

TWIN CREEKS SPOTLIGHT

K-STATE | Twin Creeks
Research and Extension | District

MARCH & APRIL 2022



Join Us and Make a Difference!

Are you looking for a rewarding career bringing new and exciting challenges every day while making a difference in the lives of people in your community? K-State Research and Extension in the Twin Creeks District is the place for you!

Our search for a District Director and Community Vitality agent started with assessing the needs of Decatur, Graham, Norton, and Sheridan Counties. What additional specialties and attributes do we need to help our Extension program grow? What do we need in our communities? It boiled down to this, a director and a focus on community vitality.

While all of our agents serve a community vitality role in our communities by being members of PRIDE organizations, local Chamber groups, Rotary, and much more, we saw a more specific need developing over the last many years - a need focused on providing facilitation and knowledge to tackle those wicked community issues, such as our lack of daycare, difficulties in small business succession in our rural towns, income disparity, and so much more. We all know such large issues exist in our communities, but it's hard to get our arms around them. This is where the new role of Director and Community Vitality agent comes in!

Community Vitality agents focus on facilitating those hard discussions, bringing the right individuals and community organizations to the table, then working together to create manageable steps to solve a problem. In addition to Community Vitality expertise, our Director position will provide administrative oversight to the District, including managing financials and communication with the Twin Creeks Executive Board, securing grant dollars to further the program, providing leadership to our local staff, and more. This position, while challenging, will most certainly prove a rewarding career for the right person!

So, are you that person? Or maybe you know someone who might be? Contact any of our local offices to learn more or see the complete job description and application at [Current Openings | Jobs | Research and Extension | Kansas State University \(k-state.edu\)](#). Applications close March 16, 2022. The position will be based in our Hoxie office with additional offices in Hill City, Norton, and Oberlin. Kansas State University is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Written By: Alyssa Rippe-May, Interim District Director & Livestock and Farm Management Agent



K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION
TWIN CREEKS DISTRICT



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



Meat the Future

Written By: Jenilee Godsey
Youth Agriculture Agent



“Gardening – A Family Affair!”

It’s still cold and brown outside, but believe it or not – it’s the perfect time to start planning a summer garden! And this year, why not make that garden a family affair?

There are so many benefits associated with getting those little hands in the soil. I recently read an article that shared people who garden are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. The article eluded to the fact that whether it be the sunshine or simply watching your efforts grow before your eyes, gardening is good for the soul and our mental health. Here are a few more reasons we believe in the power of gardening for our kiddos!

1. Physical Activity: Get those little bodies out and get them moving!
2. Enjoy the Outdoors: Staying off of the devices and experiencing what nature has to offer can build our youth stronger – both physically and mentally!
3. Family Time: What more needs to be said?
4. Helps Us Learn Where our Food Comes From: When you buy a bell pepper from the grocery store, it wasn’t grown there! Gardening helps us see the connection between the growth process of a pepper plant, how it started from a seed, requires attention and the right time to harvest it. It helps us appreciate the people who grow our food for us!
5. Encourage Healthy Eating: Fruits and vegetables are essential to a healthy diet as they provide vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients. It is common for us to enjoy eating fruits and vegetables more if they are grown in our garden and fresh!
6. My Personal Favorite -- Give Youth the Opportunity to Grow and Care for Something: Not only does this instill life skills in our youth such as responsibility, dedication, time management, etc., it also allows them to feel a sense of accomplishment as they see something through from beginning to end.

If I’ve won you over at this point, here are a few tips to consider as you plan your family gardening adventure!

- Consult with an expert neighbor, a family member, a local nursery, or stop by your local Extension Office to find out what plants will grow best where you live. But, ultimately let your kiddos help plan what you will have in the garden this year!

