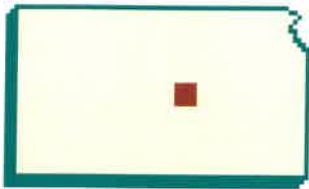


McPherson County



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MAY 2020



Ag News

Shad Marston
County Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources



Keeping a Positive Outlook

As I prepare for the month of May, I look at my long list of tasks that need to be done, both at work and at home. I'm sure many of us are in the same boat. I have decided that I'm going to up my attitude and be more positive in everything I do. With that said, the recent outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19) in the United States has affected the workplace in many different ways. The current situation has many of us like myself, working from makeshift workstations located in spaces, formerly known as dining rooms, living rooms, or bedrooms. These unforeseen circumstances have come with many challenges and made us appreciate items like our desks and office chairs designed for optimum functionality and long-term use. As humans, we often mistakenly assume that everyone's resources/environment are similar to our own. In this "new" work environment, that we find ourselves in, we cannot assume that people have the same resources available in their homes as they would have had at their former workstations. Essential elements in the workplace, such as printer or even internet connectivity may create challenges for some households when it comes to work that needs to be done or homework to be finished. It would also be a mistake to assume that workflow would remain unchanged, and that this new environment has fewer distractions. Workflow and productivity will be impacted and for many parents the terms "family friendly" and "work life balance" have taken on entirely new meanings. Many adjectives may be used (rewarding, interesting, challenging, distracting, frustrating) to describe what it is like to work with children in the home. Work places and businesses should always take a moment and consider that not everyone's circumstances are the same when communicating with employees and community members about their services or expectations, as unintentional assumptions often result in negative outcomes. Even though in these challenging times many of us have normal activities to be started and competed, we all have things to do. Stay positive in everything you do.

Farmers Market starting May 30

Farmers Market will be starting May 30, from 7:30 am till 12:00. Every Saturday between May 30 and the last weekend in October in the Blue Roundtop, 710 West Woodside, McPherson.

The safety steps to follow:

- Vendor tables will be further apart to allow more space for social distancing.
- Vendors will not be serve unpackaged food as samples or for purchase.
- Customers will not be allowed to touch produce before buying
- Hand washing or hand sanitizing stations will be provided.
- At the Farmer Market, vendors will frequently clean and disinfect high touch surfaces.

May Garden Calendar

Vegetables and Fruits

- Plant tomato, pepper, and eggplant transplants in early May
- Seed sweet corn, cucumbers, squash, beans, and other warm season vegetables
- Lightly cultivate soil with a hoe to control weed growth
- Mound soil around potato plants to encourage tuber formation
- Harvest fresh asparagus until the spear size decreases
- Remove rhubarb seed stalks to encourage leaf growth
- Plant kitchen herbs for summer use in dishes or food preservation
- Treat fruit trees with needed pesticides to control insects and disease
- Thin heavy fruit set on apples to increase fruit size and next year's crop

Flowers

- Plant annual flowers for summer color
- Continue to plant and divide perennials
- Mulch perennial and annual gardens for weed control and moisture retention
- Begin pinching chrysanthemums for bushier plants
- Do not remove foliage from spring bulbs until it dies down naturally, this develops stronger blooms for next year
- Plant container gardens and hanging baskets using a good quality potting mix
- Keep a garden journal for permanent reference

Lawns

- Reduce thatch layers from zoysia by verticutting or core aerating
- Sod or sprig zoysia lawns to fill in bare areas
- Fertilize zoysia lawns with high nitrogen to promote green up and summer growth
- Mow zoysia at 1 to 2 inches tall
- Apply slow release nitrogen fertilizer to bluegrass and tall fescue to promote summer growth if watering during the summer. Lower maintenance lawns skip this application
- Mow bluegrass and tall fescue at 3 inches
- Spot treat broadleaf weeds
- Withhold early summer watering until needed to promote more drought tolerant lawns

Trees and Shrubs

- Plant new trees and shrubs
- Prune spring flowering shrubs after bloom to shape plant and encourage flowers next year
- Mulch around young trees and shrubs to conserve moisture and control weed growth
- Water young ornamentals as needed
- Remove tree wraps for summer growth
- Remove tree stakes that have been in place more than one growing season
- Fertilize trees to help increase growth rates
- Caution, use line trimmers around trees and shrubs so as not to damage tender bark

Houseplants

- Move plants outdoors for summer by gradually increasing the exposure to sunlight
- Fertilize plants to promote summer development
- Rotate plants to develop a well-rounded plant
- Wash dusty leaves in the shower under room temperature water
- Four to six inch cuttings are a great way to start new plants, root in potting mix under low light
- Repot plants into a one inch larger pot
- Check for insects

Master Gardeners Zoom Meeting

May 28
7:00 p.m.

