TWIN CREEKS SPOTLIGHT



NOVEMBER 1 2020, ISSUE 6

"Tomato, Corn, Pig and Canning Clubs"

By : Patsy L. Maddy Twin Creeks Extension District 4-H Youth Development Agent

Screen time blues coming your way? Worried about remote learning and social distancing affecting the ability of our youth to "socialize" and build friendships? Our 4-H program is developed around the experiential learning model – learning by doing! Continue reading to find out how to engage your youth in the largest national youth organization – 4-H!

A.B. Graham was the founder of the very first 4-H Club in Ohio in January 1902 and O.J. Kern began a similar club a month later in February 1902 in Illinois. These project related clubs were called "Tomato Clubs", "Corn Clubs", "Pig Clubs" and "Canning Clubs". At that time, researchers in public universities observed that adults in farming communities were not open to trying new ideas like using hybrid seed corn, milk sanitation and better home canning procedures. They did notice that their young students were open and willing to experiment and take these new ideas back to parents. This was the beginning of hands-on learning and extending an arm of the university to individuals in other communities.

With the passing of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, county agents and local leaders began to organize 4-H Clubs and a canning program started in 1917.

Since those early years of 4-H, our program has continued to adapt to our ever changing times to provide opportunities for all youth – the national 4-H theme this year – "Opportunity4All"! Our 4-H program is open to all youth ages 5 to 18 with 5 and 6-year-old youth participating in our Cloverbud program and 7 to 18 year-old youth participating in our community club programs.

Club members in Kansas can choose from over 30 different project areas to explore, experiment and build on life skills learned providing lasting, every day, useful education. It's not just the project content, it's building character, confidence, competence, caring and connection that leads to contribution in your community.

4-H youth are guided by screened volunteers in a positive youth development atmosphere. K-State Research and Extension agents have worked hard to adapt project programs to meet the needs of todays youth with a continued focus on networking and hands-on learning.

We are at the beginning of our new 4-H year and welcome anyone interested to investigate our educational program delivered in a fun and safe environment. Consider getting your youth involved in developing life skills that will benefit them in future endeavors. Contact Patsy Maddy, Twin Creeks Extension District 4-H Youth Development Agent for more information in how to get enrolled in our 4-H program in your county. (pmaddy@ksu.edu or 785-877-5755 or 785-877-7262)

There is something for everyone in 4-H!











By: Stacy Brown
District Director, Family &
Consumer Sciences Agent



"Celebrating the Holiday's Safely"

With the holidays quickly approaching, people are feeling concerned and confused about how to celebrate in this day and age of social distancing. Staying in touch and connected with loved ones while taking the precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can present many challenges. This social distancing can be especially difficult for some older adults.

People are social creatures. Our connection to others enables us to survive and thrive. Social engagement has benefits to our overall well-being. Now, with COVID-19, the risk of infection brings the risk of social isolation and loneliness.

Research has shown that loneliness in older people can pose poor health risks, such as cognitive decline, depression, and heart disease.

People who engage in meaningful and productive activities with others tend to live longer, improve their mood, and have a sense of purpose. So, it is important that we stay socially connected to family, friends, and neighbors during this time of physically distancing ourselves from others.

The CDC recommends that the best way to celebrate the holidays is to stay home to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. Some of the lower risk activities that it recommends if you don't want to stay home are:

· Having a small dinner with only people who live in your household

•Preparing traditional family recipes for family and neighbors, especially those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and delivering them in a way that doesn't involve contact with others

- · Having a virtual dinner and sharing recipes with friends and family
- · Shopping online rather than in person on the day after Thanksgiving or the next Monday
- · Watching sports events, parades, and movies from home

Jane Strommen, Gerontology Specialist, NDSU Extension recommends for family members of older adults to stay connected with those members. She says to be intentional about making contact more frequently during this time. Challenge your family to get involved and set up a schedule of who will call or reach out.

Obviously, face-to-face contact is best but when not possible, choose options like FaceTime. This helps maintain bonds. Phone calls are next best. Hearing the other person's voice is a form of social connection. Another option is to make a gift or send handwritten cards, small gestures show your love and care. If your loved one is in a nursing home or assisted living facility, contact staff to see what technology options are available for connecting. Options might include Skype, Zoom, and FaceTime or other creative ways. Do not forget about old-fashioned mail and email.

