



[www.geary.ksu.edu](http://www.geary.ksu.edu)

# Geary County

K-State Research and Extension News

## Knowledge for Life

### Ask the Agent

**Q:** Are kitchen sponges safe to use for washing dishes and cleaning kitchen counters?

**A:** Kitchen sponges are notorious for trapping food particles which can lead to bacterial growth. This can lead to cross contamination and foodborne illness.

In a recent study, researchers evaluated polyurethane foam sponges and cellulose sponges and different treatments to help clean and sanitize them. The polyurethane foam sponges disinfected with chlorine reduced pathogenic *E. coli* up to almost 90%. Cellulose sponges reduced chlorine levels by 24% after 30 minutes of soaking. This reduces the effectiveness of disinfection. Total numbers of bacteria and *E. coli* were less in both antimicrobial polyurethane sponges and regular polyurethane sponges.

Bottom line, if using sponges, try polyurethane types, keep them disinfected, and replace them often.

Source: Blakeslee, Karen; "You Asked It!: Tips from the Rapid Response Center", Kansas State University Research and Extension, June 2017.

For more information call the Geary County K-State Research & Extension office at: 785-238-4161



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

[www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu)

## Summer = Fair Time

June-July 2017

As I shared in last month's newsletter, I am doing a combination June/July newsletter this year. It's Fair season and the Geary County Free Fair Open Class has something for everyone—even YOU!

**Q: Why would I want to enter an exhibit into the open class fair?**

**A:** *It's fun, educational, and you can meet other people with similar interests. Perhaps you have a hobby that you would like others to see, or perhaps you are babysitting your 5 year old grandson and have completed some craft projects that could be entered. Regardless of your age or interests, there is something for everyone at the Geary County Free Fair Open Class.*

**Q: Who can participate in the open class fair events?**

**A:** *Any person who lives in Geary County, Fort Riley, or surrounding counties can participate in the open class events.*

**Q: How old do you have to be to participate?**

**A:** *There is no age limit, but there is a minimum age of 4. Children age 4 to 15 will be entered in the youth division and judged separately from those 16 years of age and older.*

**Q: How is open class events different from 4-H events?**

**A:** *Participants in open class are not and cannot participate in 4-H events. The open class events are designed for the general public. Although children have the opportunity to join a 4-H group, not all children choose to do so. Open class events offer them a place to enter and display their products. For example, if a child has participated in a summer art camp, they can enter one of their projects in open class arts & crafts. Another example would be an adult who likes to make leather-tooled products such as a wallet who enters one of their products in the crafts division.*



## Preserve the Harvest Program—July 16

Alta Vista Simpson United Methodist Church

Wabaunsee, Morris, and Geary County FCS agents are offering this multi-county program for our avid gardeners or Farmer's Market shoppers. Even if you don't have your own garden, the abundance of fruits and vegetables you can purchase at the local grocery store or farmers market may have you interested in learning how to preserve foods at home. Perhaps you already use canning to extend your food pantry inventory. Regardless of your level of experience, there's a lot to learn and do at this workshop. Register by contacting the Geary County Extension office by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 30. Registration fee of \$20 covers produce, jars, lunch, and refreshments. See the insert for more information. Hope to see you there!







## A Tasty Read, or Two!

I am an avid reader who often gets wooed into an author who writes a series. Combine that with my interest in preparing and trying out new menu ideas and you have the perfect combination for a tasty read. Reading is a great way to make yourself slow down and relax. It gives you a chance to escape from the hassle and hustle of both work and home. Research shows that pleasure reading improves social skills and fosters creativity. It promotes critical thinking and higher order reasoning. Reading

doesn't slow down your thought processes, it simply moves your thoughts in a different direction. Might I suggest a culinary fiction novel? In my attempt to avoid endorsing specific authors (there are several on this list I read!), check out the abundant options at <https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/culinary-fiction>. Many of these book's authors not only craft a great read, but give you some yummy recipes to try along the way. Grab a tall cold glass of infused water, a lounge chair in the shade, and enjoy a "tasty read!"

# REFRESH

Need new ideas for your infused water menu?

