

Flint Hills District

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER



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Sciences Agent



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We're
Hiring!

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New Look, New Agents, Same Commitment

Greetings! We are excited to share the newest version of the Flint Hills District K-State Research & Extension bi-monthly newsletter!

By now, many of those reading this newsletter may already recognize the layout change and customized design. The goal of this newsletter is to provide timely, reliable, and research-based information that can help Flint Hills District residents in their every-day living – whether at work on the farm or in the office, or at home with their family or as an individual. The target publication dates for the bi-monthly newsletter will be October/November; December/January; February/March; April/May; June/July; and August/September.

The “new” doesn’t stop there, though! Our Morris County office has relocated to main street in Council Grove. Drop by, say hi, and check out our new space in the GMCDC building at 315 W. Main. Our sign will be in front soon!

In the past each FHD Extension Agent had notable 4-H responsibilities, along with significant other programming commitments in their content area. Now, there is a designated 4-H Agent, Ron Smith, that is shared in the district who is strongly supported by both the Agriculture and & Natural Resources Agent and Family & Consumer Sciences Agent. This design allows for each Extension Agent to focus on their programming area while ensuring the 4-H Youth Development program continues to grow and thrive in the Flint Hills District with a designated agent.

Still remaining is the high level of commitment of K-State Research and Extension has to the youth, individuals, and families of Chase and Morris Counties. Through the Flint Hills District Extension Board, staff are charged with the task to ensure the university's research and scientific accomplishments are accessible and relevant to every household. Ultimately, Chelsea, Deb, Ron, Laura, and Donna are dedicated to helping improve Kansans' lives, livelihoods and communities through education, research, engagement and leadership – especially in the Flint Hills District.

Did You Know?

K-State Research & Extension’s goal is to provide research-based information on topics including agriculture, economic development, family and consumer sciences, and youth development. Statewide, we work from three campuses, eight regional centers and offices in each of our 105 counties. Through these many locations our professionals and volunteers can respond rapidly, and with resources, to whatever challenge Kansans face. Check out the Flint Hills District website at: <https://www.flinthills.k-state.edu> for more information!

Upcoming Flint Hills District Extension Programs

**Requires pre-registration.

- 2024**
- October 15—** **Medicare Open Enrollment Begins!** - Contact your local Extension Office to make your appointment to look at your Part D prescription plan.
- November 11—** **Office Closed—**Flint Hills District K-State Research & Extension offices closed for Veterans Day.
- December 7—** **Medicare Open Enrollment Ends!** - Don’t put off making your appointment. Space is limited!

Management Considerations for October/November 2024

Cow Herd Management

- ⇒ For spring-calving cow herds:
 - If not already done, make plans for weaning calves.
 - > Test your forages and have feedstuffs on hand prior to weaning.
 - > Check and clean waterers and prepare weaning/receiving pens.
 - Evaluate cow BCS at weaning.
 - > Record scores with the BCS Record Book (<https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/Item.aspx?catId=562&pubId=19320>) from KSRE!
 - > Use BCS to strategically supplement cows during fall, if needed.
 - > Female requirements are lowest at weaning so weight and BCS can be added more easily in early fall rather than waiting until closer to calving.
 - Schedule pregnancy checking and fall health work if not already done.
 - > How were pregnancy rates relative to last year?
 - > Do we need to re-think our fall/winter nutrition program?
 - Evaluate the cost of gain relative to the value of gain when making feeding and marketing decisions for cull cows.
- ⇒ For fall-calving cow herds:
 - If not already done, review your calving health protocols as needed.
 - Have calving equipment cleaned and available to use as needed.
 - Plan to adjust your nutrition program to match needs of lactating cows.
 - Use the estrus synchronization planner (<https://www.iowabeefcenter.org/estrussynch.html>) to help plan fall synchronization protocols.
- ⇒ Plan your mineral supplementation for this coming fall and winter.
 - Record date and amount offered and calculate herd consumption.
 - If consumption is 2X the target intake, then cost will be too!
 - Risk of grass tetany is greatest for lactating cows. Consider magnesium levels in mineral supplements for cows grazing cool-season forages and winter annuals this fall.
- ⇒ Schedule breeding soundness exams for bulls used for fall and winter service.
 - Monitor BCS, particularly on young bulls.
 - If bulls are BCS ≤ 5.0, consider supplementing to regain BCS going into winter.