The Master Gardeners will be scheduling gardening educational programs throughout the summer for all to participate in. Each program will cover different topics that can help everyone with their gardening skills. Call the Extension office to get signed up for the Zoom presentations.

Challenges for Applicators Concerning PPE

This growing season may be a challenge for producers/applicators in more ways than one. With the critical need for N95 respirators for health care workers, it is anticipated that applicators may experience a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) that will be available to use this growing season if not previously purchased. It is important to remember pesticides may not be applied without the label-required PPE. The Environmental Protection Agency has not issued any exemption or relaxation of the PPE label requirements, therefore some herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides you plan to use may require the use of N95 type respirators. It is important to review the labels of products which are key to your operations and plan accordingly. If required PPE is unavailable for purchase, users may need to select alternative products or management methods. Research to see if there is a product available with the same active ingredient, whose formulation type reduces the need for respiratory protection. The other alternative is applicators are allowed to use more protective gear, so if you have a half or full-face respirator with a N95 filter that you have had fit-tested and received a medical evaluation to use this may be a good alternative. Do not put yourself at risk by not following the label PPE requirements because you are having difficulty finding PPE. This could potentially add to the need for medical care and is in direct violation of the label, so please have a plan for how you will deal with this issue.

Chemical Weed Control Book

The new K-State 2020 Chemical Weed Control Guide is now available at the Extension Office, pick one up!

This publication provides suggestions for chemical weed control in several major crops, but also includes pastures, rangeland, and noncropland.



Cowherd Mineral Supplement Selection Tips: Phosphorous

Cattle producers are anxiously preparing for the upcoming grazing season. Among those preparations is selecting a mineral supplement. It can be challenging to select a mineral program, as there are many different products and mineral formulations currently available. When evaluating mineral supplements, the phosphorous concentration may be used as guide to determine if the mineral fits the production stage of the herd and forage base. Phosphorous is one of the most common mineral deficiencies in grazing systems around the world and is one of the primary reasons we provide mineral supplements to grazing beef cattle. The table below illustrates the amount of phosphorous required in a mineral supplement required for cattle at various production stages consuming forages with different phosphorous concentrations. Forage phosphorous concentrations vary and are typically greatest during the spring and lowest in the winter. In Kansas, phosphorous content of native range in the spring is typically between 0.15 and 0.20%. Thus, the maintenance requirements of lactating cow (20 lbs milk/d) could be met by a mineral with at least 8% phosphorous (average of 6 and 10 in the table).

	Total diet P, %			
	0.05	0.10	0.15	0.20
	-----% P needed in mineral supplement-----			
Maintenance				
1000 lb BW	8	6	6	6
1200 lb BW	10	6	6	6
1400 lb BW	12	8	6	6
Gestation				
Last 1/3	16	10	6	6
Lactation				
20 lb milk/d	16	16	10	6
30 lb milk/d	16	16	16	6

Intake assumption: 2% bodyweight during maintenance and gestation. Intake increases with milk production
Wright, 2003

Fertilize Cool-Season Grasses in May, Says K-State Expert

Slow-release fertilizers will help lawn look great through summer

As the calendar turns to May, homeowners hoping for a lush lawn should be making plans for one of the more important tasks of the season.

“May is an excellent time to fertilize such cool-season lawns as tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass, if they will be irrigated throughout the summer,” said Ward Upham, a horticultural specialist with K-State Research and Extension.

If the lawn is not on a sprinkler system, he said, fertilizing in May is not recommended because the plant often goes through a period of summer dormancy because of drought.