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(continued from page 2)

- If you have limited outdoor space, planting in containers is a good way to try out gardening.
- If you will be planting directly in the ground, now is the time to perform a soil test to be certain your seed bed has all of the nutrients it needs to be successful. Come see us at your local Twin Creeks Extension Office and we can certainly help with this!
- Start your plants from seed, purchase seedlings, or buy plants later this spring to transplant – it’s totally up to you!
- Kids can certainly help with tasks such as: collecting sticks and other debris, digging holes for seeds or plants, harvest fruits or vegetables from the garden, assist with spreading mulch, water plants with a watering can or hose, weed (with good instructions on what to pluck and what to keep). Always have adult supervision present and keep in mind that working on specific projects is best if done in short windows – for example 15 minutes to pull weeds in a designated area.
- Keep tools handy that are child appropriate. They will be excited to utilize the same equipment you are, but in their own size!



Always educate your child throughout the gardening process. You will be surprised to see how quickly their minds grow, right alongside your family garden!

Jenilee Godsey is a Youth Agriculture Agent for the Twin Creeks Extension District which covers Decatur, Graham, Norton and Sheridan counties. Email her at jenileem@ksu.edu or reach her by telephone at the Graham County Office, (785) 421-3411.

BEEF ACROSS KANSAS SERIES

'Quality Matters'



MAR 20
2:00 PM

DO YOU KNOW THE BEST HEALTHY & DAILY CARE PRACTICES?

Join us as we meet with a veterinarian and beef industry experts as we discuss the ins-and-outs of health and proper daily care practices!

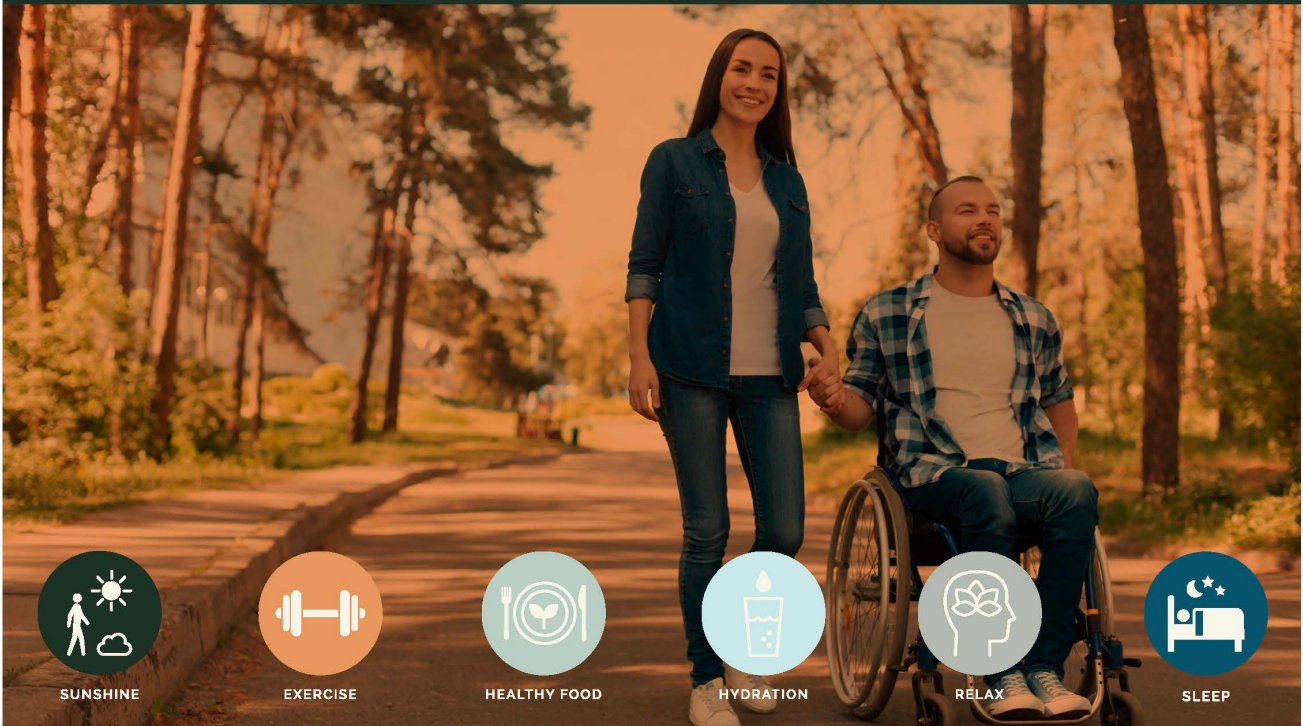
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K-STATE

Research and Extension



AN 8-WEEK HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHALLENGE!