Calf Management

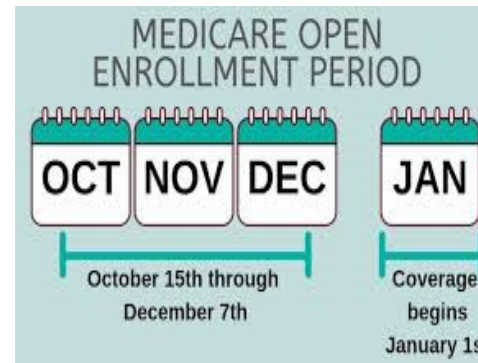
- ⇒ Consider the economic value by implanting nursing fall-born calves and weaned spring-born calves.
- ⇒ If not already done, schedule your breeding protocols for fall replacement heifers in advance of the breeding season.
 - If synchronizing with MGA, make sure intake is consistent at 0.5 mg of melengestrol acetate per head per day for 14 days, and remove for 19 days prior to administering prostaglandin.

General Management

- ⇒ Take inventory of and begin sampling harvested forages for fall feed needs.
 - Be aware of possible presence of molds and other anti-nutritional compounds in hay harvested at higher than typical moisture levels.
 - Test for nitrates and prussic acid when appropriate.
 - Use the forage inventory calculator (<https://www.agmanager.info/hay-inventory-calculator>) to balance forage inventories with fall/winter grazing acres.
- ⇒ If grazing crop residues following harvest, keep the following in mind:
 - The bottom 1/3 of the stalk is where nitrates accumulate.
 - Be aware of prussic acid in new regrowth of sorghum plants, and the time around frost is the greatest risk.
 - High amounts of down grain will require a change in management.
 - Use the Management Minder tool on KSUBeef.org (<https://www.asi.k-state.edu/extension/beef/tools.html>) to plan key management activities for your cowherd for the rest of the year.
 - With high feeder calf prices, consider price risk management tools.
 - Begin preparing for cold weather (i.e. tank heaters, windbreaks, bedding).

Source: Jason M. Warner, Ph.D., Extension Cow-Calf Specialist

Medicare Open Enrollment is HERE!



From October 15 thru December 7, Medicare beneficiaries should look at their Part D Prescription Plan each year to see if the plan they are currently on will be the best option for 2025. Plan formularies change and the medication costs can vary greatly from year to year and from company to company. Generics offer cost savings, too. K-State Research & Extension has specially trained staff that provide SHICK counseling during the Open Enrollment Period (OEP) as well as throughout the year. New Medicare prescription plan options chosen during OEP take effect 1/1/2025.

During the 2024 Open Enrollment season, Medicare Beneficiaries who took advantage of this free service offered at your local K-State Research and Extension office saved a total of over \$53,000 in costs – an average of \$946.71 per person.

In 2025, thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, people with Medicare prescription drug coverage will benefit from a \$2,000 out-of-pocket cap on their annual prescription drug costs, further making prescription drugs more affordable for seniors and people with disabilities. Because of the Inflation Reduction Act, people with Medicare coverage already see improved benefits, including a \$35 cost-sharing limit on a month's supply of each covered insulin product and recommended adult vaccines under Medicare Part D at no cost. People with Medicare prescription drug coverage who fall into the catastrophic phase of the prescription drug benefit will not have to pay anything out of pocket for covered Medicare prescription drugs.

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas is a free program that offers Kansans unbiased assistance with questions about Medicare and other insurance issues. Over 60% of the County Extension Offices in the state of Kansas have at least one agent that has become SHICK certified whose purpose is to educate and assist the public in making informed decisions for each situation. Not everyone will find a better plan than they currently have but you won't know without looking in to it! Call Deb at the Morris County Flint Hills District K-State Research and Extension office at 620-767-5136 to make your appointment in Council Grove and Deb Haglund at the Chase County Senior Center in Cottonwood Falls 620-273-8511.

And yet more change

We want to extend our sincere appreciation to our two office professionals Betty Ann Yeager and Aleece Priest for their hard work with the Flint Hills District of K-State Research & Extension.

Betty Ann has been a dedicated anchor in our Cottonwood Falls office for 17 years. Her commitment to the 4-H youth, individuals, and families of Chase County has made a lasting impression on our communities. Betty Ann's last day in the Chase County office is October 31, 2024. She will be greatly missed! She requested no fan fare before she leaves, but anyone could stop by the office to wish her the best!

Aleece has been a valued asset to the programs in the Council Grove office for over 3 years. She has provided ongoing support to the programs, volunteers, and 4-H youth in Morris County through many previous transitions. We appreciate the resiliency and resourcefulness she has demonstrated and wish her the best of luck as she pursues other interests. Her last day in the Morris County office is October 31, 2024. Drop by the office between now and then to wish her the best!

Please be patient with us as we work to find a qualified candidate for our office professional staff and shuffle our schedules to make sure both offices maintain adequate service hours during this time of transition and training.