“But for irrigated lawns, we suggest fertilizing in May because the springtime flush of growth in these grasses has tapered off, so the fertilizer you apply will be less likely to cause excessive shoots than if you had fertilized at a full rate in April,” Upham said.

Upham suggests that homeowners use slow-release, nitrogen fertilizers, which promote controlled growth throughout the summer.

“Relatively few fertilizer available to homeowners supply all of the nitrogen in a slowly-available form,” he said, “but one such product that is widely available is Milorganite. Others available in the retail market are cottonseed meal, alfalfa-based fertilizers and any other products derived from plants or animals.”

Upham noted one exception: bloodmeal. “Contrary to popular belief, the nitrogen supplied by bloodmeal is quickly available,” he said.

“These products are all examples of natural organic fertilizers,” Upham said. “They typically contain less than 10 percent nitrogen by weight, so compared to most synthetic fertilizers, more product must be applied to get the same amount of nitrogen.”

That does mean that the slow-release products are a little more expensive, he said.

Upham urges homeowners to follow label directions, but in general, you should plan to apply one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. “If the fertilizer is 6 percent nitrogen by weight, you will need to apply almost 17 pounds of fertilizer per 1,000 square feet,” he said.

Homeowners who would like to save money and instead apply quick-release fertilizers should plan to split the application into two doses – one-half pound of nitrogen, not fertilizer, per 1,000 square feet in May, and again in early June.

K-State Recommendations For Soybean Planting Dates & Maturity Group

After considering the effects of genetic yield potential and the environment, planting date is one of the primary management practices under the farmer’s control that can highly influence soybean yields. In recent years, Kansas producers have been planting soybeans slightly earlier -- at the rate of about one-third-of-day per year. The past growing seasons, however, the “50% planting date” mark was achieved at a similar time (first week of June) statewide – with exception of the last growing season (2019) that was marked by extremely wet and late planting conditions.

Kansas planting dates and maturity groups

Soybeans can be planted over a wide range of dates (Figure 1, upper panel) with adequate soil moisture conditions, although germination and emergence could be reduced and/or delayed in cool soils (less than 60 degrees F). The recommended maturity varies across Kansas by area (Figure 1, lower panel).

Figure 1. Recommended soybean planting dates (upper panel) and suggested maturity groups (bottom panel) across Kansas. Maps from K-State Research and Extension.

Recommendations

Ultimately, weather patterns dictate soybean yields, especially under dryland conditions. There is no guarantee that any certain planting date will always work out the best when it comes to soybean yields in Kansas. In fact, the distribution and amount of rainfall and the day/night temperature variations around flowering and during the grain filling periods have large impacts on defining soybean yield potential. Thus, when the risk of drought stress during the growing season is high, diversifying planting dates may be a good approach to consider.

When planting early, seed should be treated with a fungicide and insecticide. Selecting varieties with resistance to soybean cyst nematode and sudden death syndrome is advisable. Do not plant into soils that are too wet. Also, do not plant until soil temperatures are close to 60 degrees F. If planted into soils cooler than 60 degrees F, seedlings may eventually emerge but will have poor vigor.

In drier areas of Kansas and on shallow soils, yields have been most consistent when planting soybeans in late May to early June. By planting during that window, soybeans will bloom and fill seed in August and early September, when nights are cooler and the worst of heat and drought stress is usually over.

Preliminary Wheat Injury Assessment From The April 13-17 Freeze Events In Kansas

The cold temperatures experienced in week of April 13-17 caused freeze injury to the 2020 wheat crop at varying degrees. The level of freeze damage depends on the region in the state, primarily because the wheat in different regions was at distinct growth stages (with varying levels of susceptibility to cold damage) and also because the different regions recorded minimum temperatures ranging from 8 to over 30 degrees F. Within a given region, factors that impacted the level of freeze damage included cropping system (which affected residue cover and sowing date), wheat variety selection, and position in the landscape.

As we moved from Saline County to McPherson and Reno counties, there were fewer fields showing leaf burn symptoms, so that there was essentially no sign of freeze damage in Sumner Co. Evaluation of the wheat heads near Hutchinson suggested that maybe 5-10% of the primary tillers could have suffered some damage level, especially in the early-sow fields (Figure 1). While there is still potential that the emerging heads might be trapped in the boot, the freeze damage in this region was much less dramatic than in the central or north central regions.