Regardless of age, remember that we are all in this together and none of us is all alone. Now more than ever we need to find creative ways to stay connected. If you are struggling during this time, reach out to a trusted person such as family and friends but also to your pastor or a mental health professional. This too shall pass. It may take a while but we need to find a way to maintain a sense of hope. Maintaining connections are key to that.



Agent Spotlight

Karen Shepard Family and Consumer Science Agent

Karen Shepard is a live long resident of Graham County. She grew up on a farm near St. Peter, graduated from Morland High School and earned her Bachelor's degree from Fort Hays State University. She worked in the school system for 20 years before becoming an extension agent in 2002.

Karen lives in Penokee with her husband Kenny, and had three children; Lee, Sonya and Nick.

Lee their oldest son, was lost due to a motorcycle accident while he was home on Christmas break in 2002. He was attending the Hutchinson Community College majoring in Fire Science. He had spent his last summer as a member of the San Juan Hotshots in Colorado.

Sonya is employed at the KUMC and her husband, Cody Fabricius, is a Delta Airline pilot. They blessed Karen with two grandchildren; Harrison, 4 and Farah, 2. They make their home in Overland Park, KS.

Nick, the youngest, is employed at the Scottsbluff Body and Paint Shop and his wife, McKenzie is a dental hygienist, also in Scottsbluff. They make their home in Mitchell, NE.

During Karen's free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, gardening, sewing, reading and following the Kansas City Chiefs.



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K-State Research and Extension Twin Creeks Extension District http://www.twincreeks.ksu.edu



2020-2021 Programming Year Goals



- Enriching the Health and Wellness of Aging Adults in the Twin Creeks District
- Improve Nutrition
 - Food Safety and Health in Twin Creeks
- Assist with the 4-H Maintenance in Graham County



By: Alyssa Rippe-May, Livestock & Farm Management Agent

and

By: Keith P. VanSkike Agronomy and Natural Resources Agent



"Plant hardy bulbs now to add spring color"

Tulips, daffodils and more should go in the ground by early November.

MANHATTAN, Kan. – For gardeners who think of their yard as a canvas, Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham says now is a good time to build the color palette.

Upham said gardeners can plant hardy bulbs in October through early November as long as the soil temperature remains above 40 degrees F, which allows them to develop roots.

Some of the popular, colorful examples: tulips, daffodils, grape hyacinths and crocuses.

"Although many of the best bulbs have probably already been purchased, garden centers may still have a good selection," Upham said. "Be sure to select large, firm bulbs that have not begun to sprout."

While many bulbs can adapt to a wide range of soil types, none can tolerate poorly-drained soil, he added. "Prepare the planting bed by adding organic matter, such as peat moss, well-rotted manure or compost, and mix that into the soil."

Before planting, Upham recommends having a soil test done to determine the nutrients needed.

"Garden soils that have been fertilized regularly in the past may have excess levels of phosphorus, which can interfere with the uptake of other essential micronutrients," he said.

Upham and his colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources publish a weekly horticulture newsletter in which they cover guidelines for many yard- and garden-related chores.

The Oct. 19 newsletter covers recommendations for fertilizing planting beds, including mixtures that would help to offset high phosphorus levels. In some cases, even common lawn fertilizers can work as long as they don't contain weed preventer or weed killer.

Some sources of organic fertilizers include blood meal, cottonseed meal and soybean meal.

"If you have not taken a soil test, or if phosphorus is needed, add a low analysis, balanced fertilizer such as 5-10-5 or 6-10-4 at the rate of three pounds per 100 square feet," Upham said.

In general, hardy bulbs should be planted at a depth two to three times their size, but Upham urges gardeners to check the planting instructions specific to each type of flower.

In addition to K-State's weekly horticulture newsletter, interested persons can also send their garden- and yard-related questions to Upham at wupham@ksu.edu, or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

Sidebar (continued on page 5)

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"Clean up the garden"

Fall is traditionally a time for cleaning up gardens.

