As this year come to a close, the Marion County Extension Office would like to say thank you to the many supporters and dedicated volunteers that make our programs successful.

Please take a few moments to read the newsletter and take note of some of the upcoming educational programs available.

Happy Holidays from
Rickey, Renae & Doris!!

www.marion.ksu.edu
Using Excel for:
Estimating Machinery Costs, Budgeting and Enterprise Analysis, Calculating Principal and Interest Payments, Analysis of Livestock Economics

As well as:
Tips and Tricks for Using Excel, Other Decision Tools on AgManager.info

Skills to be learned:
* Mathematical calculations * “Sum” and “Sumproduct” functions * Link information from other sheets * Calculate breakeven prices & yields * Use what-if analysis * Utilize financial functions * Use “If” functions * Create and use look-up tables * Excel tools on AgManager.info

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE
9:30 a.m.   Registration
10:00 a.m.  Into to Excel
10:15 a.m.  Spreadsheet 1: Estimating Machinery Costs
11:00 a.m.  Break
11:15 a.m.  Spreadsheet 2: Crop Budgets
12:00 p.m.  Lunch
12:45 p.m.  Spreadsheet 3: Principal/Interest Payments
1:30 p.m.   Spreadsheet 4 Livestock Economics
2:15 p.m.   AgManager Excel Tools
2:30 p.m.   Adjourn

Instructor—Rich Llewelyn,
K-State Extension Assistant in the Dept. of Agricultural Economics

Cost: $10.00—Registration
Deadline—January 25, 2016

To Register:
Rickey Roberts
Marion County Extension
Phone: 620-382-2325
Email: rroberts@ksu.edu
Program Description
Leasing land for farming and ranching has become a necessity to grow and stay competitive in today’s commercial agricultural. As a result, understanding how to effectively and equitably negotiate a land lease has risen in importance for both landowners and tenants. This workshop is designed to help both landowners and producers consider the factors that affect lease rates, contract terms, and risk exposure.

Topics covered in this workshop include:
1. Explaining the differences and similarities of various leasing arrangements: crop share, fixed cash rent, flexible leases, AUM pasture leases.
2. Calculating an equitable lease using cost of production budgets, price and yield expectations, and other market-based information.

Schedule
6:00 pm  Registration
6:30 pm  Leasing Arrangements
8:00 pm  Break and Refreshments
8:20 pm  Calculating an Equitable Lease
9:15 pm  Summary and Questions
9:40 pm  Adjourn

$5 if pre-registered by January 8, 2016
$10 at the door

Soil Testing Can Save You Money
With current crop commodity price forecasts, finding a profit at the end of the season may be a challenge this year. A suggestion to help mitigate this situation is to soil test your fields, focusing primarily on the level of Phosphorus available to your crop.

If your soil test level comes back at or above 20 ppm of Phosphorus, research shows producers can forego applying phosphorus for that year as enough is available for the future growing crop. Currently Phosphorus costs about .55 cents per actual unit, so for example if you normally apply 30 lbs/acre of phosphorus to your growing crop, that would be a potential savings of $16.55 per acre.

The key to this though is to be sure your soil sample adequately represents your crop field. It is recommended that at least 20 core samples be taken across the field, mixed together, and then 2 cups of that soil mix be submitted to be tested. The cores should be from 0-8 inches in depth for phosphorus. You would not want to not apply the phosphorus if in fact your soil test showed a need for it, as that would cause you to lose dollars.
Elizabeth Kiss, Family Resource Management Specialist and associate professor at K-State, offers the following tips to avoid blowing your budget:

1. Make a list that includes gifts, decorations and food. Put dollar amounts next to each item for planning purposes. Once you total it, consider whether you can or want to spend that much. You don’t want to be paying for December 2015’s spending in December 2016 if you put it on a credit card.

2. Think outside the box. Re-gift a family heirloom, including a written history. (Though not re-gifted to me, I do think of my grandmothers every time I use the kitchen items I acquired from them.)

3. Make sure the gift you purchase can be returned or exchanged if it doesn’t work for the receiver. Do your homework online. Know the rules for gift cards you give. If a gift is faulty, unusable, etc. by the recipient, it is a waste of money. Also make sure someone will be home at the address you are shipping to.

4. Be cautious with your credit card. If not using your private computer to shop online, clear the computer history of your information.

5. Use a specific area of your purse, wallet or envelope to track your expenditures—collecting receipts there as you go. Using cash is a helpful way not to overspend...when it is gone, it is gone. Others find it helpful to have a specific credit card just for holidays to pay off in January. Remember, credit cards often have teaser rates to get you to open an account so if you go that route, have a plan to pay it off. Minimum payments take years to eliminate the debt.

Source: Dec. 8, 2015 KSU article by Katie Allen

American Academy of Pediatrics recommends parents consider alternatives to placing children into carts. Use strollers, front packs, wagons or ask another adult to shop with you to watch your child. Carts can easily be tipped over and falls can occur which can lead to injury or death. Pushing a stroller and pulling your cart is very doable—though you might get strange looks like I did years ago. 😛

If you must put your child in the cart, do not leave them unattended....try to have one hand on them when you must look away.
Reminder For Safe Holiday Decorating

By K-State Fire Safety

With the upcoming holiday season, it is important to remember a few fire safety regulations, and other important information.

The National Fire Protection Agency estimates that Christmas trees, both natural and artificial, were the item first ignited in an estimated 920 reported home structure fires from 2007–2011. These fires caused 24 civilian deaths, 88 civilian injuries and $73.2 million in direct property damage.