Some local wheat fields are showing signs of freeze damage, mainly in thin stands of wheat where there is no canopy. Neighboring fields show less signs of damage where the canopy has kept the growing point of the wheat from freezing. (Figure 2) Photos by Shad Marston at and around Marquette Wheat Plot at the Patrick Farm

Wheat variety effect on potential for freeze damage

We also saw a considerable difference among varieties in their response to the recent freeze events. It is important to note that these differences do not reflect a variety's winter hardiness. Instead, they seem to be more related to when varieties were released from winter dormancy and started their spring growth. Varieties that began to grow early are showing more freeze damage than varieties that were released from dormancy later, regardless of sowing date. Remember that wheat's tolerance to freezing temperatures is at its peak during the winter, and then decreases as the crop begins its spring growth – thus, the further away from the depths of the winter, the less a given variety is able to tolerate cold temperatures. In most cases, varieties that released earlier from winter dormancy (for example, WB4458, Paradise, TAM114, Zenda) were showing much more freeze damage than varieties that were released later (for example, WB Grainfied, Rock Star, LCS Chrome, Joe).





Clover Corner

Lindsey Muetting
County Extension Agent



K-STATE
Research and Extension



Happy May!!! It has been a crazy couple of months we have encountered. I hope you have all been able to continue to learn in your 4-H projects. If you might be willing to help teach others in a certain project area during this time- please.. Lets talk more! Don't forget that Eight Weeks of Virtual 4-H has a couple of weeks left and lessons are always available as previous posts on our McPherson County 4-H Facebook page!

While the cancellation of in person events has been sad to accept- I am super excited about an Oz-Some 4-H Camp Connection coming up June 16-18 and some virtual STEM day camp activities that will be open for registration soon! The state is also working on some adaptations to offer events to youth in replace of Discovery Days, Campference, etc. Stay tuned and don't miss these unique opportunities!

~Lindsey

VIRTUAL COW PATTY BINGO

With reduced development fund figures, delayed family night and no opportunities to meet in person- 4-H Council came up with an amazing opportunity to still promote 4-H and earn funds for our programs! We will be hosting Virtual Cow Patty Bingo on the morning of May 16! Each family is asked to share the information with as many people as they can think of. The great thing is you don't have to be in McPherson County or even Kansas to participate! Those playing can purchase squares online and then watch the action live on our facebook page! Watch email and online soon for promo materials to share! Please take a few minutes to promote this fundraiser!!



McPherson County 4-H
COW PATTY
Bingo

Eight Weeks of Virtual 4-H

Don't forget to tune in to our McPherson County 4-H Facebook Page each weekday for Virtual 4-H! The archived lessons can also be found on the page to access at any convenient time! We have a couple weeks left in May- and a few more McPherson County 4-H members to showcase! Don't miss out!

4-H Council

Just a reminder that the next 4-H Council meeting will be June 4 at 7 PM. This will be another Zoom meeting. Watch your email for reminders!

Get Published!

How has your club or project group stayed connected during this time? How are your 4-H projects going? We would love to share these things with others!

Please get any information you would like included in the June Clover Corner to Lindsey by May 18. Exciting club happenings, project meetings and accomplishments are needed! Email information to LMuetting@ksu.edu

Development Fund

As we have reached May 1 typically the Development Fund Drive has come to a close. In our unique time we are in- I would like to ask you to attempt to contact your businesses in the coming month if you have not had a chance. In the last newsletter we discussed that maybe writing a note about what you are doing in 4-H at this time, sending a picture of your favorite project or activity or connecting with a phone call would be good strategies while we are in a time of limited interaction. Let's try to have our donations turned in by the end of the month!

American Legion Family Night- Postponed

Due to our current restrictions we are unable to have our Family Night Fundraiser in May. 4-H Council has voted to accept the proposed alternate date of October 15 to complete this event. This will be super exciting just coming off of National 4-H Week and a great way to kick off the new 4-H year!

Our responsibilities as 4-H families will be to sell tickets to the event and provide desserts. Tickets should be available the third week of September- so watch for more details as fall comes about! Tickets will be \$5 each which includes a hamburger, fries, dessert and drink! Please mark October 15 on your calendars to come eat supper to benefit 4-H!