"Normally we recommend clear-cutting dead stems to help control insect and disease problems," said Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham. "With herbaceous perennials that have been pest-free, you might want to consider leaving some to provide structure, form and color to the winter garden."

For example, he said, ornamental grasses can be attractive in the winter, though they can be a fire hazard near structures. The same goes for evergreen and semi-evergreen perennials.

"Of course, some perennials are naturally messy after dormancy and should be cut back in the fall," Upham said.

Foliage left on marginally hardy plants, such as tender ferns, can help ensure overwintering of the plant's crowns. Seed heads on some perennial plants also can provide seeds for birds.

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story

K-State Horticulture Newsletter, https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html

K-State Research and Extension local offices, www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/stateandareamaps.html

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Ward Upham



"Views with Van"



By: Keith P. VanSkike Agronomy and Natural Resources Agent



"Grain Dry Down"

In recent years, a common question from producers is related to the dry down rate for sorghum when approaching the end of the season. Based on previous information, the average dry down rate depends on the weather, primarily temperature and moisture conditions. The weather outlook for November calls for an increased chance of above-normal temperatures with chances for normal precipitation. Normal precipitation in November is much less than in October. This would favor a faster dry down rate than average but any sorghum impacted by freeze will present challenges in the dry down rate.

From a crop perspective, the overall cumulative GDD from flowering to maturity is about 800-1200 (based on 50 degrees F as the base temperature), with the shortest requirement in GDD for short-season hybrids. Before maturity, from beginning of grain filling (soft dough until maturity), grain moisture content within a grain will go from 80-90% to 25-35% where black layer is usually formed . From maturity (seen as a "black-layer" near the seed base) to harvest time, sorghum grain will dry down from about 35 to 20 percent moisture, but the final maximum dry mass accumulation and final nutrient content will have already been attained at maturity.

Grain water loss occurs at different rates but with two distinct phases: before "black layer" or maturity and after black layer.

To answer the rate of dry down question from many of our producers, a study was conducted to investigate the effect of the grain dry down rate from the moment of "black layer" until commercial harvest grain moisture is reached. For the conditions experienced in 2019 (from early September until early October), the overall dry down rate was around 0.7% per day (from 34% to17% grain moisture) – taking an overall of 26 days (from September 9 to October 10). This dry down process can be delayed by: Low temperatures, High humidity, High grain moisture content at black layer (38-40%).

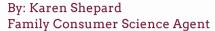
It is expected that the dry down rate will decrease to <0.5% per day for late-planted sorghum entering reproductive stages later in the growing season. A similar decrease is also expected for sorghum that was exposed to late-season stress conditions (e.g., drought, heat, and freeze). Under these conditions, maturity may be reached with high grain water content and the last stages after black layer formation could face lower temperatures and higher humidity. These main factors should be considered when the time comes to schedule harvest.

You can track temperature and humidity levels on the Kansas Mesonet web site at http://mesonet.k-state.edu/weather/historical/ by selecting the station and time period of interest.

An excellent publication on early fall freeze to sorghum can be found at: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF1081.pdf









"A COVID-19 Look at Home Kitchens"

Meals are likely to include more meat such as chicken, ground beef, and seafood. Have you spent more time in your kitchen this year? If so, you are not alone. Surveys show that 70% of U.S. households are now food preparation central for 80% of meals. This is up 40% from 2019 and likely not slowing down.

What are home cooks making? One survey says the most common recipes searched for on the internet include banana bread, pancakes, chicken, pizza dough, brownies, crepes, meatloaf, French toast, lasagna, and cheesecake.

Who's doing the cooking? Millennials and Gen Z consumers are learning new cooking skills and discovering new passions through culinary experimentation, particularly with new seasonings.

What are we cooking with? Slow cookers are in nine in 10 households and pressure cookers are in half of consumers kitchens.

Baking has become very popular, as evidenced by empty grocery shelves where baking supplies are sold. Will these bakers keep baking? Eight in 10 say yes!

Source: Food Technology, Sept. 2020



"Are You in Charge of the Holiday Meal?"