WALK KANSAS

March 27 - May 21, 2022

Gather your team of six or go solo this year.

Register by March 26th.

Register online at WalkKansas.org or by contacting your local K-State Research and Extension office.

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Walk Kansas

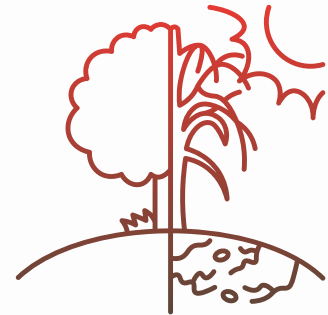
Twin Creeks Extension Offices Locations:
Hill City--410 N. Pomeroy, --785-421-3411
Hoxie--925 9th St. --785-675-3268
Norton--113 N. State St, --785-877-5755
Oberlin--120 E Hall, --785-475-8121
or email Karen Shepard at kshepard@ksu.edu





Roots & Chutes

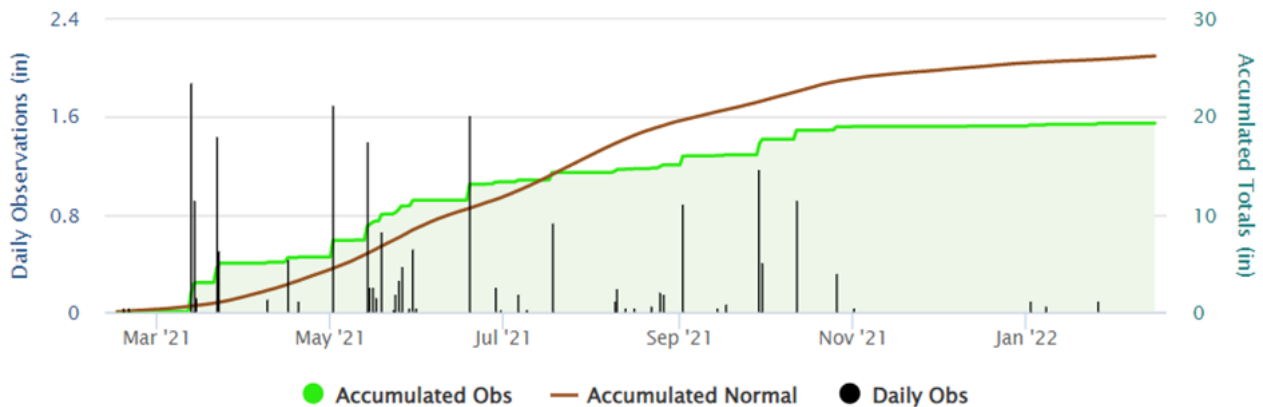
Written By: Alyssa Rippe-May
Interim District Director &
Livestock and Farm Management Agent



"Boy, is it dry!"

Have you heard folks say "Boy, is it dry" the last few months? Sure you have, and boy are they right! Looking at the Kansas Mesonet data collected at our most central Twin Creeks District station, Norton 4SW located in the Norcatour area, we have seen below average precipitation since mid-July of 2021. Currently, that station sits at an almost 7-inch deficit from our yearly average precipitation. For a site that averages only 26 inches of precipitation each year, that means we are short over 25% of our yearly total. Combine that information with the sad-looking wheat and triticale emergence across the area, grubbed down pastures, and dwindling hay supplies, it begins to make a cattleman or cattlegirl mighty nervous.

