



Pottawatomie County

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION NEWS

Agriculture and Natural Resources

pottawatomie.k-state.edu

February 2026

Pottawatomie County Extension

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Forage Production Issues

Last year was a tough one for many forage producers in the county. Depending on your location, you may have been short on rainfall. Fall armyworm wreaked havoc and damaged many brome grass stands. Hay prices were generally low, which made input costs in fertilizer, insecticide, herbicide, fuel, etc. challenging to pay for, particularly if you don't own livestock.

These circumstances and more will be discussed at a forage producer meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, 2026, beginning at 6 pm in the Sunflower Meeting Room at 612 E. Campbell, Westmoreland.

Dr. Tina Sullivan, Northeast Area K-State Extension Agronomist, will be explaining fall armyworm, why they're so bad, and the potential management practices that can be done to attempt to mitigate damage. I will be covering forage soil fertility, including a look at the nitrogen price and hay price relationship and minimal fertilizer applications to increase survival in tough conditions. Both presenters will be happy to address other forage-related questions.

Thank you to MKC for sponsoring this event by funding chili or a tuna salad sandwich (since it is Ash Wednesday) meal. Please register to attend, ideally by February 11, 2026, [here](#). You may also call the Extension office at (785)-457-3319 to register.

Shannon Blocker

Shannon Blocker
County Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources
K-State Extension, Pottawatomie County



Topics:

Fall Armyworm
Dr. Tina Sullivan,
K-State Extension NE Area Agronomist

Forage Soil Fertility
Shannon Blocker,
Pottawatomie County Extension Agent

Register on website or by phone by 2/11/26

Light meal of chili/soup sponsored by: **MKC** Shared growth. Shared success.

Wednesday,
February 18, 2026
6:00 - 8:00 PM

Event Details
Sunflower Meeting Room
612 E Campbell St
Westmoreland, KS 66549

(785) 457-3319
www.pottawatomie.ksu.edu

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CROPTalk Webinars

Registration is only needed once for any/all of the webinars at www.bit.ly/KSUCropTalk

The live broadcast of the CROPTalk webinars is held on Tuesdays from February 10 to March 10, from 12:00 to 1:00 pm CT.

CCA credits have been applied for, with one credit for each webinar.



CROPTalk

Broadcast Live from 12:00 – 1:00 pm CT
via Zoom and YouTube

February 10
Understanding Flex Leases
Robin Reid, K-State Extension Ag Economist

February 17
Available Soil Water At Planting and Related Management
John Holman, K-State Extension Cropping Systems Agronomist
Augustine Obour, K-State Professor of Soil Science

February 24
Wheat Conditions & Breeding Efforts on Mosaic Viruses
Allen Fritz, K-State Wheat Breeder

March 3
Fungicide Applications in Corn and Sorghum
Rodrigo Onofre, K-State Extension Plant Pathologist

March 10
What's Bugging You? Insects to Watch for in the Field
Anthony Zukoff, K-State Entomologist

Register to attend at
www.bit.ly/KSUCropTalk
Links for joining will be sent after registration.
One Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Credit per session has been applied for.

 Scan me!

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If you have questions, please contact your local Extension agent or the K-State Northwest Research and Extension Center at 785-462-6281.
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K-State Dairy Day

This event will be held on February 17, 2026, at the Meadowlark Extension District Office Complex in Seneca at 10 a.m. Please pre-register by calling: (785)-336-2184 or by email to rmostell@ksu.edu.



Women Grow the Farm Conference



<https://www.womengrowthefarm.com/>

Women Grow the Farm is the new name for the Women Managing the Farm conference held in Manhattan February 12-13, 2026. Registration is still open at \$200 per participant and \$25 to attend one of three pre-conference workshops, if desired. A student rate of \$75 is available for high school and college students. This is a great opportunity for networking and learning! Please see the link just below the graphic for more information and to register.

K-State Cattlemen's Day



Plan to participate in the 113th Cattlemen's Day scheduled for Friday, March 6, 2026, at the new Bilbrey Family Event Center located on the K-State campus. The event will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and include a tradeshow and speaker sessions. Registration is \$25 until February 20, 2026. More information and registration can be found online at <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/events/cattlemens-day/>

Farm Bill Program Decision Deadline

Producers will have at least a little more time to make their Farm Bill program decisions (ARC-Co vs. PLC) than mid-March due to heavy workloads for FSA. I will be happy to discuss the choice for each of your farm numbers and commodities as further details are released. This delay does not harm producers as more information about predicted prices is beneficial in the decision-making process. Watch for communication from FSA and/or myself concerning this deadline.