While the holidays can be stressful, don't let the holiday meal stress you out! Take time to plan ahead to ease the stress and have success.

- · Decide when to purchase a fresh or frozen turkey. Order a fresh turkey to be picked up the week of Thanksgiving.
- · If buying a whole turkey, plan for one pound per person.
- · Plan for about one week to thaw a frozen turkey in the refrigerator safely. Do not wash the turkey before cooking.
- · Use a food thermometer to determine doneness; all poultry products should reach a minimum 165°F.

More information can be found at Food Safety for Holiday Meals



"Roots & Chutes"



By: Alyssa Rippe-May, Livestock & Farm Management Agent



The Chute..."4-H Record-keeping Skills in Life"

It's the start of the new 4-H year, but, what do we do before we can kick off the new year? Wrap up the old year by finishing record books, of course. Do you remember the dreaded 4-H record book? The time at the end of the 4-H year where you were made to sit down with pencil and paper to make sense of feed expenses and notes jotted down about your 4-H project. It was hard if you waited until the very end of the year, wasn't it? If you have grown up into a cattle producer, you may know this feeling again as you wade through production notes on random pieces of paper as you're trying to figure out just how many cattle you had on a specific date for the FSA office. Or if you find yourself trying to identify why that cow is open by rifling through a calendar with no exact bull turn-out date written down.

What's the solution to these woes? Well, it's the same as when you were a kid; get yourself a good record-keeping system that you use throughout the year. So, what exactly should you keep track of? In general, records on cow-calf operations can be broken down into two large categories, whole-herd records and individual records.

Whole-herd records give you a "big picture" view of the operation, allowing you to analyze year to year trends in profitability and efficiency. At the most basic, you need to find a system to keep track of your cow and calf inventory, whether it be using pen and paper, a spreadsheet on your computer, or a specific computer program. You need some way to track sales, purchases, calvings, etc. Keeping track of group movements is also key by noting pasture movements, dates groups are moved into the lot, etc. Finally, whole-herd records of percent calf crop, percent pregnant, weaning/yearling weights, and death loss help to analyze your operation over time, allowing you to identify any positive or negative trends.

Individual records give you more specific information about each cow and can help narrow down the cause of any positive or negative group trends. These records should include:

- · Calving Dates. Identify in both your records and tagging system the date and year each calf is born. Make sure to include calf sex as well as any dystocia issues in your notes.
- · Bangs Tags. We all know cows come in missing their ear tag every now and then. Consider noting the ear tag and bangs tag number together for heifers, so if a cow comes in without a tag in a subsequent year, she may be able to be identified.
- · Bull Turn-out. Write down both the date you turn out the bulls and the date you pull them. Note which bulls went to which groups as well. If you have any reproductive problems, estimated dates and guesses on the correct sire might lead you to an incorrect conclusion.
- · Vaccinations and Treatments. Include the date, animal, and specific products with the serial number, lot number, expiration date, withdrawal date, and administration site.
- · Preg Check. Note which cows came up open, particularly if you intend to give them one more try in the herd.

(continued from page 08)

·Body Condition Score (BCS). Think about recording the BCS of your cows once a month or so. One of our extension beef specialists taught me a neat trick that comes in handy; when you feed your cattle, tally the BCS of each cow on a paper like in the example below. Then, turn the paper sideways for a quick chart. Compare it with the previous month to know if your cows on average are gaining or losing condition.

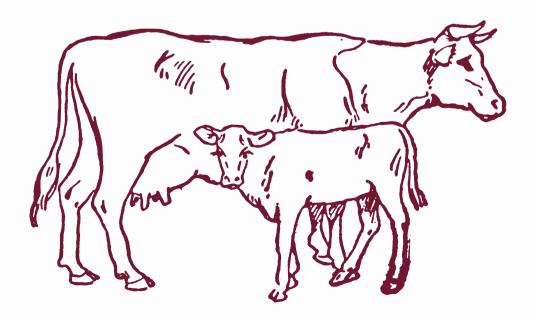
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At the end of the year, if you feel like you're struggling to complete your adult record books, think about making some changes to your daily record-keeping routine. Maybe you start by recording just the whole-herd records next year, then resolve to adding some individual records the following year. Just remember that taking a couple minutes each day throughout the year will help you get on track in the end.

