K-State to offer free workshops on farm, personal health

Soil, profitability and mental health highlight agenda

By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news

BALDWIN CITY, Kan. – Kansas State University and several state partners will host a series of three free workshops to support farm families, from the managing their soil to forming succession plans and increasing their personal health and wellness.

Margit Kaltenekker, an agriculture agent with K-State Research and Extension’s office in Douglas County, said the workshop – Whole Farm Health – will be held on successive Tuesdays at the Worden Cornerstone Church near Baldwin City.

There is no cost to attend, but online registration is requested. The list of workshops includes:

- Feb. 20 – Transition to Soil Health and Beating the Drought.
- Feb. 27 – Planning for Profit.
- March 5 – Lighten the Load on the Road to Wellness.

Each session will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The workshops have been put together by extension staff in Douglas, Johnson and Shawnee counties; conservation districts in Douglas and Miami counties; Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy coordinators; the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture; and the Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams.

“After three years of drought, regenerating soil health by applying soil health principles will increase its water-holding capacity, nutrient cycling and resilience before the next drought,” Kaltenekker said.

She added that cover crops “can be a profitable way to restore ecosystem function in soils, and provide extra forage for livestock.”

The March 5 session addresses what Kaltenekker says is a “silent crisis” in rural communities.

“It’s not in the news everyday, but there continues to be a suicide crisis affecting our rural areas like never before,” she said. “The last workshop is geared to provide resources to learn about
suicide prevention and holistic health strategies that can help lighten the load on the road to wellness."

A video outlining resources available to Kansas farmers is available online.

Kaltenekker said she hopes all three workshops provide "an opportunity to meet with other producers to exchange ideas and troubleshoot challenges."

Epsilon Sigma Phi, the Kansas Soil Health Alliance and Green Cover Seed are sponsoring the workshops.

More information on the Whole Farm Health series is available at http://tinyurl.com/whole-farm-health-2024, or by contacting Kaltenekker at 785-843-7058 or makaltenekker@ksu.edu.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Whole Farm Health 2024, http://tinyurl.com/whole-farm-health-2024

2023 Farm Stress: You Are Not Alone (video), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJJvk0xHoWI.

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

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