



Volunteers Make A Difference in 4-H

The Post Rock District 4-H Youth Development Program depends on adult and youth volunteers to help youth gain the five Kansas 4-H Life Skills of a positive self concept, an inquiring mind, a concern for the community, healthy interpersonal relationships and sound decision making. The District has 159 registered volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to the program. 4-H is unique in its pursuit of effective youth-adult partnerships. These partnerships ensure that both youth and adults grow together in shared responsibility and decision-making. Whether you want to be a club leader or work with kids on a short-term project, there's a role for you in 4-H. Many volunteer roles involve working directly with youth while others do not. Some volunteers are engaged with the program for a long period of time, such as leading a 4-H Club for several years. Others volunteer on a one-time, short-term or even an annual basis. Regardless of the role our volunteers assist our young people as they gain confidence and self-esteem - essential ingredients for happy, productive citizens. When you support Post Rock District positive youth development programs, youth participants develop strong workforce skills, life skills, and become contributing adults in society.



Calving School



The ultimate goal of any cow/calf operation is to produce and raise a live calf. When it comes to calving, timely assistance can cut calf death losses by half and help boost the cow's reproductive health after delivery. To educate producers on minimizing potential losses related to calving, the Post Rock Extension District hosted a Calving Management School this winter. Those present received a review of the normal calving process, knowledge on how and when to intervene, and how to manage a difficult birth. The calving schools hosted by the Post Rock District were well received by our producers.

Food Preservation

K-State Research and Extension is a trusted and reliable source for food preservation. We are here to answer questions about freezing, drying/dehydrating, and both pressure and water bath canning. K-State Research and Extension is focused on the safety of food preservation to ensure that only safe preservation methods are implemented. K-State Research and Extension is happy to assist with finding tested recipes and test pressure gauges free of charge. Post Rock District hosted a Food Preservation Workshop in March providing safe canning information and hands on canning experience to 18 Post Rock residents. After the workshop, one participant said, "I have learned how much science goes into the new canning recipes, I plan to use those new tested recipes!"



Relationship Smarts

Relationship Smarts is an interactive school enrichment program focused on helping teens develop the knowledge, skills and motivation needed to make wise relationship choices. Throughout informative, upbeat and teen-focused activities, participants learn that healthy relationships begin with individual self-awareness. They learn the building blocks of healthy relationships and practice identifying qualities and characteristics that promote positive development as well as those that serve as warnings and danger signs. Research-informed principles and decision-making frameworks are taught and practiced by participants as they apply the concepts and tools to their own personal relationships. The program is implemented in collaboration with high school educators, and it is facilitated by the Post Rock District's Family and Youth Development Agent. During the 2015-2016 school year, 67 high school students engaged in Relationship Smarts.



Pollinator Power



With growing concern about the decline of bee and Monarch butterfly populations, it is important to understand the purpose and function of pollinator species. The Pollinator Power program is designed to teach youth about pollinators. Elementary students learned which insects and animals could be pollinators. Using diagrams of flower parts, the students learned about the process of pollination from the transfer of pollen to the fertilization of the ovule to make the seed. Students discovered which flower colors were the preferred color to attract certain insects and birds. An interactive activity involving a colored flower drawing and cheese puffs simulated how bees move pollen from one flower to another.

Students were asked about their favorite fruits and vegetables, and learned which ones would disappear from store shelves if we lost all pollinators. Finally, students learned about what plants to grow in a pollinator friendly garden. This program brings education and awareness of the importance of our insect pollinators to Post Rock District youth.

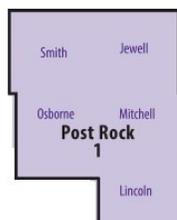
Sensor-Based Nitrogen Studies in Wheat

Technology has certainly driven the enhancements in the field of agriculture. Whether it is in crop breeding programs or in variable rate applications of fertilizer, technology plays a critical role in making the field of agriculture more efficient and at the same time protecting the environment. The use of sensor technology is one of the recent tools that has been developed for producers to use in fine-tuning their fertility program to avoid under or over fertilization. This is the 3rd year that the Post Rock District has participated in a sensor-based nitrogen study in wheat. The studies use a hand-held sensor that can be compared to the nitrogen status of a growing crop to that of a crop known to have adequate amount of N referred to as a reference strip. The values from the sensor are then used in a spreadsheet calculator that was developed by K-State Research and Extension to determine the nitrogen needs of the crop. The yield data from our district plots has been compiled with other locations across the state of Kansas.



Post Rock Extension District #1

Beloit Office 115 S. Hersey Beloit, KS 67420-3230 (785) 738-3597
Lincoln Office 216 E. Lincoln P.O. Box 8 Lincoln, KS 67455-2056 (785) 524-4432
Mankato Office 307 N. Commercial Mankato, KS 66956-2511 (785) 378-3174
Osborne Office 113 N. 1st Street Osborne, KS 67473-2001 (785) 346-2521
Smith Center Office 218 S. Grant P.O. Box 287 Smith Center, KS 66967-0287 (785) 282-6823



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