Norton 4SW 365 Day Accumulated Precipitation



Source: [Kansas Mesonet - Precip Daily Totals \(k-state.edu\)](https://www.k-state.edu/mesonet/precip-daily-totals)

So, what can we do to plan for our cow herds in 2022? First and foremost, make a management plan.

Feed

What feed resources do you have on hand and how far will they get you with your current herd? Perhaps instead of planting commodity crops on some of your acres, you can consider planting a drought-tolerant crop for grazing, like some types of millet. Some helpful resources for finding grazing crop options for our area include:

(continued on page 6)

Midwest Cover Crop Decision Tool: [mwcc \(msu.edu\)](http://mwcc.msu.edu)



KSRE Grazing Management: Toxic Plants Publication: MF3244

MF3244.pdf
Click image to view the page

Think outside the box on feeding opportunities as well. Early weaning of calves can help reduce pressure on your pastures during a drought summer while allowing you to capture efficient gains on the calves in your dry lot. Use cross-fencing and more intensive grazing to prolong the life of your pastures. Concentrating more animals creates a more competitive environment, causing animals to eat some less palatable plants that would be otherwise left ungrazed.

Downsizing Your Herd

Next, do you have easy cull decisions? Do you have open cows that need to go to town? Or do you have a set of older cows that are nearing their retirement age? Think about what is least valuable to your operation, what is most valuable at the salebarn at that time of year, then make your decisions. Try to cull early to avoid locally depressed markets if everyone is bringing their culls in at that time. Similar to a marketing plan, make your culling plan with a list of "triggers" where sales decisions need to be made.



For example, if I have a set of older cows that will calve late, my drought plan for them might be: *If we have not received 3 additional inches of rain (3.25 inches total for the year) by April 15, I will market all late-calving cows ages 7+.* Just make sure your plan contains those specific triggers of when (by April 15), where (sale barn), and what (late-calving cows ages 7+). This can help us remove some of the emotion from this terribly hard decision.

For comprehensive information on making drought management plans for your livestock operation, see these resources:

Beef Cow/Calf Management Options When Pastures are Limited: MF3114

Drought Management Plan for Your Cow/Calf Enterprise:

Drought Planning Beef Cattle Institute Podcast: Sandhills Calving System Definition, Planning for Drought, Conflict Resolution (ksubci.org)



Beef production in Kansas has been affected by reduced rainfall, overall poor and dry pastures, and economic uncertainties. Culling when average pasture and feed use production is low is one of the best ways to manage the herd. The first objective in this document is intended to help beef producers determine appropriate management practices for cow-calf operations when pasture is limited. **Key objectives:**
- evaluate current herd by the producer
- identify areas for improvement
- determine when to cull
- determine when to sell
- determine when to buy
- determine when to breed
Instructions:
- Read the document carefully and make notes on the key points.
- Use the document as a guide to develop your own drought management plan.
- Share this document with your fellow producers.
Section I - Feed Supply
1. What is your pasture condition?
- Assess current pasture condition, water availability, and soil health.
- Determine when to cull or sell based on pasture condition.
- Determine when to buy or breed based on pasture condition.
- Determine when to sell based on pasture condition.
- Determine when to buy or breed based on pasture condition.



N Drought Management Plan for Your Cow/Calf Enterprise
beef.unl.edu



Sandhills Calving System Definition, Planning for Drought, Conflict Resolution
Welcome to BCI Cattle Chat! Please click on any links below to be taken to sources mentioned in the podcast. Keep an eye out for news regarding the...



Chasing Clovers

Written By: Patsy Maddy
4-H Youth Development Agent



Making a Difference

Chante Owens, Senior Marketing Manager, Global Social Media at Healthline Media, shares her outlook on "10 Ways to Make a Difference" – Do Good! If a person makes a difference, they make a situation better because of their good actions. Check out the following simple ways YOU can make a difference in someone else's life!

