



Kansas Currents

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

Central Kansas Extension District

centralkansas.ksu.edu

Dec. 2019/Jan. 2020

*District Extension
Agents:*

Debra Wood

Family Resource
Management

Leah Robinson

Nutrition, Food Safety
and Health



'Like' us on Facebook at
[facebook.com/CentralKansasDistrict](https://www.facebook.com/CentralKansasDistrict)
for the latest news and events from
Central Kansas Extension District.

K-STATE
Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.

ksre.k-state.edu

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



Although we are in the midst of holiday fun, you might also feel motivated to start (or get back into) an exercise program. If so, you may be interested in Central Kansas Extension District's Stay Strong, Stay Healthy program. This popular fitness class will begin late January at the Salina Senior Center.

What's special about this program? Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (SSSH) is a highly effective, research-based, light weight-training class that will improve balance, flexibility, build lean muscle, and burn calories. It provides measurable results that can help reverse many of the physical changes associated with growing older. The adage "use it or lose it" has plenty of evidence behind it. However, even if you do lose it, there is hope for getting some of it back. This strength training class can help you achieve that. Individuals of any age or fitness level can gain increased strength, better balance and flexibility through SSSH.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays on the 3rd floor of the Salina Senior Center beginning January 21st and run through April 2nd. **New this year: There will be a morning and afternoon class to choose from. The morning class will be 9:30am — 10:30am, and the afternoon class will be 12:30pm — 1:30pm. Both classes will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays and are limited to 15 adults each.** Leah Robinson, Health, Nutrition and Food Safety Extension Agent and certified SSSH instructor, will be teaching this course. Cost to attend all sessions is \$20 per person. We will be using light hand and ankle weights, which will be provided for you.

Registration paperwork can be picked up at the front desk of the Salina Senior Center or from Central Kansas Extension District, Salina Office beginning January 6th. To be officially enrolled in either class, completed registration forms and payment must be returned to the Central Kansas Extension District, Salina Office by January 17th.

(Reminder, the CKD Extension office is now located on the K-State Polytechnic campus. The address is: Central Kansas Extension, K-State Polytechnic, 2218 Scanlan Ave., Salina, KS 67401-8196. If you need help with directions please call 785-309-5850.)

Stay Strong Stay Healthy is a fun and simple way to gain strength and flexibility. It's a great way to connect with others while doing something fabulous for your body! For more information, contact Leah Robinson at 785-392-2147 or lmrobins@ksu.edu

Farm Financial Skills for Women in Agriculture

K-State Research and Extension recognizes the financial stress that farmers and ranchers are experiencing due to low commodity prices and high input costs. More than ever, financial management of the operation is critical to long-term sustainability.



Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics is offering a statewide Farm Financial Skills program for Women in Agriculture. This workshop series will teach principles of recordkeeping to develop a balance sheet, income statement and a cash flow statement. Participants will work with a case farm to do performance analysis and understand how these statements can help with management decisions. Other special topics will include managing family living expenses, coping with mental stress and developing a whole-farm financial management plan.

Central Kansas District is a host site for this series. The series will be held at American Ag Credit, 925 W Magnolia in Salina on January 15, January 22, January 29 and February 5. Each night builds upon the previous workshops. Cost to attend is \$40 which covers all meals and materials. The first 500 participants who register will receive a free farm financial management book.

The program will be a combination of broadcasted keynote speakers, local speakers, and facilitators to assist in completing the hands-on activities. The goal is for participants to acquire financial management skills they can apply directly to their farming or ranching operations.

To register for this series, visit <http://www.agmanager.info/events/farm-financial-skills-kansas-women-agriculture>. Questions? Call Cade at 785-392-2147.

Baking with Sprouted Wheat Flour

Have you tried baking with sprouted wheat flour? Here are some tips from the Home Baking Association and Chef Stephanie Peterson.



