



September 2009 Update

- Individuals and caregivers in Kansas who are living with chronic disease are learning to manage their symptoms and positively affect their health through a program from K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Health and the Environment. Created by Stanford University, the Chronic Disease Self Management program teaches people to deal with frustration, pain, fatigue, exercise, meditations, communication, nutrition, and treatment decisions. Results have included a decrease in physician visits, an increase in communication with physicians, an increase in exercise levels, and a reduction of health care costs. Deb Sellers, Extension specialist in family and consumer sciences, Joan Kahl, Extension assistant, and Sharolyn Jackson, Extension specialist, are leading these efforts.
- The Beef Cattle Institute (BCI) has developed audio-visual modules, in both English and Spanish, that outline best management practices for cattle handling, processing, health management, and dairy and beef quality assurance. Pre-test/Post-test scores indicate that topical comprehension is improved by 25 percent after viewing these modules, across language and topic area. To deliver the training, BCI developed software to facilitate and automate end-user registration, module delivery and transcript tracking and maintenance. The BCI, a collaborative effort among fourteen departments and colleges, received initial funding from Targeted Excellence. BCI co-directors Chris Reinhardt and Dan Thomson, and Deanna Retzlaff, assistant professor in food science, have led the program.
- Chuck Rice, university distinguished professor of soil microbiology at K-State, has been appointed as a member of the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources, a major program unit of the National Research Council. The National Research Council functions under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the Institute of Medicine. The four organizations are collectively referred to as the National Academies. He will serve until 2012.
- Jianming Yu, assistant professor in agronomy, coauthored an article published in *Science* in August. Buckler et al. authored "The Genetic Architecture of Maize Flowering Time" (325: 714-718). Flowering time is a complex trait that controls adaptation of plants to their local environment. This research demonstrated that a simple additive model predicted flowering time for maize. In addition, the authors write that because of high quality genetic tools for research on complex genetic architecture, they will be able to more fully examine other traits of interest in maize, increasing sustainability of production and food security.
- K-State's Risk and Profit Conference recently drew about 150 participants to improve their competitive advantage through business planning and enable them to make sound economic decisions. Because of the general economic situation in the country, the conference focused on impact on the agricultural sector. While consumer confidence is declining, the credit crisis has not affected agriculture yet, according to leaders of the conference. Certain commodities will be affected more severely, and effects in other countries may be more severe than in the United States.