



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Cowley County

# Making a Difference

April - September 2020

## New Connections

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Cowley County Extension continues to connect the citizens of Cowley County with resources, information and education to make a difference in their lives and in the community.

Changes to our daily lives and operations brought on by the pandemic resulted in a pivot to the way Extension operates. We sought new and innovative ways to continue to provide opportunities to the citizens of Cowley County. Examples included virtual youth contests and conferences, state-wide educational programs, and live-streaming of events.

Our team has also used this time for professional development and collaboration. Upcoming programs include Dining with Diabetes Online and delivery of the Extension Master Gardener trainee program.

We will continue to adjust to meet the needs of Cowley County in the face of adversity. We are making a difference.

## Making it happen...

**Kelsey Nordyke**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Cindy Stephens**  
Office Professional

**Becky Reid**  
Family and Consumer Sciences

### 2020 Cowley County Extension Council Executive Board

Mike Legako, ANR, Chair  
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*ANR - Ag & Natural Resources*  
*CD- Community Development*  
*FCS- Family & Consumer Sciences*  
*4-H - Youth Development*

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# Agriculture and Natural Resources

## Connecting Agriculture

### Wheat Production in South Central Kansas

**Partners:** *Bryant Ag Services, Sumner, Sedgwick and Harvey Counties*

The South Central Kansas Counties partnered to plant wheat plots and provide data and information to the producers in our area. Wheat test plots were planted in Sedgwick, Harvey, Cowley, Sumner and Harper Counties and harvested for yield data. Due to COVID-19, no in-person wheat plot tours could be held. Alternatively, we hosted a virtual South Central tour with assistance from Dr. Romulo Lollato and Dr. Kelsey Anderson Onofre. The virtual tour was recorded and links provided through e-newsletters to producers.

The Sumner-Cowley County Wheat Pre-plant meeting was altered this year due to COVID as well. All South Central Kansas Counties partnered to host the pre-plant meeting virtually with assistance again from Dr. Lollato and Dr. Anderson-Onofre.



### Cowley County Livestock Association Annual Meeting

**Partner:** *CCCLA, Kansas Livestock Association*

The Cowley County Livestock Association hosted its annual meeting Thursday, March 12 at Tisdale Methodist Church. Ninety Cowley County Livestock producers learned about grazing systems in southeast/south-central Kansas from KSRE Southeast Area Beef Cattle Systems Specialist, Jaymelynn Farney. KLA Stockgrowers Division Director Dean Klahr, shared industry updates related to policy and trade.

*75% of participants indicated they would be likely to implement grazing management changes to their operation and the changes would have a positive economic impact for their business.*



### Intro to Farm Quickbooks

**Partner:** *Harper County Extension, KSRE Ag Econ*

Participants were given hands-on instruction using QuickBooks Pro for farm and ranch accounting. The class was designed to provide basic information for producers to get started with bookkeeping in QuickBooks through a step by step approach. This resource was valuable to local farmers wishing to improve the business skill in their operations. Because farm and ranch accounting is slightly different from other small businesses the training provided examples and suggestions for handling specific farm business transactions.

*100% of participants rated the training "very valuable" and indicated they will be making changes to the financial management of their operation(s).*

# Family and Consumer Sciences

## Connecting farms, food and families

### Burger Cow Project

**Partners:** *Barry & Nadine Barber, Legacy Regional Community Foundation, Angels in the Attic, Manna Ministries, Joseph's Storehouse, Eastern Cowley County Resource Center, Udall Food Pantry, Winfield Food Pantry*

Barry recruited cattle producers to identify animals appropriate for processing. The Rally Cowley fundraising campaign raised funds to pay cattle producers for the animals and processing costs. A total of 10 cows were processed and distributed to the six food pantries/distribution sites in Cowley County.

