



March 2023

# THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Research and Extension



## Director's Note

**Denise Dias,**

Wyandotte County Director

Things are warming up and spring will be here before the end of the month!

Spring is a great time to try something new. Did you know that our staff teach programs throughout the county? We go where you are, to make it convenient for you to get the information you need.

Here are some topics trending this month in Extension.

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# SPRING INTO PLAY

**Jessie Carr**

**4-H Youth Development Agent**

Spring is right around the corner! With spring comes better weather, sunshine, flowers and opportunity for young people and adults to play and learn together!

Spending time outside can have great effects on our mental and physical wellbeing and even brain and social development for young people. Exploring nature can help us reduce stress, improve our mobility, and increase our mental wellness.

Kansas State University child development specialist, Bradford Wiles shares just how important is to get outside together - "There are so many benefits for adults and children to be together," Wiles said. "Not only do we respond better mentally and physically to fresh air, but being outside typically involves some movement. It's a great opportunity for parents and their children to learn with and from each other."

Not sure what to do once you get outside? Here are some fun ideas to get you and your family started:

- Go on a walk around your neighborhood or on a nature trail
- Visit a park
- Find a shady spot to read
- Identify shapes in the cloud
- Have a picnic
- Make bird feeders
- Plant a flower garden

The opportunities are endless! Make it a goal to get out and play today!

To learn more about the importance of getting outside together: Get out and Play: K-State expert says outdoor time is learning time for kids

# 4-H Youth Development



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# SPRING BREAK FUN ON A BUDGET

**Chiquita Miller,**  
**Family and Consumer Sciences Agent**

It's finally here! Like many of us, you've probably been counting down the days since Winter break. As the end of winter draws near, students and families count down the days until the most celebrated week -- SPRING BREAK! While the kiddos are ready for freedom, families everywhere wonder, "What will I do with the children for a whole week?" Not to worry, listed below are 16 Spring Break ideas that won't break the bank.

1. Going for a Camp out - Create your own campground in the backyard.
2. Comfort Party - Turn your home into a spa with mini mani/pedis for all.
3. Creative Crafty - Check Pinterest for project ideas galore.
4. Read more books - See what tall tales your local library has to offer.
5. Splish Splash- Bust out the hose and turn your backyard into a splash zone.
6. Take a Picture - Grab that camera and let your mini models show off their stuff.
7. Pillow Fight - Host a family slumber party in the living room.
8. Movie Night - Pop some popcorn and enjoy family movie night.
9. Learn about a different culture - Local museums often have discount programs during school vacations.
10. Get some sun - Nothing says spring break like a trip to the beach, lake, or pond.
11. Complete a puzzle - Start with the edges first and together the family can create a masterpiece.
12. Game Time - Dust off the board games; it's game night.
13. Let's Cook- Make your own pizza night (tacos are fun, too).
14. Make room for spring - Clean out those closets (not the most fun task, we know).
15. Grow Fun- Plant a little garden.
16. Make a difference - Organize a community project with friends or neighbors.

For more information regarding the tips, you can visit this resource:  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/50-inexpensive-and-fun-spring-break-activities.cfm>

# Family and Consumer Sciences



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# NEW SERIES OF FREE NUTRITION CLASSES ANNOUNCED!

**Stephanie Whatley-Hopkins**  
EFNEP Agent

New and Exciting Partnership with The Kansas City  
Kansas Public Library West Wyandotte Library

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is announcing a new partnership with The Kansas City Kansas Public Library West Wyandotte Library (KCKPL West Wyandotte Library). Registration began February 20th for EFNEP classes held at the West Wyandotte Library branch. The series of classes is called Families Eating Smart and Moving More, a curriculum built to teach families how they can eat healthier, stretch their food dollars further, be more active, and create lasting behavior changes.