Impacted Summer Events

With the current restrictions on in person gatherings for 4-H and Extension, many events we look forward to each summer have been impacted. While we cannot hold our "traditional" events, I do know that there are leaders and groups all over the state working very hard to adapt opportunities to fit our guidelines! I do not have much information at this time- but urge you to be very in tune with email in the coming month as I learn more about opportunities for youth of all ages! The one event I DO know about right now is.....

Oz-Some 4-H Camp Connection

OzSome 4-H Camp is thrilled to offer a 3 evening OzSome 4-H Camp Connection experience! This is for any member 4-H age 8-13. Those 14 and older are also needed to serve as group counselors!

This Connection experience will be June 16, 17 and 18 from 6-9 PM. A box of camp supplies and T-Shirt will be mailed prior to the event. There is also a place in registration asking who you might like to be grouped with. We will be offering camp groups of youth with a counselor so they can enjoy old camp friends and make new ones! The main platform used for this will be zoom- but we will have lots of activities to participate in and ways to get up and move throughout the experience!

Registration will be only \$5 as McPherson County 4-H Development Fund will be covering the remainder of the cost! Registration must be completed by May 10! Please visit https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1O0FmCbV8AnT6cJ

Upcoming STEM Related Camps

Lindsey is working with a group of colleagues across the state to bring a day camp learning to our youth! There will be one session focused for 2nd-5th graders and one for 6th-8th. These will take place once a week starting the first part of June. A box of supplies for all lessons will be mailed prior to the start date! Watch you email closely for this promotion and registration as spots are limited and with several agents working to provide this opportunity, spots will fill VERY quickly!

Project Meetings

How can we continue to learn and grow together during this time of being apart? I urge you to be willing to share your knowledge with other members!

- * Maybe doing a short video clip to send to project members?
- * Hosting a zoom class for a specific topic?
- * Creating a Kahoot trivia game for a friendly learning challenge?
- * Even showing your progress on a project on one of our facebook groups, email or the newsletter will help motivate others!

Lindsey does have some additional ideas that could use some volunteer support- if you are willing to help, please talk more with her! She is also willing to do Zoom trainings or help set up meetings for those who could use assistance!

McPherson County 4-H Fair

At this time we are still working hard to finalize plans for an in person fair, July 24-27! As we know- this can change rapidly with local and university/Extension guidelines we have to follow. Should we need to adapt our fair- we WILL be doing so! There is no canceling fair! We will work diligently to make sure that in some capacity our 4-H'ers and their projects are judged and showcased! If changes to our fair plans need to be made we will notify everyone as soon as we would know more. Until then... fingers crossed for our time together in July!

4-H Pledge Provides Road Map for Kansas Youth

Youth development group's ideals help provide focus during global pandemic

MANHATTAN, Kan. – The same ideals that have made 4-H one of the country's leading organizations for youth leadership and development are now serving its members well during the global pandemic, says one of the organization's leaders in Kansas.

Beth Hinshaw, the 4-H youth development specialist in the southeast region, said that the 4-H Pledge – a staple of the organization since 1927 – really is a guide for everyday living.

"I think that the 4-H pledge is something that we can live everyday to guide us," Hinshaw said. "and right now it's especially good."

Broken down into parts, Hinshaw talked recently about how the pledge relates to current challenges:

"I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking..."

Hinshaw notes that 'clearer thinking' can relate to planning, organizing and solving problems.

"It's about using knowledge throughout your whole life," she said. "When we think about pledging our head to clearer thinking, that means we're going to work hard at making good decisions."

Hinshaw said continuous and online education is one example of how youth are adapting to new challenges. And, she adds, being home is an opportunity to learn more fully about projects they are involved in.

"In 4-H, we have great volunteers, but some of our youth's work and practice has to happen on their own," Hinshaw said. "We know this time is a great opportunity for learning, as well."

"...my HEART to greater loyalty..."

"This is really about our strong personal values, including a positive self-concept and our concern for others," Hinshaw said.

Numerous Kansas 4-H projects include showing compassion for others in the community; that commitment has continued during the current pandemic.

