



4-H & Youth Development

Madeline Wallace – 4-H Agent

The 2024 Butler County Fair has come to an end! It was such a privilege to be able to see the passion and success our 4-Her's had with their projects. We had over 2,400 pre-entries for the fair! I cannot wait to see how our members who are progressing on to the Kansas State Fair in September will stack-up against youth from across the state.

I want to take time to thank the countless number of volunteers who assisted with set-up and clean-up, working as superintendents, running the Clover Café, and all of the odd jobs in between. The Butler County Fair would not be possible without your hard work and dedication to helping the youth of Butler County.

Family Consumer Sciences

The Real School Supply Wish List

By: Bonnie Brewer – FCS Extension Agent

August is here, meaning a new school year. As you find yourself seeking a way to get back into the school routine, remember the following real school supply wish list:

- Read with your children – reading helps children build language skills, learn about the world, develop empathy and emotional awareness, and provides an opportunity for you to connect with your child. Not only that, it grows and strengthens connections in the brain.
- Play games together – promotes family quality time, face-to-face interactions, and develops the 6-traits of strong families.
- Enforce rules and schedules – creates structure, consistency, predictability and follow through. All of these are crucial elements for the health of a developing child.
- Assign chores – help children learn life skills, develop responsibility, and contribute to the family.
- Cook meals together – promotes the learning of important life skills, motor skills, confidence, creativity, food knowledge, and math skills.
- Have conversations, even silly ones – promotes word learning, sharpens the ability to pay attention, and deeply strengthens their mental health. Make the conversations POSITIVE!
- LIMIT SCREEN TIME – prevents obesity, reduces anxiety and depression, increases focus, improves emotional well-being, creates face-to-faces social connection, and helps children perform better in school.
- Encourage and praise effort – boosts self-esteems, fosters a growth mindset, strengthens relationships, and motivates new endeavors.
- Be mindful of what they hear you say – you are a role model. Youth are more likely to behave in a kind, honest, and considerate way if you do. Little pitchers have big ears!
- Practice coping techniques for tough situations – helps children deal with difficult situations by helping them manage their emotions, develop resiliency, and feel more in control of their responses to stressful situations.
- Communicate respectfully and tactfully with teachers – increases student success, builds trust, provides feedback, and can create motivation for success.

Agriculture

Hay Storage

Charlene Miller – Agriculture Agent / Extension Director

Proper hay storage of big round bales is important in order to minimize spoilage until time of feeding. Precipitation, air temperature and humidity all lead to more spoilage in big bales. Twine wrapped bales are more subject to spoilage than net wrapped. Greater bale density leads to less spoilage. You are encouraged to keep the following in mind when considering how your hay is stored.

Select a site on higher ground that is not shaded and is open to air flow to enhance drying conditions. The site should be well drained to minimize moisture absorption into the bottom of bales. Ground contact leads to more bale spoilage. When practical keep bales off the ground using low cost surplus materials like old pallets, fence posts, railroad ties and tires. Another option is a six inch layer of coarse ground rock. Anything that can be done to maximize drainage and minimize moisture within and around the storage site will be beneficial

Bails should be stored in rows, butted end-to-end, and oriented in a north/south direction. Avoid stacking three rows of hay in a triangle shape. This formation leads to more spoilage, particularly in the two bottom rows. North/south orientation combined with at least three feet between the rows permits good sunlight penetration and airflow, allowing for faster drying. Vegetation between the rows should be mowed.

For more information, give me a call or email me at cmiller1@ksu.edu

Horticulture

Calla Edwards – Horticulture Agent

With the hot weather and lack of rain, aphid populations are on the rise across Butler County. Monitoring your vegetables for aphids a couple of times a week is important. Often aphid infestations start with just a few scattered colonies throughout the field so be sure to check everywhere not just around the edges. If you find a few aphids on your plants it's best to wait to treat till you reach the thresholds listed below. A few aphids can help support the beneficial insects that feed on aphids which will keep your numbers in check. On small plants, when the aphid population is increasing, a general threshold level is finding aphids on 50-60% of the leaves or if aphid populations remain at 8 to 10 or more per leaf for two or more weeks. For tomato or pepper plants treat if 20% of the branch ends are infested or 5 aphids per leaf. If you see just a few aphids you can spray the plant down with a strong stream of water which washes the aphids off and kills them. Other control options include insecticidal soap and horticultural oils are labeled to treat aphids before the populations reach high levels. Once populations reach higher levels, products containing malathion, bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, or pyrethrin can be used to control the insects. Be sure to thoroughly cover all parts of the plant and all sides of the leaf. Read the label and make sure it lists the vegetable you are treating along with the number of days after spraying before you can harvest the produce.

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