Families Eating Smart and Moving More is a free 10-session course for adults with children in their homes under 18, or adults who regularly buy food for and feed children under 18. EFNEP's partnership with The KCKPL West Wyandotte Library is especially exciting because they will actually be giving food to participants! That's right, the library will end each of the 10 sessions by giving out Take Home Food Kits. Every week will include a different variety of foods for families to try.

With the cost of food rising, our friends at The KCKPL West Wyandotte Library want families to still be able to try the tasty foods that are talked about in class. Each week's Take Home Food Kit will fit into the theme of the week, giving participants the opportunity to try new types of food without adding to their grocery costs.

If you would like to join us for free food, taste testing, and nutrition education, please see more information below about time, dates, and location for this session of Families Eating Smart and Moving More.

**Registration Opens February 20, 2023, please register prior to April 10th**

**Classes take place Mondays at 6 pm – 7:30 pm  
From April 10 – June 26**

**At the West Wyandotte Library in the Auditorium/Kitchen**

## Nutrition and Food Safety



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# MED DASH TO A HEALTHY HEART

Lori Wuellner

Food and Nutrition Agent

# Nutrition and Food Safety

Last month was American Heart Month, but I think it goes without saying, each day of the year we should be caring for the health of our heart. One of KSRE's publications covers the serious issue of heart disease, Make a Med DASH to a Healthy Heart.

What are the necessary lifestyle changes needed to reduce the risk of heart disease? The American College of Cardiology (ACC) and the AHA have collaborated and identified five diet recommendations to decrease risk factors for heart disease:

- Follow a diet that emphasizes eating vegetables, fruits, legumes (beans, lentils, peas), nuts, whole grains, and fish
- Replace saturated fats (fats coming primarily from animal sources) with monounsaturated fats or polyunsaturated fats (fats from plant sources such as olive oil, canola oil, avocado, nut oils); avoid palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils, and cocoa butter as they are saturated fats and can raise LDLs.
- Choose foods lower in sodium and cholesterol.
- Avoid consuming processed meats, refined carbohydrates, and sweetened beverages.
- Limit intake of trans fats.

Two well-researched dietary patterns have been shown to make a real difference in heart health: the DASH dietary pattern and the Mediterranean-style dietary pattern. While there are some varying differences between the eating plans they share many similarities including consuming plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meats/poultry, fish, meat alternatives, low-fat dairy and healthy fats. You can look more closely at the details and the ways in which the eating plans differ by going to the respective websites, <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan>, <https://medinsteadofmeds.com/>. You can also download a copy of the Make a Med DASH to a Healthy Heart publication which outlines both plans...<https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3566.pdf> (English); <file:///C:/Users/Nutrition/Downloads/HBHB%20Spanish.pdf> (Spanish)

A healthy heart is no accident — for many Americans, it takes focus, partnership with their healthcare providers, and lifestyle adjustments. What steps can you take to move – to make a Med DASH – toward a healthier heart?



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# YOU MIGHT TURN GREEN IF YOU BELIEVE THESE FOOD SAFETY MYTHS

Jan McMahon

Nutrition Program Assistant

## Nutrition and Food Safety

**Myth:** I don't need to clean the refrigerator produce bin because I only put fruit and vegetables in there.

**FACT:** Bacteria in fresh fruits and vegetables can cause cross-contamination in your refrigerator. A recent NSF International study found that the refrigerator produce compartment was the #1 "germiest" area in consumers' kitchens. To prevent the buildup of bacteria that can cause food poisoning, it is essential to clean your produce bin and other bins in your refrigerator often with hot water and liquid soap, rinse thoroughly, and dry with a clean cloth towel or allow to air dry outside of the refrigerator.

**Myth:** Cross contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator -- it is too cold in there for germs to survive!"

**Fact:** Some bacteria can survive and even grow in cool, moist environments like the refrigerator. In fact, *Listeria Monocytogenes* grows at temperatures as low as 35.6°F! A recent study from NSF International revealed that the refrigerator produce compartment was one of the "germiest" places in the kitchen, containing *Salmonella* and *Listeria*. ü Keep fresh fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs. ü Clean your refrigerator regularly with hot water and soap and clean up food and beverage spills immediately to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. ü Don't forget to clean refrigerator walls and undersides of shelves.