- 1. Smile!** Being friendly to others is a great way to brighten someone else's day. Whether it's at the store, work, or simply walking along the street, a nice gesture like a smile could go a long way for someone having a bad day.
- 2. Do Some Volunteer Work.** Volunteering is an amazing experience that gets us out of our daily routines, and makes us turn our efforts outwards. Go out and help feed the homeless, volunteer at local events, even picking up trash in your city is a great way to give back to the community!
- 3. Sponsor a Child.** There are tons of organizations looking for people to sponsor children in need in countries around the world. These organizations are literally only a click away, and don't take much time to sign up for. It is a small price to pay to make an incredible difference in a child's life.



4. Invest and Listen. Society has become so drenched in the buzz of technology that real face-to-face interaction and relationship is growing scarce. Next time you throw out the standard, "Hi, how you doin'?" phrase, make an effort to really invest in what is going on in that person's life. Ask questions that show you really care and want to listen.

5. Teach! Go out and teach a skill to someone who wants to learn. Whether it's teaching someone how to drive, or helping a student with their homework, your lessons will make a huge impact on their lives.

6. Donate. If you're anything like the typical American, you have a lot of stuff. When it comes time to get rid of something or buy something new, choose to make a donation instead! There are many ways to make donations online and in your community.

(continued on page 8)

- 7. Stop What You're Doing and HELP.** It's easy to think that our priorities are the ones that matter the most. When you're driving and see someone along the road struggling with a flat, stop to help. Wouldn't you want a person to do the same for you? There are tons of ways for us to lend a helping hand throughout our day.
- 8. Team Up with Someone to Live Healthier.** Oftentimes having a workout partner is the best kind of motivation out there. If someone you know keeps talking about how he/she wants to get in shape, join them! This will make a huge impact on their lives, and together, you'll both be on your way to a healthier life.
- 9. Make a Care Package.** Care packages are easy and affordable to make, and they can be used in so many different ways. They can be sent overseas, or used locally! Next time you're out and about and see a homeless person with a sign offer them a care package. The packages are great to keep a supply of in your car, and they go a long way.
- 10. Have an Outward Gaze.** We live in a pretty self-centered society. Many of us are taught at a young age to do what is going to make us most successful; this can lead us to do a lot of things that are only self-serving. It's time for a change of perspective! Start thinking in ways that turn that self-centered gaze outward. See what it's like to put others' needs before yours. You won't regret it.

If a person makes a difference, they make a situation better because of their good actions.



We're Hiring

**APPLY TO BE OUR
DISTRICT DIRECTOR AND
COMMUNITY VITALITY AGENT**

Learn more at www.ksre.k-state.edu/jobs.

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WHY WORK WITH US

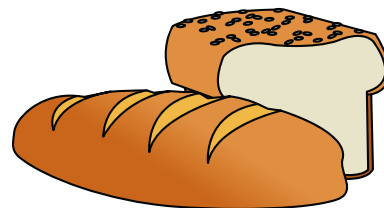
- Competitive pay
- Great benefits
- Generous retirement plan
- Tuition assistance
- Flexibility of hours
- Team environment
- Professional development
- Personal growth
- Family oriented
- Continuous learning
- Career, NOT a job
- Make a difference
- Community based

202 Greetings from KANSAS USA 34



Eating & Aging Well

Submitted By: Karen Shepard
Family Consumer Science Agent



Baking techniques affect the flavor, smell of yeast bread

By Emily Halstead, K-State Research and Extension news writer

Nothing beats the smell of fresh baked bread, but what is it that gives different breads distinct tastes and smells?

Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee said many bread cookbooks use terms such as sponge and starter interchangeably. But, she said, they are not the same.

"In bread, a starter is a form of yeast," Blakeslee said, "It is typically a combination of flour and water that is exposed to air to attract wild yeasts such as lactobacilli bacteria, to create fermentation."

Blakeslee explained that these harmless yeast organisms create fermentation and eventually unique flavors in the bread.

"Many home bakers have bread starters that have been active for years and passed on to future bakers," Blakeslee said.