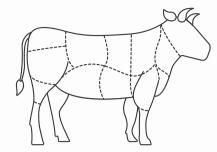
For a more in-depth look at record-keeping, see: Production Records for Cow/Calf Producers at https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3298.pdf.



"Meat the Future"



By: Jenilee Godsey, Youth Agriculture Agent



"Mentors in 4-H"

Here is an article I would like to share with you written by fellow K-State Research and Extension Agent, Michelle Beran, from the Midway Extension District. As we kick-off a new 4-H year, we as Extension Agents, get excited about the opportunity to work with existing and new volunteers in our 4-H programs. Volunteers play a crucial role in the success of the program in regards to knowledge gained and skills advanced for our youth in their specific project areas. Take a look at Michelle's message about mentoring in 4-H!

One of the important aspects of 4-H is providing practical learning opportunities for youth by working with caring adults who set examples and model behaviors. These adults provide invaluable opportunities as mentors for youth.

What is a mentor? A mentor is someone who listens, helps in goal setting, sets examples, and provides a framework for youth to learn problem solving, improve communication, and expand life skills.

Mentors have long-term impacts on the lives of youth and can exist in many different roles. We often think of mentors in one-on-one relationships but they can certainly exist as part of a group environment. They can include teachers, counselors, pastors, neighbors, family members and club/project leaders.

Good mentors will go to great lengths to assist, but also understand that the success of any young person depends on that youth's choices and behaviors.

Even when a young person doesn't show instant change and doesn't seem to be benefiting from the relationship, the simple act of the mentor being there can be life-changing. Developmental or youth-centered mentoring relationships in which mentors help young people set and reach their own goals results in higher youth satisfaction compared to relationships in which the mentor just directs activities.

While it may sound like a mentor needs to be perfect or a super-hero to succeed, mentors are human and make mistakes. Mentors may take the wrong approach to a problem or say the wrong thing from time to time, but mentees are generally resilient as long as they understand that their mentors have the youth's best interests at heart. Mistakes can give young people the chance to see an adult model good problem-solving skills and can be used as teachable moments.

Here are some great Do's and Don'ts:

DO be consistent – Many young people believe that adults aren't dependable and mentors need to 'walk the walk' and make sure that our actions are consistent with our words.

DO practice healthy communication skills – Establish eye contact, listen, ask questions for clarification, don't interrupt and be open-minded.

DO address inappropriate behavior – Do this directly but with care. Explain that there are standards in the outside world with which individuals are expected to comply. Behaviors learned in the home or among peers may be appropriate in those settings but not in others.

DON'T trivialize your mentee's feelings – Young people tend to lack the perspective that comes with age so your mentee may react more strongly in a given situation than an adult would. You may not understand why something is so important to your mentee but accept that it is and keep listening.

DON'T jump to conclusions – Remember there are usually at least two sides to every story. It's okay to give your mentee the benefit of the doubt but don't choose sides or believe everything you hear. If you know the facts, then you'll be in a better position to help your mentee find solutions and make wise choices.

If you are interested in being a mentor or volunteer in our 4-H program, we welcome you to contact any of our county offices!

This is an article written by Michelle Beran with Kansas State University Research and Extension in the Midway District.

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



4-H T-Shirt Fundraiser

ADULT SHIRT OPTIONS

Available Sizes: S-4XL

Shirt Options: Volunteer (Black) or 4-H Proud (Green)

\$15/Each (+\$2 for 2XL and Larger)

YOUTH SHIRT OPTIONS

· Available Sizes: Youth S-XL

• Shirt Options: 4-H Proud (Green)

\$12/Each

Proceeds from the shirts you purchase will go towards 4-H volunteer training and resources in your county!

Payment Options: By cash OR check payable to your local 4-H Council. You may drop payment off at your local TCD Extension Office (Decatur, Graham, Norton or Sheridan Counties).