- **Knead longer or add gluten.** Sprouted wheat flour is a bit lower in gluten content. Knead dough longer or add extra vital wheat gluten.
- **Use shorter fermentation time.** While long fermentation gives more flavor and character, sprouted wheat flour will not raise as much.
- **Cup for cup.** Measure sprouted flour as traditional flour.
- **Avoid rancidity.** Store in a cool, dry, dark location, or even in the freezer.
- **Food Safety.** This is a raw flour just like all other flours. Wash your hands and clean equipment and surfaces well.

Cleaning and Storing Canners

As canning season winds down, it's time to clean and store the equipment for next year. Here's some tips for pressure canners.



- Clean the vent and safety valve with a pipe cleaner or small piece of cloth.
- Check the gasket for cracks and food debris.
- If the inside of canner has darkened, fill it above the darkened line with a mixture of 1 tablespoon cream of tartar to each quart

of water. Place the canner on the stove, heat water to a boil, and boil covered until the dark deposits disappear. Sometimes stubborn deposits may require the addition of more cream of tartar. Empty the canner and wash it with hot soapy water, rinse and dry.

For more information, see http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/fall/store_canning_supplies.html

How is the Financial Health of Americans Changing Over Time?

The second annual U.S. Financial Health Pulse report gives new insights on the financial health of Americans. Year-over-year analysis found that, despite a strong economy, the majority of Americans are still unprepared for financial shocks and only 29% of people in the U.S. are financially healthy.

Highlights include:

- People are saving less, with 12% of respondents saying they have less than one week of living expenses saved in 2019, up 1.4 percentage points from 2018.
- People are less confident in the sufficiency of their insurance coverage, with the percentage of people who say they are confident they have sufficient insurance coverage to recover from an emergency declining 3.2 points to 58.2% in 2019.
- Women are experiencing significant shifts in stability and stress, with 51.2% saying they do not have enough liquid savings to cover three months of living expenses in 2019, an increase of 2.6 points.
- For some, the rate of spending is outpacing income, with nearly 20% of people with household income from \$30,000 to

\$59,999 saying they spent more than their income in the 12 months prior to the 2019 survey, an increase of 4.1 points.

- There are also some notable bright spots within the 2019 data, including that people with household incomes less than \$30,000 are better able to pay their bills on time and manage their debt, up 5.3 and 4.9 points respectively.

Social Security Expands Public Hours at Offices

Starting on January 8, 2020, Social Security offices nationwide will be open to the public on Wednesday afternoons, according to Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security. This change restores Wednesday public service hours that were last in place in late 2012, prior to sequestration. Currently field offices are open until noon on Wednesdays.

As a reminder, there are many things that can be done online without having to visit an office. The Social Security website has a wealth of information at www.ssa.gov. Individuals may create a *my* Social Security account, a personalized online service, at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount. Through their personal *my* Social Security account, people can check personal information and conduct business with Social Security. If they already receive Social Security benefits, they can start or change direct deposit online, and if they need proof of their benefits, they can print or download a current Benefit Verification Letter from their account.

Upgrading Your Phone?



Top Tips for Avoiding Scams at the Holidays

Now that the holiday shopping season is in full swing, scammers are shopping too, looking for people to separate from their money. Here are some tips from the Federal Trade Commission to help you outsmart those bah-humbug scammers and donate safely.

Online shopping? Pay by credit card.

Credit cards give you extra protection for most online purchases. And many cards offer benefits, like protection for returns and purchases. If unauthorized charges pop up on your statement, you'll be able to dispute those charges. Credit card protections can vary, so check with your issuer to understand all of your card's protections.

Buy gift cards for gifts, not for pay-

ments. Gift cards are a great answer for the teenager in your life. But they're also a scammer's favorite way to steal your money. Anyone who contacts you and demands that you pay them with a gift card, for any reason, is always a scammer. Report gift card scams directly with the card then report it to the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint. Learn even more at ftc.gov/giftcards.

Research charities before you donate.

With the generous spirit of the holidays, and with year-end fundraising, 'tis the season for donations. Make sure your donation goes where you want it to, not into the hands of a scammer. If someone calls, asking you to give to a charity, don't let them rush you into making a donation. Instead, research the charity to make sure your donation counts. Visit ftc.gov/charity to learn more.