A sponge, on the other hand, is an extra step in the bread making process. Bakers combine yeast, some of the flour and water to create a sponge that can be allowed to ferment from 30 minutes to several hours. After fermentation, the bread making process proceeds as usual. Longer fermentation gives bread stronger flavors.

"A yeasty aroma and acidic flavors start to develop, adding more flavor to the finished bread," Blakeslee said.

Some bakers choose to do the extra step of making a sponge in order to add a slight sour and tangy flavor to the bread.

"Not all sourdough bread tastes the same," Blakeslee said. "This is due to the different microorganisms and how the dough is handled."

Time, temperature and other ingredients add to the complex development of flavor in bread.

While these baking techniques are safe, Blakeslee reminds home bakers to handle starters with clean hands and utensils to reduce the possibility of contamination by unwanted bacteria.

April 30th

HILL CITY, KS | 8 AM - 5 PM



HAZARDOUS OCCUPATIONS SAFETY TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE

FOR YOUTH AGES 14-15

Graham County 4-H Building

2520 U.S. HWY 283

Hill City, KS 67642

\$10 Participation Fee

(Includes manual rental, lunch and snacks.)

MANUALS MAY BE PURCHASED TO KEEP FOR AN ADDITIONAL \$15.

This program will provide the trainee with the knowledge and information of tractor safety and farm hazards. Safety training is required by the U.S. Department of Labor for youth ages 14-15 who will be working on a farm for someone other than their parents. However, there are many cases where youth need certification even when working on the "family farm". Certification will be presented to participants who meet all of the following:

- Attend the entire session
- Complete all assignments
- Successfully complete a tractor safety exam
- Safely demonstrate the ability to operate a tractor and all its controls according to safe operating procedures under the supervision of a parent or employer
- Youth ages 14-15 years (others will receive certification at the time they turn 14)

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING: MANUAL, PEN/PENCIL, & A READY-TO-LEARN ATTITUDE!

Register at your local Extension Office by Fri., April 22nd.

TWIN CREEKS DISTRICT

Decatur: 785-475-8121

Graham: 785-421-3411

Norton: 785-877-5755

Sheridan: 785-675-3268

COTTONWOOD DISTRICT

Ellis: 785-628-9430

GOLDEN PRAIRIE DISTRICT

Gove: 785-673-4805

Logan: 785-671-3245

Trego: 785-743-6361

PHILLIPS-ROOKS DISTRICT

Phillips: 785-543-6845

Rooks: 785-425-6851

Thank you to our sponsor:



Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities, and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact the Twin Creeks Extension District at 785-421-3411. **Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service** K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Views With Van

Written By: Keith VanSlike
Agronomy, Natural Resources,
& Entomology Agent



What is Crop Talk?

Our group of Northwest area Agronomy agents and expert speakers from K-State Research and Extension and other areas put together one-hour virtual zooms of a variety of timely topics starting from 2021 to 2022. Our topics included soil fertility, weed management, manure management and other timely topics. For Crop Talk recordings and handouts people can visit the NW Agronomy page at <https://www.northwest.k-state.edu/events/crop-talk-series/index.html>.

Or if they are just looking for recordings they can visit the Northwest Agronomy YouTube page at K-State Agronomy or <https://www.youtube.com/user/KStateAgronomy/videos>. If you have any questions or would like printed copies of any of the handouts please reach out to your local extension office.

2022 AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY



Lack of a skilled agriculture workforce is a top inhibitor of growth and expansion for many Kansas agriculture operations. An agriculture workforce needs assessment survey will help the Kansas Department of Agriculture work toward solutions for the Kansas ag industry.

We are seeking Kansas farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, manufacturers and producers of agricultural products to help KDA identify the number and types of jobs, and specific skills required for those jobs. We need your input — please complete this survey by April 8.



WE NEED YOUR INPUT!



Please scan the QR code to get started or you can go directly to the survey at

tinyurl.com/workforce2022

Paper survey copies are available by contacting Russell Plaschka, agribusiness development director, at 785-564-7466 or Russell.Plaschka@ks.gov.



