Series will help local food growers produce strong, healthy crops

K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – A trip through the local Farmers Market often provides a delicious array of temptation at every stand.


But the appeal of the Farmers Market and other wholesale food markets hasn't happened by chance. Getting local food to market often requires a great deal of thought and care back on the farm, says Margit Kaltenekker, agriculture agent at K-State Research and Extension's office in Douglas County.

“Bringing produce from the seed to the shelf and to your table prompts a romantic view of farm life,” she said. “Yet little do most realize just how much diligent effort and tough work is put forth on part of producers to bring those crops to fruition.”

Kaltenekker is part of a group that is hosting a series of three workshops to help local producers get the most of their harvest.

The Kansas Specialty Crop Producers workshop kicks off on July 8 at Juniper Hill Farms in Lawrence (1547 N. 2000 Road). The workshop costs $10 and begins at 6 p.m. with a presentation by Kansas State University entomologist Raymond Cloyd, who will give a talk on dealing with bug problems in tomato production systems.

K-State plant pathologist Megan Kennelly will also talk about how to identify and manage common tomato diseases.

Kaltenekker said the workshop comes at a time when many local food producers are beginning to bring tomatoes into production, though the information will also help in sustaining production.
“Keeping fruits and vegetable crops health ensures they will produce strong, excellent yields of superb quality through the season, which brings a return for producers’ efforts,” she said.

Additional workshops in the series include:

- July 22 – Understanding pesticides. Z&M Twisted Vines Winery (24305 Loring Road in Lawrence). 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- Aug. 12 – Pollinators and Pesticides. Table View Farm (840 Shawnee Road in Pomona). 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Kaltenekker said in addition to learning from the speakers, growers will have an opportunity to ask questions related to their own challenges, as well as network with other producers.

The workshops are sponsored by K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association, Growing Lawrence, Growing Growers, and conservation districts in Douglas and Miami counties.

More information on the workshop series is available online, or by contacting Kaltenekker at 785-843-7058, or mkaltenekker@ksu.edu.

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Kansas Specialty Crop Producers workshops,  

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