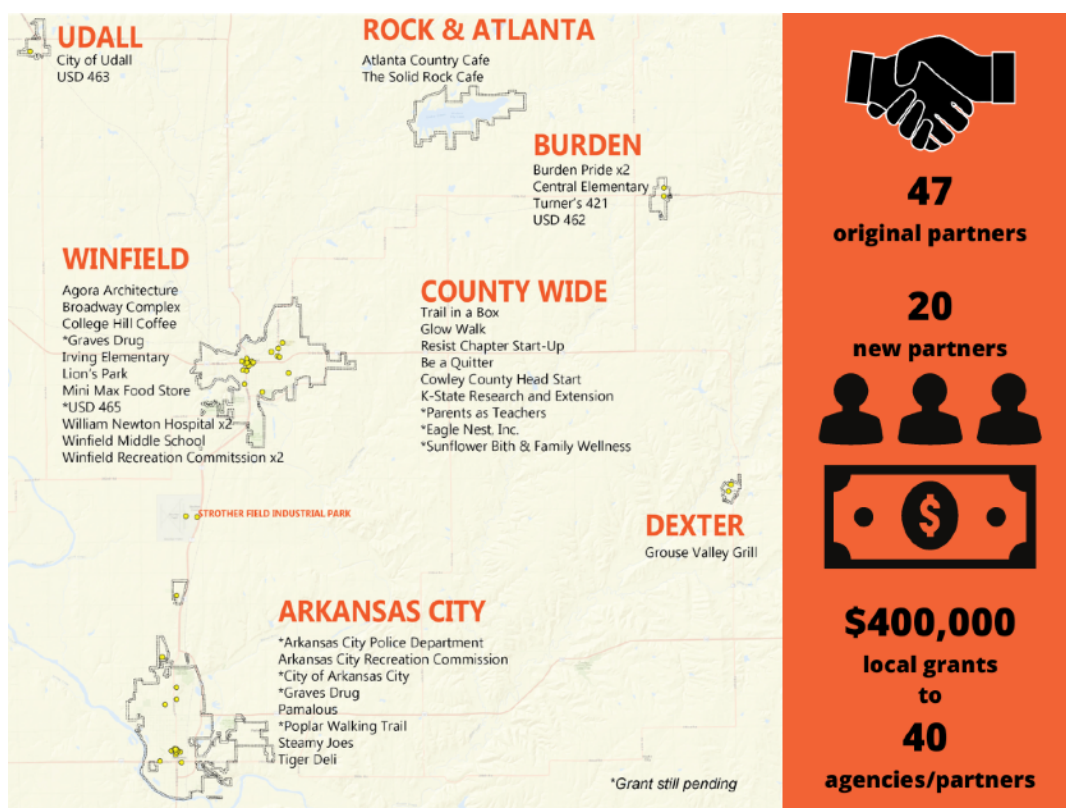
### SNAP-EBT

The electronic benefits transfer (EBT) system for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has been discussed since 2017 with vendors and market leaders. In July 2020, the program was implemented at the Arkansas City Farm and Art Market and the Walnut Valley Farmers Market. Now, customers can swipe their Kansas Benefits card for a dollar amount that can be redeemed for tokens. The tokens are then accepted by participating vendors for eligible products.

## Connecting community partners

### Phase 1 Completed for Pathways to a Healthy Kansas initiatives

Becky Reid served as the Pathways to a Healthy Kansas Grant coordinator as partners finished the phase 1 grant cycle. A total of \$400,000 was awarded to partners throughout Cowley County.





## 4-H Youth Development

### Virtual Connections

#### Virtual Club Meetings and Activities

##### Participants:

Clubs transitioned to virtual or e-mail based meetings April - June. Groups found creative ways to engage families including virtual educational tours, scavenger hunts and Facebook groups. Clubs were allowed to resume face to face meetings beginning in July but many are still offering virtual connection options.

**Lifeskills:** Concern for others, cooperation, safety, social skills, critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, leadership, self-motivation, self-responsibility, personal safety, teamwork.

### Showcase Opportunities

#### Cowley County 4-H Fair

Although Cowley County Fair Board canceled the public events of the 2020 fair, they did support 4-H youth activities. Modifications included virtual exhibits and judging for dog, rabbit, pigeons/poultry and fashion revue; drive-through exhibit drop off and pick-up for static exhibits; non-conference exhibit review; and “show and go” livestock judging. Overall exhibit numbers were down from previous years due to COVID-19, Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV), and rabbit hemorrhagic disease.