A complete survey report will be made available later this year. Thank you for your investment in Kansas agriculture.



Clover Corner



Statewide Dates & Deadlines

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| March 25-27 | Shooting Sports Instructor Training - Rock Springs Ranch |
| March 26: | Super 4-H Saturday - FHSU Campus, Hays |
| April 23: | Shooting Sports Spring State Match - Great Bend Expo Complex |

County Dates & Deadlines

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| March 4: | Graham County Club Day - Hill City Grade School |
| March 5: | Norton Beef Weigh-In - Norton Livestock Sale |
| March 14: | Decatur County Club Day - United Methodist Church |
| March: 21: | Decatur County 4-H Council Meeting |
| March 22: | Sheridan County 4-H Council Meeting |
| March 26: | Decatur Beef Weigh-in - Oberlin Livestock Auction |
| March 27: | Norton County Club Day - Norton Jr. High School |
| March 28: | Sheridan County Club Day - Hoxie High School |
| March 28: | Graham County 4-H Council Meeting |
| April 3: | Norton County 4-H Council Meeting |
| April 5: | District Club Days - Sheridan County 4-H Building |
| April 10: | Small Animal Weigh-In - Sheridan County Fair Grounds |
| April 18: | YQCA (Youth for the Quality Care of Animals) - Sheridan County 4-H Building |
| April 18: | Sheridan County 4-H Council Meeting |
| April 18: | Decatur County 4-H Council Meeting |
| April 18: | YQCA (Youth for the Quality Care of Animals) - Graham County 4-H Building |
| April 24: | Small Animal Weigh-In - Sheridan County Fair Grounds (Snow Date) |
| April 24 | Small Animal Weigh-In - Decatur County Fair Grounds |
| April 25 | Small Animal Weigh-In - Hill City Fair Grounds |

Note: Youth events are open to ALL youth (with Extension agent approval for youth not currently enrolled in the 4-H program). If you have a youth that is interested in an event please contact Patsy Maddy, Twin Creeks Extension District 4-H Youth Development Agent pmaddy@ksu.edu.

Go to the Twin Creeks District website at <https://tinyurl.com/qukdd97> for a complete listing of all activities and events at the local, district, area and state levels.





INFORMATION ON UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Family & Consumer Science

- Walk Kansas - March 27th, 2022 - May 21st, 2022
- Twin Creeks District Bread Workshop - Oberlin, March 15th, 2022
- Twin Creeks District Bread Workshop - Norton, March 16th, 2022
- Twin Creeks District Bread Workshop - Graham, March 17th, 2022
- Twin Creeks District Bread Workshop - Sheridan, March 21st, 2022

Ag & Natural Resources

- Crop Talk Climate Update & Kansas Mesonet, webinar series, March 7th, 2022
- Crop Talk 2022 Grain Market Outlook & Strategies, March 14th, 2022

Youth Agriculture

- Kansas Jr. Beef Producer Day - March 5th, 2022, Manhattan, KS
- Farm-2-Table after school program - March 3rd, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- Farm-2-Table after school program - March 17th, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- Kansas Jr. Sheep Producer Day - March 19th, 2022, Manhattan, KS
- Beef Across Kansas Series, Quality Matters - March 20th, 2022 zoom
- Farm-2-Table After School Program - March 31st, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- Farm-2-Table After School Program - April 7th, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- Farm-2-Table After School Program - April 14th, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- Farm-2-Table After School Program - April 21st, 2022, Hoxie Grade School Library, 4th & 5th Grade
- HOSTA (Hazardous Occupation Safety Training in Agriculture for Youth) - April 30th, 2022, Hill City
- Livestock Showmanship Clinic (Beef, Goats, Sheep, Swine) - June 4, 2022, Norton

To stay current on upcoming program dates, registration info, etc. [follow us on Facebook](#) and/or check our [Twin Creeks District Website!](#)



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