During the same period, holiday lights and other decorative lighting with line voltage were involved in an estimated average of 600 home structure fires. These fires caused approximately 36 civilian deaths, 64 civilian injuries and $33.6 million in direct property damage.

K-State has some fire safety rules to keep in mind when decorating for the holiday season. Let’s have a safe and happy holiday season by remembering the following fire safety tips:

- Candles, incense, incense burners and any other item that produce an open flame are not permitted at the university. Flameless candles and electric scent pots are permitted. Scent pots should be turned off when unattended.

- When decorating walls and doors, you may not cover more than 20 percent of the surface such as with a combustible material like fabric, paper or plastic.

- Do not place holiday decorations where they may block emergency egress — stairways, corridors, near doors, etc.

- Use only flame retardant decorations.

- Avoid using extension cords. If you must use an extension cord, use a heavy gauge, grounded cord and place it in plain view. Make sure the cord does not pose a tripping hazard or pass through windows or doors. Do not tandem plug — one extension cord into another — extension cords together.

- Use only FM or UL listed electrical decorations. Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini light sets or a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw in style light string sets.

- Fire resistant artificial trees are permitted and preferred. Live trees in university buildings are discouraged and a permit must be obtained from Environmental Health & Safety prior to being used indoors.

- Turn off lights when the room is unoccupied. Also, if using a space heater, it must be kept three feet away from combustibles when in use. It must be plugged directly into an outlet and unplugged when not in use.

*Reduced fat whipped topping—optional

1. Spray 9-inch glass pie dish with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Mix first 5 ingredients (sugar & spices) in a small bowl.
4. Bake for 55 to 60 min. or until knife inserted near center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 2 hours. Top with whipped topping if desired.

Nutrition for 1/8 of recipe (without topping): 140 calories, 1.5g fat, 55 cholesterol, 210 mg sodium, 28 g carb, 2 g fiber, 26 g sugar, 6 g protein
4-H Club Day
February 20, 2016

Starting at 1 pm, Marion County Club Day will be held at Hillsboro United Methodist Church, 905 East D Street.

Participants must register no later than February 8th. Registration forms will be found on our website after January 1st. For more information, view http://www.marion.ksu.edu or contact the office. Please REVIEW the materials online to refresh your memory of the requirements for each event.

In addition to the categories listed on the guidelines page, we will have pickle power and a table setting contest. FCS Judging information will be posted with the schedule as more details will become available to the office by Feb. 9th.

Room monitors will need to be at the facility by 12:30 pm on February 20.

Regional Club Day is tentatively set for March 12th in El Dorado.

Attention! 4-H Online Enrollment Information

Some fields in the Health Form have been changed to mandatory, meaning the family must enter an answer in the field before the 4-H Online system will let them continue with online enrollment. This was changed Dec. 1st. Families who enrolled online October 1st through December 1st were able to complete the fields before they became mandatory.

If you enrolled October 1 through December 1st we would encourage you to login and complete these fields in the health form.

Please note: if the family logs in during the year to view projects for example, they will be forced to complete those fields.

State Scholarship Applications

Are you a current 4-H member and high school senior? Consider applying for a state 4-H scholarship. The application form can be found at our website: www.marion.ksu.edu under 4-H and then under 4-H forms. Applications are due in the State 4-H Office by February 1st and are due to the Marion Extension office by January 26.
Upcoming Events

4-H Day with the Wildcat Women’s Basketball—Saturday, February 27, 2016
K-State vs. Baylor University  3:30 p.m.

Join 4-H’ers from all around the state at this fun event. Group ticket rate of $20 per person, youth or adult, includes a game ticket, T-shirt, hot dog and drink. 4-H and non 4-H families welcome to attend. Orders must be completed online by January 15 at http://tinyurl.com/4hbasketball16. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Horse Panorama
January 29-31, 2016
Rock Springs Center

Horse Panorama is a compilation of various contests related to the horse project. There will also be educational activities for 4-Hers of all ages. Please go to www.kansas4h.org for schedule, contest rules and registration. Registration deadline is January 15. This form must be into the extension office by Jan. 12th as we must complete the process. Fees are due at the time of registration.

Citizenship in Action
February 14-15, 2016
Topeka , KS

Citizenship in Action is an opportunity for youth to learn about the legislative process, and for legislators to see the positive impacts of 4-H. Any youth 13-18 years old before January 1, 2016 is able to attend. Cost is $165 with scholarships available. Online registration deadline is due by January 15.

Visit http://www.kansas4-h.org

Kansas Junior Beef Producer Day
Saturday, March 5, 2016
Weber Arena, Kansas State University

Early Registration Due—February 10, 2016
Early Registration Fee—$15/person ($20 after February 10th)

Kansas Junior Sheep Producer Day—Saturday, March 19, 2016
Weber Arena, Kansas State University

Early Registration Due—February 24, 2016
Early Registration Fee - $15/person ($20 after February 24th)

McPherson County will be hosting a Horse/Bowl/Hippology Contest on January 23. Save the date. Location and registration info will be available soon.

Oz-Some 4-H Camp Dates
4-H Camp—June 4-7 and Rookie Camp—June 4-5
Upcoming Events:

Dec. 24-25  Holiday Break...office closed
Jan.  1    New Year's Day...office closed
Jan. 13    K-State Leasing Workshop, Newton KS
            Register to: Harvey County Extension—by January 8
Jan. 12    Horse Panorama registration/fee due to extension office
Jan. 25    Registration Deadline for Using Excel Spreadsheets Effectively
            Register to: Rickey Roberts, 620-382-2325 or rroberts@ksu.edu
Jan. 29-31 Horse Panorama, Rock Springs Center
Feb.  1    Using Excel Spreadsheets Effectively Workshop