TO ORDER: Fill out our order form at https://forms.gle/BCBBWgaH49bvmCTK8 or contact your local Twin Creeks Office (see contact info below). Any orders not made and/or paid for by Dec. 1st will not be placed.

CONTACT:

Decatur: 785-475-8121 Graham: 785-421-3411 Norton: 785-877-5755 Sheridan: 785-675-3268





A portion of the sales price of this product or service will be used to promote 4-H educational programs. No endorsement of the product or service by 4-H is implied or intended.

NOVEMBER 2020, ISSUE 6

"Chasing Clovers"



By : Patsy L. Maddy Twin Creeks Extension District 4-H Youth Development Agent

"Remembering the Pandemic"

Pondering on memories from the past, we all have slightly different recollections of the same event. We recall the details from different angles and each one's story is a bit different.

According to Dr. Tim Elmore, CEO and founder of Growing Leaders, behavioral scientists have gathered a body of research that suggests our memories are not only fallible, but they can be downright inaccurate and even reconstructed. An example would be siblings remembering their childhood differently.

The American Psychological Association tells us that victims of sexual assault, who swear they can identify their perpetrator, can get it wrong less than a month later. In observing a lineup of suspects, they point to the one they're sure committed the act. But in all reality, it's impossible for any of the men to have done it since each was selected from a local prison and were not free to commit the crime. Our memories play tricks on us, and sometimes, we do it to ourselves.

Memories are constructed by our minds, created over time from our perceptions of reality, and we trust our memories. Memories are affected by: 1) Expectations – Our memories are colored by what we expected to happen. 2) Imaginations – Our version of reality is shaped in our minds with each story we tell. 3) Preconceived Notions – We look for confirmation bias, and life seems to reaffirm it. 4) Emotions – The level of emotion we feel in the moment influences our memory of it.

In addition to those factors, our mood, sleep levels and personality all play a role in exactly what we remember. Taking all of this into consideration will be key to leading our youth to base their memories on fact and to construct a healthy memory of this pandemic which could make or break their future.

One of Elmore's concerns for today's "pandemic population" of teens is they will emerge from it afterward with a "victim mindset" or a "scarcity mindset". Valid concerns include the loss of an internship, a job interview or a trip opportunity. These youth can easily feel they're behind and will never catch up in their career. Because of the slump in the economy, they may never earn the salary they would have prior to Covid-19. We will need to enable them to retain an accurate memory but a positive narrative.

In a group setting, recall what's happened and make a pro and con list. Accurate memories occur when several perspectives are offered in a conversation about the same past event. When visiting about the 2020 pandemic, make a "positives" and "negatives" column enabling everyone to feel honest but hopeful. This conversation will make it clear who sees the glass half full or half empty.

Review the hardships of each past generation. Today's youth may feel they are the only ones who have been through a tough time. Covid-19 is unique, but each former generation had its own set of hardships. Baby boomers grew up with assassinations, riots and their own pandemic of the Hong Kong Flu. Generation X grew up with the Vietnam War and Watergate. Millennials grew up with child abductions, a Columbine massacre and 9-11.

Clarify the "silver lining" in today's pandemic. Many past generations of caring adults were careful in helping youth find the advantage to a disadvantage. Ask the questions – what did they learn, how did they grow or what was experienced that might have never been accomplished had we not endured the pandemic. This is a habit every healthy person should learn to build into their life.

Discuss a metaphor and story they can carry with them into the future. As a leader, teacher, or parent, talk about the story our youth will tell about this pandemic experience. Help them come up with an image or metaphor that can provide a mental "handle" for them in the future, especially when tempted to spiral downward emotionally.

Dr. Tim Elmore stresses the importance of leading students and youth well. As parents, teachers, coaches and employers, it is our job to equip them to think and act in a way that is hopeful. Elmore states, where there is no hope in the future, there is no power in the present.

This article was adapted from Dr. Tim Elmore's "Growing Leaders" Weekly Digest. Please contact Patsy Maddy at your local Extension office to find out more about connecting your youth through our 4-H program, the nation's largest youth organization. General information can also be found on our website at www.twincreeks.ksu.edu and 'Like' our Facebook page at K-State Research and Extension Twin Creeks District.









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