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/pdfs/5-steps-to-clean-your-refrigerator.pdf>



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# MONEY FOR THE DOTTE

**Denise Dias**  
Extension Director

Have a community project and need some cash? One of these grant opportunities might be willing to help support your project to make the Dotte a better place to live, work, and play!

**The Olive Tree Foundation** provides grants for projects related to or providing basic necessities (food, shelter, medical services), youth or adult education development, community development and arts and culture. Applications will be accepted starting in March 2023 and the funder recommends checking back with the site later in February to find out application dates. Eligibility information and detail on how to apply can be found here: <https://theolivetreefoundation.org/>

The **Leary Firefighters Foundation** offers grants for training, equipment, and technology for fire departments (paid and volunteer) throughout the U.S. A letter of inquiry should be submitted by August 15th. Details about what the letter should include are on the site. If invited to submit an application, further instructions will be provided: <https://learyfirefighters.org/grant/>

**Resilia Nonprofit Microgrants** applications are due by March 17th. These \$1,000 grants can be for, but not limited to, arts and culture, children services, education, environment, health, and human services. You can see the grant application and a list of previous winners here: <https://discover.resilia.com/microgrant/>

**Walmart's Local Community Grants** cycle should open up on February 1st for 2023. These grants, for up to \$5,000, can be used for a variety of community projects. There are two key pieces of information here to take note of: 1. It is very important that you meet with your local Walmart's manager to talk to them about your project and upcoming application. They are the one who recommends your application for approval when it is sent to the Foundation. 2. Apply early! The funds may run out before the December deadline so the sooner you apply the better chance you have of there being dollars available. Check their page for any updates, changes, and official dates or dollar amounts: <https://walmart.org/how-we-give/local-community-grants>

# Community Development



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# FERTILIZE BULBS BEFORE BLOOM

Lynn Loughary  
Horticulture Agent

Spring-flowering bulbs are beginning to poke up through the soil. So, gardeners should be getting the fertilizer ready. These bulbs' roots are most active when their foliage first emerges. That's when they can make the best use of the nutrients that will help them produce flowers next year.

If gardeners wait too long, they'll waste time and fertilizer. Research has found that when these plants flower, their roots start to die. This shuts off the route fertilizer needs to reach the bulb.

A soil test is the only sure way to know what nutrients bulbs are craving. Blood meal is the classic, applied at a rate of 2 pounds per 100 square feet or 1 teaspoon per square foot. Turf fertilizers such as a 27-3-3 or 30-3-3 can be used, but cut the rate by a third.

Remember to leave the foliage until it dies naturally. Keep in mind that after flowering, the plant needs the green leaves to manufacture food (photosynthesis) that is stored in the bulb for next year's growth. If the foliage is removed early, the plant can no longer manufacture nutrient reserves for next year. This results in a small, weak bulb which will gradually decline, reducing blooms.

Wyandotte County Extension provides a lawn and garden soil testing service through Kansas State University.

Lynn Loughary is the Horticulture Agent for Wyandotte County, K-State Research and Extension. She can be reached by calling 913-299-9300, ext 104, or by email [lloughar@ksu.edu](mailto:lloughar@ksu.edu)

## Horticulture



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# Upcoming Events



## **March:**

**March 1- K-State Garden Hour: Houseplants-Basics and Beyond**

**March 2 - Native Plant Seed Collection, Storing, and Starting**

**March 7- Healthy Communities Brainstorming Lunch for Community Leaders**

**March 15- Shake off Excess Sodium**

**March 26- Walk Kansas**

K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact Jo McLeland two weeks prior to the start of the event (insert deadline date) at (insert phone number and email). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

Connect with us!



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