



Geary County

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

JANUARY 2024

Our Staff



Deb Andres
*Family & Consumer
Science Agent*



Ginger Kopfer
*4-H Youth
Development Agent*



Kyler Langvardt
*Ag & Natural
Resources Agent*



Traci Hockett
Office Professional



Christina Strauss
*Office Manager &
Bookkeeper*

geary.k-state.edu
(785) 238-4161
119 E. 9th St.
Junction City, KS 66441

K-STATE
Research and Extension

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

ksre.k-state.edu

A Food Science Formula for Health

Deb Andres, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Keeping food safe during a power outage begins well before winter storms hit, said Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee.

Before the power goes out, Blakeslee advised keeping an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer. According to guidelines from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the temperature inside the refrigerator should be 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower, and the freezer at 0 F or below.

Blakeslee, who also is coordinator of K-State's Rapid Response Center for food safety, said having a thermometer in place before the power goes out helps to assure the appliance temperature does not stray outside the recommended range.

It may also be a good idea to stock up on canned and non-perishable goods.

"Dried foods, such as fruit and crackers, are great for snacks," Blakeslee said. "Keep foods that family members enjoy, but also healthful foods to provide nutrient-dense nourishment."

Blakeslee recommends storing pantry foods in a cool, dry, dark location.

When power is first lost, leave the door of the refrigerator and freezer closed to preserve cold temperatures as long as possible. If the power stays out for a longer period of time and the refrigerator is not staying cold, Blakeslee has some additional ideas for protecting food.

"Coolers filled with ice are very helpful in an emergency," Blakeslee said. "Make sure ice surrounds the food for the best chilling effect."

For food in the freezer, dry ice can be used if available – but thick gloves should always be worn when handling dry ice to prevent skin damage. Dry ice should then be kept in a ventilated area.

Food spoilage may be unavoidable if the power outage is lengthy. Blakeslee outlines key factors that may be an indication of foodborne illness:

- Color changes.
- Unusual odors.
- Texture changes.

The most susceptible foods are meat, dairy, eggs and cut fruits and vegetables. Extra care should be taken when examining these food items.

"Don't taste any questionable food that has thawed out," Blakeslee said. "When in doubt, throw it out."

If a power outage lasts more than four hours at temperatures greater than 40 F, refrigerated or frozen food kept without another cold source should be thrown out.

For more information on food safety during power outages, Blakeslee recommends consulting the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage.

Holiday Clean-Up

Deb Andres, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Americans throw away 25% more waste during the holiday season, but there are several ways to recycle this trash instead of sending it to the landfill.

When you think about the holidays, all the food, gifts, holiday décor, and gatherings with friends and family likely come to mind.

What you may not think about is how much garbage we create during this season. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans throw away 25% more waste between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than any other time during the year.

The good news is we can all take steps to minimize our waste whether your area offers recycling services or not. Sherry Surrence, associate Extension professor of sustainable living at Mississippi State University Extension, offers the following tips for recycling some common holiday items:

- **Repurpose** Christmas cards into gift tags or ornaments that can be used next Christmas.
- **Save** ribbons and bows and reuse them on gifts next year. These items are often made from materials that are not easily recycled.
- **Wrap** delicate tree ornaments for storage with used wrapping paper when the Christmas tree is taken down. Shredded wrapping paper can also be used as shipping material when mailing fragile packages. In addition, shredded wrapping paper can be placed in compost bins where it will biodegrade back into soil for gardening.

- **Donate** unwanted gifts to local charities or regift them. You can also try hosting an after-Christmas present swap with friends, where all the presents are displayed, and everyone takes turns picking out another gift that they like better.

- **Place** real Christmas trees in your garden or backyard for birds to use as shelter during the winter months instead of putting them in the garbage. Trees can also be sunk in private ponds where they make excellent refuge and feeding areas for fish. Keep your eye on announcements from Geary County Public Utilities and/or Geary County Fish and Game Association to find out if tree recycling or mulching services are available in our area after Christmas.

- **Compost** leftover fruits and vegetables to minimize your holiday food waste. This will help put nutrients back into the soil.

Want to learn more about reducing waste and recycling? Check out our publications on being green and composting basics on the Geary County K-State Research & Extension Home and Family website. The Geary County Recycling Center identifies general household recycling guidelines on their website, as well.



GEARY COUNTY 4-Hers ARE GEARING UP FOR A NEW YEAR!

Preparing for a Successful Calving Season



K-State Research and Extension news service

Kansas State University veterinarian Gregg Hanzlicek said being prepared ahead of calving season is the best way for producers to assure they will bring home the newborn calves successfully.

“We’re approaching the end of the second trimester and moving into the third trimester which means the metabolic demands of that cow or heifer are going to increase tremendously,” Hanzlicek said.

A key to having a successful calving and production season is for cows and heifers to be in the appropriate body condition, which according to Hanzlicek is a score of 5-7. He said he has seen many cattle in the 3-4 range in the past few months.

“We’re far enough away from calving that we can add condition to these cows and heifers without (creating) an economic burden,” he said. “It really comes down to having a formulated ration that is balanced for protein and energy.”

For those wanting to add scour vaccines to their prevention program, “it’s time to decide what vaccine they are going to use,” Hanzlicek said. “Look at the label and schedule on the calendar when they need to start vaccinating the cows and heifers.”

Hanzlicek said heifers will require two doses of the scours vaccine, while cows need one. The timing of those vaccines is “very, very important,” he said.

Also, Hanzlicek recommends establishing a clean calving area to help reduce the risk of scours. “There’s two major risk factors for scours,” he said. “One is the lack of colostrum consumption. The

other is a contaminated environment that the babies are born into.”

Hanzlicek recommends having a location to move the pairs off the calving area to keep the calving facility less contaminated with the scour organisms.

Getting the calf here safely is another factor to consider, “Most operations are going to have to help at least one animal during the calving season,” Hanzlicek said. The last national survey indicated that 1 of every 100 heifers and 2 of every 100 adult cows will need assistance.

Being prepared to pull a calf is important. Hanzlicek said producers should have the following items on hand:

- Clean straps or chains.
- OB sleeves.
- Lube.
- Working calf pullers.
- Veterinarian’s phone number.

Intervening at an appropriate time is important. “If we intervene too early and the cow or heifer is not dilated, we can injure the tissues and hurt the calf,” Hanzlicek said. “If we intervene too late, a lot of times that’s when we end up with stillborn calves.”

According to Hanzlicek, once a cow has reached the second stage of labor, they should give birth within 30 minutes. A heifer should calve within an hour. Second stage labor is when the heifer or cow can be observed experiencing uterine contractions, or the water-bag or calf’s feet are visible.

***OVER 100 YOUTH PARTICIPATE AND LEARN
THROUGH THE 4-H PROGRAM IN OUR COUNTY.***

UPCOMING EVENTS:

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Join Geary County Farm Bureau and Geary County K-State Research and Extension over the noon hour for lunch and to learn more about Kansas weather, its impact on agricultural production and the CoCoRHS program with Christopher (Chip) Redmond, Kansas State University Assistant Meteorologist. Thursday January 18th from Noon to 1 at the Grandview Plaza Community Center.

Register by January 15th by calling our office at 785-238-4161. There is no cost to register.



For up-to-date information and the latest news, follow Geary County K-State Research & Extension on Facebook.