



\*\* This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/swrec-spring-field-day>

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### **K-State to feature water-saving alternative crops and wheat innovation**

Southwest Research-Extension Center hosts field day on May 19

*By Kelsey Stremel, K-State Research and Extension news service*

GARDEN CITY, Kan. – Kansas State University's Southwest Research-Extension Center will host its Spring Field Day on Monday, May 19, highlighting drought-tolerant wheat varieties, water-efficient forages, and canola, a rapidly emerging crop for western Kansas.

The event will be held at the Southwest Research-Extension Center, 4500 E. Mary Street in Garden City. Registration begins at 3:30 p.m., followed by the program and field tour at 4p.m. A complimentary meal sponsored by agricultural industry partners will follow.

"This year's field day is about identifying crop options that can help producers remain productive and profitable, even with limited water," said Logan Simon, K-State southwest area agronomist. "We'll walk through variety plots and talk about which wheat selections are holding up under current growing conditions."

Attendees will tour wheat, canola and annual forage plots and hear updates from K-State experts, including:

- Logan Simon, southwest area agronomist.
- Mike Stamm, agronomist and canola breeder.
- John Holman, cropping systems agronomist.

Canola quickly gained support across western Kansas for its agronomic and economic potential. With increasing demand for vegetable oil -- driven partly by renewable fuel production -- canola's high oil content is drawing new attention.

"Canola is a crop with serious momentum in this region," Stamm said. "K-State is one of only two institutions in the U.S. with an active canola breeding program, and we're excited to be helping shape its future here. It's a strong rotational fit with wheat and offers new market opportunities for producers."

Holman will speak on the performance of annual forage trials at the SWREC.

“Forages like sorghum-sudangrass, pearl millet and forage oats can be a practical option when flexibility and water-use efficiency are critical,” he said. “They’re useful in dual-purpose operations or in managing risk under uncertain rainfall.”

These regional variety trials are part of the broader work of the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, which plays a vital role in evaluating crop performance under real-world growing conditions. The data gathered helps producers and industry partners make informed decisions based on how crops perform locally in western Kansas.

The field day provides a valuable opportunity for producers to connect with researchers, ask questions, and gather practical insights to take home. It’s part of K-State’s continued commitment to delivering research-based knowledge that supports innovation, resilience, and sustainability in Kansas agriculture.

To RSVP or more information on the 2025 spring field day and catered meal, please call the SWREC office at 620-276-8286 or email [lsimon@k-state.edu](mailto:lsimon@k-state.edu).

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K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the wellbeing of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu). K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Story by:**

Kelsey Stremel  
[stremelk@ksu.edu](mailto:stremelk@ksu.edu)

**For more information:**

Logan Simon  
[lsimon@k-state.edu](mailto:lsimon@k-state.edu)