Bonding Through Board Games

Break out the board games. Families live in a busy world in which time together is often lost in the buzz of activity. Family bonding time is important to maintain close relationships among family members. One way to increase this time is through the use of Euro-style board games. A Eurogame, or Euro-style game, is a class of tabletop games that generally uses abstract pieces in a literal theme and is designed around the concepts of creating, developing, or nourishing. Euro-style games emphasize strategy while downplaying luck (players are allowed to control randomness) and indirect player conflict, which usually involves competition over resources. Euro game activities create positive environments for relationships to grow.

Differences Between Traditional and Euro-Style Board Games

Traditional or American-style board games:

- Focus on luck
- Are conflict-based
- Have a common theme
- Have an extended time of play



Euro-style board games:

- Highlight strategy
- Play time is predictable

- Players are not eliminated
- De-emphasize conflict and luck
- Require planning and thought
- Literal theme with abstract pieces
- Games are simple to learn

Tips for Hosting Healthier Holiday Parties

There are hundreds of tips on how to eat more healthfully when you GO to a party, but what if the celebration is at your house? This season, will you be the “host with the most,” (calories, that is,) or the savvy entertainer who offers “great taste and a small waist?” Here are a few tricks for a delectable yet healthy-ish holiday party.

- **Make food beautiful!** Garnish with colorful vegetables, clusters of grapes or fresh herbs. Use a carved out squash or cabbage to hold lower fat dips and spreads.
- **Cut the cheese, please.** Cheeses are always popular but do you know soft cheeses, such as goat, feta and fresh mozzarella have about 25% fewer calories than traditional Cheddar or Stilton? You can still offer them, just cut into smaller bites. (Although chunks of cheese are pretty, guests tend to carve off more than a standard serving.) Pair with whole grain crackers.
- **Broth is best.** If you are serving dinner, start with a light, brothy soup (avoid cream soups or bisques.) It is warm and fragrant, feels filling, and studies show that you will eat about 20% less. It’s a nice change from salad.
- **Ponder the protein.** Rather than a traditional ham, how about serving roasted pork loin or a flavorful, marinated tenderloin? Ham has 228 calories and 16

grams of fat, while the loin comes in at 122 calories and 3 grams of fat (3 ounce serving.)

- **Go Greek!** Substitute at least half your sour cream with Greek yogurt to save calories and fat. Yogurt is a bit “tangier” so taste as you go.
- **Make dessert special.** For dessert, focus on one or two special offerings that you only make at holiday time. Why waste calories on a chocolate chip cookie you can have anytime? Save calories by making a lattice crust for your pie, or make a meringue or crumbled top. Did you know you can bake pumpkin pie filling without the crust?

Outsmart Your Cravings!

We all crave certain foods from time to time. The psychology behind cravings show that hormones, memories and other triggers create a sensory signal of craving a food. This intensifies with hunger or dieting.

So how can you outsmart these cravings?

Here are some tips:

- Take a walk! Some sort of physical activity can redirect your craving, thus putting mind over matter.
- Your nose picks up on food odors, so try smelling a nonfood, such as a scented candle, to redirect your brain.
- You’ve heard the saying, “my eyes were bigger than my stomach.” So keep healthy snacks in your vision.
- Do you crave sweets? Grab naturally sweet fruit to curb that craving.
- The holidays are about comfort food. Enjoy in moderation, smaller portions, or do a healthier makeover to classic recipes.



Walk Kansas 2020

Want to feel better and have more energy? Maybe you need to blow off some steam from a stressful day or need to get better sleep. Regular exercise can help you achieve this and more. The health benefits from regular exercise and physical activity are hard to ignore, and they are available to everyone, regardless of age, sex, or physical ability. Another fantastic thing about exercise — it's fun! Plan to join Walk Kansas, a health initiative presented by K-State Research and Extension. The 2020 Walk Kansas dates have been set for March 15 through May 12.