Check out these possible ingredient combinations:

- ◆ Water with just lemon, cucumber OR pineapple
- ◆ Strawberries, sliced cucumbers, lime & fresh mint
- ◆ Mandarin orange & blueberries
- ◆ Raspberry, blueberry, and blackberry
- ◆ Watermelon & fresh basil
- ◆ Strawberries, lemon, basil
- ◆ Lemon, orange & lime
- ◆ Lemon, cucumber, & mint
- ◆ Green tea, mint, & lemon



### Directions:

- 1) Combine all ingredients in a pitcher or into individual mason jars. Place in the refrigerator and let sit for 2—24 hours to allow the water to infuse.
- 2) For a more intense flavor, squeeze or muddle the fruits or herbs of your choosing before placing into the refrigerator.
- 3) Serve cold and enjoy!

## Special Baking Contest

Each year, the Geary County Free Fair sponsors a special baking contest for a specific baked product. Products are judged based on their flavor, texture, appearance, and overall quality. Prizes are awarded to the top three entries. The 2017 special baking contest product is for:

### Homemade Oatmeal Cookies

Entry is to consist of six (6) oatmeal cookies of uniform size. All cookies should be from the same recipe.

Each entry must be prepared from scratch and baked by the person whose name is on the entry form. Commercial mixes and no-bake cookies are NOT allowed. Cookies cannot have icing or decorations.

Recipe must accompany entry and must include a list of all ingredients, quantities, preparation instructions, and should NOT contain the name of the baker. Contest recipes will be returned to the contestant after the contest.

Entry must be displayed on stiff, foil-covered cardboard, and enclosed in a sealable food-grade plastic bag. Cookies will be judged on taste and appearance.

Unlimited entries per person is allowed but the recipes must be considerably different for each entry.

Contest is open to youth and adults and will be judged in two divisions: Youth (age 4 – 18) and Adult (age 19 and over.) There will be three placings in each division: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Cookies will be sold after judging. One cookie of the first, second, and third place entries will be displayed in the Open Class Food showcase. Prizes will be awarded for the top three placings in each division.

*Entries will be accepted at the 4-H/Sr. Citizens Center between 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>. Early entries will not be accepted. Judging will take place at 5:30 p.m. in the center section of the main building.*

Entries in Open Class foods cannot have been entered in 4-H Foods. However, cookies made from the same recipe or the same batch may be entered in 4-H or Open Class.







**JULY 15**  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM



Are you interested in food preservation? Do you need to brush up on current food preservation methods? Come join us for a hands-on workshop to learn about safely pressure canning, water bath canning, dehydration and freezing your food harvest!

**SIMPSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**508 LOGAN STREET**  
**ALTA VISTA, KS**

**COST IS \$20 TO ATTEND**  
**LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED**  
**EACH PARTICIPANT WILL TAKE HOME**  
**CANNED PRODUCTS**

**FEEL FREE TO BRING A SHOE BOX**  
**TO TRANSPORT CANNED PRODUCTS**

INSTRUCTOR: KAREN BLAKESLEE, M.S.  
RAPID RESPONSE CENTER COORDINATOR

Registration and payment are due by  
**June 30<sup>th</sup>** to your local Extension Office.

Make checks payable to:  
**Wabaunsee County Extension**  
(host county)

Hosted by K-State Research & Extension:  
Flint Hills District: 620-767-5136  
Geary County: 785-238-4161  
Wabaunsee County: 785-765-3821

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. K-State Research and Extension is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision or hearing disability, or a dietary restriction please contact Bernadette at 785-765-3821 or btrieb@ksu.edu.

**TO REGISTER:**

Complete the form below, then mail it and the \$20.00 registration fee (includes canning supplies, fruits and vegetables for canning, and lunch.)

Check may be made out to: *Wabaunsee County Extension* **by June 30, 2017 to:**

Preserve the Harvest  
c/o Deb Andres, FCS Agent  
Geary County Extension Office  
PO Box 28  
Junction City, KS 66441

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

How Can We Reach You?

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Do you accept texts? (circle one): YES NO

*Please enclose \$20 per person registration fee.*





# Family Resource Management



Summer is full of so much fun stuff: family vacations, ball games, vacations, camping, and so much more. But as I think of my list of summer "fun stuff", I envision checks being written, debit card charges racking up, and green bills slipping from my wallet into the hands of sales clerks and concession stand workers.

