier YouTube Channel



<https://www.frontierdistrict.k-state.edu/>

**Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and  
Cooperative Extension Service**

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