Walk Kansas is a team-based program that will inspire you to lead a healthier life by being more active, making better nutrition choices, and learning positive ways to deal with stress. Watch for more details in the February Kansas Currents issue and on the Central Kansas Extension District website and Facebook page. The benefits of exercise are many. One study showed that even getting one hour of exercise a week can reduce the risk of depression and improve your mood, regardless of intensity. Walking was just as effective as getting moderate and high intensity activity to stave off depression.



Master Gardener Training begins in January



Even though gardening season is finished, gardeners themselves never stop learning, growing and giving. This is the essence of what it means to be a Master Gardener. If you enjoy learning and giving back as a volunteer, consider becoming a Master Gardener in 2020. Now is the time to apply and reserve your spot for the 2020 basic training course. Master Gardener basic training classes begin January 30th, 2020 in Salina and will run each Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. through March 19th. Topics covered include: basic botany, soil fertility, insects, diseases, tree and shrub care, vegetables, fruit gardening, turf management, wildlife, native plants, landscape design and more.

If you are interested becoming a Master Gardener volunteer or have questions, call the K-State Research & Extension office. Space for the class is limited and applications can be filled out or downloaded online at www.centrankansas.ksu.edu or picked up at the Extension office and are due by January 17, 2020. The Minneapolis office can be reached at 785-392-2147 and the Salina office at 785-309-5850. We look forward to hearing from you!



January is National Radon Awareness Month

Radon, a naturally occurring element produced from radioactive decay in the soil is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas, and the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. It's the second leading cause of lung cancer in the general population.



Radon surveys have shown that 6 percent of U.S. homes have average concentrations above levels that would be considered safe. However, a Kansas survey indicated that one in four homes—about 25 percent—in the state were above safe levels.

Radon comes from the natural radioactive decay of radium and uranium found in the soil beneath the house. The amount of radon in the soil depends on soil chemistry, which varies from one house to the next. Radon levels in the soil range from a few hundred to several thousands of pCi/L. The amount of radon that escapes from the soil to enter the house depends on the weather, soil porosity, soil moisture, and the suction within the house.

How does radon get into the house? Houses act like large chimneys. As the air in the house warms, it rises to leak out the attic openings and around the upper floor windows. This creates a small suction at the lowest level of the house, pulling the radon out of the soil and into the house. You can test this on a cold day by opening a top floor window an inch. You will notice warm air from the house rushing out that opening; yet if you open a basement window an inch, you will feel the cold outside air rushing in. This suction is what pulls the radon out of the soil and into the house. You might think caulking the

cracks and the openings in the basement floor will stop the radon from entering the house. It is unlikely that caulking the accessible cracks and joints will permanently seal the openings radon needs to enter the house. The radon levels will still likely remain unchanged.

The U.S. surgeon General recommends that all homes in the U.S. be tested for radon. Winter is an excellent time to test your home. Testing for radon is easy to do. If your house has a radon problem, you can take steps to fix it to protect yourself and your family. You can find out if your home has an elevated radon level by conducting a simple test. It's as easy as opening a package, placing a radon detector in a designated area, and, after a set number of days, sending the detector back to a lab will then inform you of your radon test results.

Radon test kits are available at the Salina or Minneapolis extension office for \$6.00 payable by cash or check.



Central Kansas Extension District

Salina Office

K-State Polytechnic
2218 Scanlan Ave
Salina, KS 67401-8196

Address Service Requested

The enclosed material is for your information. If we can be of further assistance, feel free to call or drop by the Extension Office.

Sincerely,



Debra Wood
District Extension Agent
Family Resource Management
dwood@ksu.edu

Salina Office
K-State Polytechnic
2218 Scanlan Ave.
Salina, KS 67401-8196
785-309-5850
Fax: 785-309-5851



Leah Robinson
District Extension Agent
Nutrition, Food Safety and Health
lmrobins@ksu.edu

Minneapolis Office
Courthouse
307 N. Concord, Suite 190
Minneapolis, KS 67467-2140
785-392-2147
Fax: 785-392-3605