



Knowledge  
for Life

# *K-State Research and Extension* **Making an Impact**

**K-State Research and Extension engages Kansas people and Kansas communities by working with them on their issues, through research-based education to improve the quality of their lives.**

## **Kansas Producers Better Manage Risk after Training Program**

Increased risks magnify the decisions farm managers make, requiring a good understanding of markets and marketing tools. Risk-Assessed Marketing (RAM) program participants learned to integrate alternative marketing techniques with crop insurance and government programs to develop risk management strategies.

A program participant followed up with an email a few months after a workshop:

“I just wanted to let you know that I have been using what I learned at the RAM workshop in February. I’m now using put and call options, and it has reduced the risk I face in marketing grain, while also increasing my profits. Your workshop was very helpful, especially the case study, so I could try things that I had never done before.”

## **Program Enhances Well-Being, Community Vitality**

Strong, stable, and resilient families are crucial to the health and well-being of individuals and communities. K-State Research and Extension helped create a “Circles Campaign” with the goal of reducing poverty and building community prosperity.

Families in a “Circles of the Heartland” community recently completed a 15-week training class. During training, a single mom was chosen as a Habitat for Humanity home recipient, and she credits her “Circles” involvement for much of her motivation and courage to apply. Another positive result is increased social capital of the families. Those who completed an 18-month program reported a 20 percent reduction in debt and a nearly 70 percent reduction in public benefits.

## **Individual Financial Education Comes with Tax Assistance**

K-State Research and Extension educators gain an opportunity to discuss financial management topics with individuals in collaboration with two groups that provide free community tax preparation: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly. Both programs are likely to reach a high percentage of taxpayers who are disabled, veterans, seniors, or racially and ethnically diverse. Last year’s results reported by seven extension agents indicated that volunteers completed 10,207 federal returns, resulting in more than \$11.7 million in refunds to residents of Kansas communities.

The IRS sets the value of tax preparation at \$250 per return, bringing the total value for the volunteers’ work to more than \$2.5 million. KSRE educators agree the most rewarding aspect of this effort is providing education that helps taxpayers understand how changes to family, work, and income may affect future taxes.



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## **Water Use Affects Future of Ogallala Aquifer, Agricultural Revenue**

Current water use trends — if unchanged — could deplete 69 percent of the ground-water in the Ogallala Aquifer within 50 years. The top eight Kansas counties for agricultural production overlay the aquifer, and those counties contribute about one-third of the state's total agricultural revenue.

A multidisciplinary team of scientists is projecting the aquifer's drawdown over the next several decades, and at what point aquifer-based agricultural production will decline. The study also illustrates how the aquifer's life can be dramatically extended through increasingly efficient usage and policies. To assist producers, K-State Research and Extension programs introduce water-saving crops, provide irrigation scheduling tools, and offer subsurface drip system information that can prolong the aquifer's life.

## **Nutrition, Resource Education Benefit Learners**

Kansas has one of the highest obesity rates in the nation, and more than 20 percent of the state's children live in poverty. With a shortage of primary care physicians, especially in rural areas, health education and prevention are vital.

K-State Research and Extension programs address quality of life, healthy development, and health behaviors across life stages for all socioeconomic groups, targeting the state's diversity. Of 516 participants who responded to questions at the end of one nutrition education program, 97 percent indicated they had gained knowledge to improve their health, eat healthfully, manage chronic disease, and manage food-related resources.

## **SPecial INterest Clubs Introduce New Members to 4-H**

4-H SPIN Clubs provide opportunities for more youth to have a positive youth development experience. The special interest clubs were designed to attract youth and families who are not familiar with the 4-H Youth Development program.

Seven counties and one district are piloting 4-H SPIN Clubs through a grant provided by the Kansas 4-H Foundation, and 95 percent of the youth have continued into their second year of membership.

These examples reflect the K-State Research and Extension commitment to help find solutions to address five grand challenges of interest to all Kansans: global food systems, water, health, developing tomorrow's leaders, and community vitality. For more information, see <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu>.

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**Mission Statement:**  
K-State Research and Extension is dedicated to a safe, sustainable, competitive food and fiber system and to strong, healthy communities, families, and youth through integrated research, analysis, and education.

### **Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service**

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, John D. Floros, Director.