Summer months can often turn up the heat on our family budgets—pun intended! What can you do to keep your kids from burning up your cash flow? Here are some easy tips to get started:

Help your kids get a better understanding of what it costs to take care of a household and the many activities they want to engage in. Get started by having them take this short online survey called "Reality Check" at <http://www.jumpstart.org/reality-check.html> Talk to them about their responses and how every financial decision you have to make as a parent effects the family as a whole.

Hand them a notebook to write down every purchase they make over an entire month. Help them see where they "burn up" the money they have access to by asking them to use highlighters to identify the main areas they spend their money. For example, for every purchase that is noted for snacks/pop have them highlight those purchases in yellow. For every purchase they make on entertainment have them mark those purchases in red, and so on. Some additional categories might include "music/videos, or clothes/shoes."

Using the information from their spending journal to work from, give them a monthly spending allowance and have them create their own personal budget to help guide how they spend their money (and/or YOURS!)

Try the envelop system. Give your child an envelope for each category of spending they identified in #2 (make sure you label each envelope!) Distribute an appropriate amount of money in each envelope. For example, my younger kids want to spend their (or my) money at ballgame concession stands. With two games per week and three kids at the park, this can add up to a pretty significant amount of money. It is important, even if they are spending their own money, for them to have a limit at what they will spend. Here's an example: Perhaps you determine they can spend \$3/week for concession stand purchases. In their envelope labeled snacks/pop, they would put \$12 in the envelope at the beginning of the month. When that money is gone, they will know they have no more to spend at the concession stand or on other snacks/pop for the month.

Make sure you help your kids understand the importance of saving. My kids love to go to the swimming pool. They also like to frequent the concession stand at the pool. If they have spent all their money at the ball park, they have no money to use at the pool for snacks. It might seem like a harsh lesson but I know I am training them to be successful adults and these small lessons are a lot easier to swallow than the lessons about money if we are adults before we learn them!

Finally, it is critical to understand that children learn the most from how their parents model financial behavior. Research shows that financial habits begin at a young age: savings habits, spending habits, and giving habits. You are the first teacher your child has. Make sure you practice what you teach and develop good financial habits yourself. For current research on spending habits of teens, check out the April 2017 Piper Jaffray report "Taking Stock with Teens" at: <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20170410006103/en/>



I have to admit that I am a home improvement/do-it-yourself TV fan. The problem is, I don't take the time to try some of the tricks they offer. I either don't have the materials they have or I am afraid of diving in to something I won't finish. However, there is one resource I have an abundance of that I am not afraid to work with—old canning jars! There are the standard uses—drink glasses and potpourri concoctions, but the recent upswing in this trendy household item has pushed those simple ideas aside. Now I have seen a chandelier made from Mason jars by cutting a hole into the lid and inserting C9 Christmas lights—making for a beautiful rustic look to any family dining area. Just last month, I attended a wedding where the jars were made into wedding favors using wildflower seeds, burlap, and canning labels. I guess it's time to dig out the multiple boxes of antique canning jars and my memories of my mother-in-law teaching me the art of home preservation over 20 years ago. Here's to her spirit of

resourcefulness, and the DIY shows that draw me in! Do a quick web search for "repurposing mason jars" and you too can find amazing ways to reuse these often neglected generational left overs!



# K-STATE

Research and Extension

Geary County  
P.O. Box 28  
119 E. 9th Street  
Junction City, KS 66441

## Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

**\*\*Requires pre-registration. Call 238-4161 to pre-register\*\***

### July

- 16 — Preserving The Harvest—Karen Blakeslee, K-State Rapid Response Center Coordinator, food safety and food preservation expert, will present this interactive workshop which will include a pressure canner lab, water bath lab, and jelly lab. This all day program is located at the Alta Vista Simpson United Methodist Church in Alta Vista; registration information for this event is enclosed with this newsletter.
- 24-27—Geary County Free Fair, exhibits accepted from active 4-H members and community members alike; fun for the entire family; stop by the Extension Office to pick up the 4-H Fair Book or the Open Class Fair book for more details.



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

'Like' us on Facebook for the latest news from **Geary County**

**K-State Research and Extension**, including health, wellness, and financial tips.

[www.facebook.com/gearycountyextension](http://www.facebook.com/gearycountyextension)

Geary County Office information: <http://www.geary.ksu.edu/>

