



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



AmeriCorps



KONZA
PRAIRIE
Community Health
& Dental Center

Monthly Newsletter

Volume 01 | Issue 10 | Servicemember Agricultural Vocation Education

Announcement

The VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System Community Mental Health Summit held a Virtual Summit on Friday September 25. The theme was "Suicide Prevention and Whole Health: Two Sides of the Same Coin."

Whole health is an approach to health care that empowers, equips, and treats individuals so that they can take charge of their health and well-being to live their lives to the fullest. Whole health centers around what matters to you and not what matters. This means the members of your health team will get to know you as a person prior to working with you to develop a personalized health-based plan based on your needs, goals, and values.

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Are you ready for Fall?

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Don't Fall behind, the bees are still working!

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AgrAbility? What can it do for me?

Who's Preparing for Fall?

Now that the Autumn season is here, it's time for raking leaves, putting together Halloween costumes, and trading our shorts and t-shirts for pants and jackets. But humans aren't the only ones preparing for a season change.

Both farmers and animals are busy during fall harvest season. Animals, like groundhogs, chipmunks, and bears, feast on nature's buffet of berries, apples, nuts, and seeds to build up reserves of fat that will keep them warm during their long winter's nap.

Butterflies and birds are on the move in the Autumn. Many species fly south to warmer climates, including Monarch butterflies, which typically pass through the Kansas in mid-late September during their annual migration to Mexico.



“Welcome to the Fall Farming Season”

Fall is a season known for the changing leaves, shorter days, and cooler nights. For many farmers, it signals the start of a busy time on the farm. Harvesting and preparing operations for the cold months, a farmer's work is never finished during the Fall farming season.

Keeping a watchful eye on the weather and enhancing crop protection in anticipation of the first frost. A Fall harvest can include anything from apples and cranberries to broccoli and butternut squash, to either be stored or sold. In addition, many farmers use the Fall farming season to plant crops that will be ready for Spring harvest. Fall-planted leafy greens like kale and collards are not only hardy enough to survive the snow and cold, they typically taste all the better for it. Winter onions, peas, garlic, broad beans, root vegetables, and cabbage are also planted in the Fall.



Benefits of the Sting!

For some people, a simple bee sting can cause serious medical complications. However, most of us fear the experience due to the pain and discomfort caused by the sting.

When a bee stinger is triggered, it releases more than venom alone. There is an estimated 18 - 20 naturally occurring antibiotics and antivirals found with the venom, that possess anti-inflammatory and pain reduction substances. Reactants in the human body that form healing properties that would otherwise remain dormant can also be activated by bee stings.

There has been an increase of interest in Apitherapy, which is the medicinal purposes of bees. Many individuals have sought the therapeutic benefits throughout history. The Ancient Egyptians utilized products that bees produce to remedy arthritis. Consuming honey is also believed to promote general wellbeing, and thought to be effective against osteoporosis, constipation, insomnia, laryngitis, and stomach ulcers.

The majority of the medicine used today is acquired from substances that are naturally derived on the properties and behaviors of what can be found in nature. Understandably, bees would develop methods for combatting pathogens since they interact with wildlife, while also acquiring beneficial substances.

Bees already provide humans with copious benefits, mostly by pollinating 90% of the world's flowers and 30% of the world's crops, so their protection and restoration in their ecosystems need no further justification.

Upcoming Events

Information Booth and Honey Sales 3 October at the Fort Riley PX from 10 am – 5 pm

Next Bee Bootcamp 14 November 9 am – 3 am, sign up at www.GoldenPrairieHoney.com

Tuesday – Friday 10 am – 6 pm and Saturday 11 am – 4 pm

Helping Our Pollinators in the Fall

Most gardeners start to cut back on their outdoor endeavors after Labor Day. Honeybees and other pollinators are staying busy well into the fall, and even early winter. You can help, as Mother Nature will appreciate the assistance.

Bees are sensitive to most commercial pesticides, so minimize your use of these products or avoid them altogether. You may want to consider insecticide alternatives like soapy water. You can find many eco-friendly pest control ideas on gardening websites, or by asking other gardeners.

Don't be so quick to weed your garden. Weeds like clovers and dandelions are great food sources for bees. Many wildflowers are classified as weeds but can be great for pollinators as well. If you must weed your garden, try to let your weeds bloom first so the bees can benefit.

If gardening isn't your thing, there are other ways that you can help the bees. Spread the word by enlisting others like schools, civic clubs, and local entities in the fight to help pollinators thrive in your community. "Save a life, help better a life." The truth is that most bees are not interested in stinging humans, so stop and think before smacking one. Most human-bee encounters can be prevented by keeping sugary drinks and desserts covered at picnics, and when roaming through the woods, your community parks, and neighborhoods.



Kansas AgrAbility Project

Each year AgrAbility helps hundreds of farmers, ranchers, agricultural workers, and their families succeed in agricultural production and rural community life.

AgrAbility is a national network of programs funded and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). Kansas is one of 21 states that have AgrAbility Projects.

The Kansas AgrAbility Project's primary purpose is to directly assist Kansas farmers/ranchers, their employees, and family members who have become injured, have a health condition, or a disability, to remain actively engaged in agriculture production for as long as they choose. It is estimated that more than 9,000 full-time or part-time Kansas farmers, ranchers, and their workers have disabilities that interfere with their ability to work in production agriculture. For many of these individuals, the presence of a disability jeopardizes their rural and agricultural futures. Rural isolation and gaps in rural service delivery systems are often compounded by a farm family's self-reliance. These factors frequently prevent agricultural workers with health conditions or disabilities from taking advantage of growing expertise in modifying farm operations, adapting equipment, promoting farmstead accessibility, and using assistive technologies to safely accommodate disability in agricultural and rural settings. Yet, with some assistance, the majority of agricultural workers with disabilities can continue to earn their livelihoods in agriculture and participate fully in rural community life.

The Kansas AgrAbility Project is a partnership between K-State, Southeast Kansas Independent Living, and Assistive Technology for Kansans at the University of Kansas. Through these partnerships, and in cooperation with multiple agricultural and disability service organizations and K-State's network

of extension educators in all 105 counties, Kansas AgrAbility continues to enhance the quality of life for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers.

The Kansas AgrAbility Project actively promotes education and networking among rural and disability service organizations to increase the capacity for serving farmers with health conditions and disabilities. The project works to improve understanding around challenges faced by those farmers in an effort to break down service barriers and promote successful outcomes.

The Project provides a wide range of no-cost assistance to farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers who have health conditions or disabilities. This assistance includes information on how to accommodate barriers and maintain a rural lifestyle by modifying equipment, structures, and operations. Farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers with any type of physical, cognitive, or sensory condition (e.g., amputation, traumatic brain injury, hearing impairment) that interferes with their ability to do their agricultural work or activities of daily living, are eligible for AgrAbility services.

Kansas AgrAbility Agriculture Assistive Technology specialists combine their knowledge of agriculture with assistive device expertise to provide farmers, ranchers, and workers with health conditions or disabilities the specialized services they need to safely accommodate their activities in everyday farm/ranch operations. Furthermore, the project engages extension educators, disability experts, rural professionals, and volunteers in offering an array of services.

For more information, visit agrability.ksu.edu |
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