"We've seen some really wonderful examples of young people making masks for different organizations in their communities, writing letters to people in nursing homes or neighbors they're not getting to see, and more," Hinshaw said. "You can really brighten someone's day with a letter or a phone call. We know that we have kids doing artwork that they're sending to their local nursing homes. Sometimes you just have no idea the impact that something simple like that can really have."

"...my HANDS to larger service..."

In-person community service and volunteer opportunities may be limited now, but Hinshaw said it's a good time to plan for future activities.

"Our community service project, called 48 Hours of 4-H, is something we do every year at the end of National 4-H Week in October," said Hinshaw, noting that the annual event is scheduled for Oct. 10-11 around Kansas.

"Now is a great time for Kansas 4-Hers to be having conversations with others in their club, project group or family about how we can serve our community, and what kinds of things need to be done."

"...and my HEALTH to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world."

Beyond health, Hinshaw said this part of the pledge relates to "character, ethics, stress management and disease prevention."

"Everybody is at home right now, so it's important to think about how can we eat well and how can we get our exercise," she said. "But also on that mental health side, how can we be connecting with people managing stress and doing those things that are going to promote our good mental health?"

K-State Research and Extension Agents are still here for you! Call our office weekdays from 8-5 to be directed to an agent or reach Shad and Lindsey via email! We can also help you with radon and water test kits, soil samples, identifications and more! Call us with your questions and needs! Remember to stay healthy and safe during this time!

Unsafe Mixtures Have Caused Spike In Accidental Home Poisonings

MANHATTAN, Kan. – The leader of a Kansas State University program that helps to promote food and consumer safety at home is waving a caution flag regarding the proper ways to disinfect kitchen and other household surfaces.

Karen Blakeslee, coordinator of the K-State Rapid Response Center, said her concern stems from an April 24 article from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicating that the number of incidents received by the nation's poison control centers between January and March, 2020, climbed a whopping 20.4% over the same period one year ago.

The CDC data indicate there were 45,550 exposure calls relating to cleaners and disinfectants received during the first three months of this year, compared to 37,822 in 2019. In the article, the CDC cites two examples in which exposure to poisonous chemicals resulted from homeowners taking extra steps to protect food or surfaces from potential exposure to the novel coronavirus.

In one case, a woman filled a sink with a mixture of 10% bleach solution, vinegar and hot water and soaked produce that she had purchased at the grocery store. She was transferred to the hospital after experiencing breathing difficulties caused by the chemical mixture.

"The message here is that we need to use cleaners and disinfectants as directed and for the type of surface you are cleaning," Blakeslee said. "And it's important to note that you do not need to sanitize groceries after bringing them home from the grocery store. What the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends is that you wash your hands when returning from the store, put your groceries away safely, then wash your hands again.

"There is no indication that the novel coronavirus can be carried and transmitted to humans from food or food packaging."

Blakeslee notes that the CDC's recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting home surfaces are fairly simple: wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect, and use soap and water to clean surfaces.

"You should clean surfaces regularly, especially high touch surfaces" including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks, Blakeslee said.

To disinfect areas of the home, the surface should first be cleaned with a simple solution of soap and water, or a mild detergent if the surface is dirty. Then, Blakeslee notes, use a household disinfectant.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency maintains a list of recommended disinfectants for home use to help protect against the coronavirus and other viruses. Consumers are reminded to follow label directions and be sure to follow the contact time, which is the amount of time that a surface should be visibly wet.

Blakeslee said the CDC also has recommendations for using bleach solutions, when appropriate for the surface being disinfected. The CDC's recommendation for a safe bleach solution is listed as 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water; or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used, according to the CDC.

When reviewing disinfectants for the home, "do not mix any of these cleaners together thinking it will be a better cleaner," Blakeslee said. "That is dangerous."

"There is the added factor right now that children are home, which increases the possibility of poisoning," she adds. "Keep all cleaning and disinfectant products out of reach of kids, or locked in a cabinet."

Blakeslee said that if a poisoning does occur in the home, seek immediate medical attention, or call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

To view other COVID-19 information from K-State Research and Extension visit: www.ksre.k-state.edu and click on COVID-19 Extension Resources!



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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