Local Food Producer Workshops

Annually in February and March, K-State Extension hosts regional Local Food Producer Workshops in collaboration with the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Alternative Crops. These workshops are an opportunity for producers and small food businesses to learn more about selling their products through farmers markets, direct-to-consumers sales, and other local market opportunities. Participants can connect with other producers and learn from their peers to improve their business success.

Our closest Local Food Producer Workshop will be held in Holton on February 20, 2026. See this website <https://extension.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods/get-involved/workshops.html> for more information and to register.



Extension Master Gardener Spring Garden Workshop

Pottawatomie County Extension Master Gardeners are hosting a workshop morning on March 7, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Wamego Senior Center, 501 Ash St., Wamego. Topics covered this year will be herb-infused vinegars, weed identification tools and tips, and native plants. New this year, there will be a Kids Garden Corner for youth ages 5-12. Please register online [here](#), ideally by March 2. You may also register by calling the Extension Office at (785)-457-3319.



Coffee With a Master Gardener

This February 14, 2026, event will be held at 5-H Greenhouse in Wamego from 9-11 a.m. focused on strawberries.

Uncrewed Aerial Systems (Drones) Workshop



I mentioned back in November a precision agriculture and/or UAS (drones) workshop being planned for early this year. To better facilitate live demonstrations, that workshop has been postponed until after daylight savings time. It will most likely be held on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, starting late afternoon in the St. Marys or Wamego vicinity. Please be on the lookout soon for finalized details.

Cow Herd Management for February

Cow Herd

Target BCS at calving for spring-calving cows:

- 5 for mature cows
- 6 for young females

Be ready to start your post-calving nutrition program for spring-calving cows.

Evaluate fall-calving cows for BCS:

- Adjust nutrition program as needed relative to weaning date

If conditions allow, keep grazing crop residues and dormant pastures but be prepared to move cattle or provide supplemental feed.

Increase energy content 1% for every degree F below the lower critical temperature (LCT) when dry, 2% if they have a wet hair coat.

Put down bedding, remove snow, ensure cattle have access to wind protection.

Supply adequate water volume and space in freezing conditions.

Don't forget about your herd bulls!

- Bulls need to be in a BCS ≥ 5.0 prior to the next season of use
- Keep young and mature bulls separate if possible and provide plenty of space to prevent injury
- Spread sufficient fresh bedding to help avoid testicular frostbite

Calf Management

Do you have a plan for weaning and marketing fall-born calves?

- Evaluate your feed resources and cost of gain relative to the value of gain
- Talk to prospective buyers in advance of selling

Evaluate calf health protocols, both spring- and fall-born calves.

Monitor growth and pubertal development of replacement heifers.

General Management

For spring-calving herds this calving season:

- How are you going to record your calving data?
- What information are you going to record?

Take inventory of supplies and clean equipment prior to spring calving.

If making bull selection decisions:

- Review your herd performance relative to your marketing and genetic goals.
- Study EPDs impacting your marketing and genetic goals and do your homework well before sale day

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Events and Dates

February

- 10 CROPtalk Webinar: Understanding Flex Leases
- 12-13 Women Grow the Farm; Manhattan
- 14 Coffee with a Master Gardener; Wamego
- 17 K-State Dairy Day; Seneca
- 17 CROPtalk Webinar: Available Soil Water at Planting
- 18 Forage Production Issues: Fall Armyworm and Soil Fertility; Westmoreland
- 20 Local Food Producers Workshop; Holton
- 20 Kansas Agricultural Technologies Conf.; Clay Center
- 24 CROPtalk Webinar: Wheat Conditions

March

- 3 CROPtalk Webinar: Fungicide Applications in Corn and Sorghum
- 6 K-State Cattlemen's Day; Manhattan (pre-register by 2/20)
- 7 EMG Spring Garden Classes; Wamego
- 10 CROPtalk Webinar: What's Bugging You?
- 28 K-State Sheep Day; Manhattan (pre-register by 3/13)