

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension



Southwind
District

Making a **DIFFERENCE**

3rd QUARTER 2026



Partnership Improves Health Outcomes Through Collaboration

Southwind Extension, Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas, and B&W Trailer Hitches partnered to change lives this quarter. Create Better Health, ran for 8 sessions and gave the support, resources, and encouragement that participants needed to improve their health.



During the program, 16 participants learned practical strategies for improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, setting realistic goals related to behavior changes, and overcoming barriers to healthy living. B&W Trailer Hitches allowed its employees to attend the sessions during the workday, demonstrating its commitment to employee wellness. Community Health Center provided food that could be used by the participants at home to make healthy meals for themselves and their families.

Surveys showed measurable improvements in participants' habits relating to health. They exercised more, ate more fruits and vegetables, and three participants reported a healthy amount of weight loss over the course of the 5-month-long program. One participant noted that their A1C dropped from 8.4 in January to 6.0 in May, and another's blood pressure dropped to an average of 114/72.

This program affected the lives of the participants long after the last session ended. The lessons taught during the program became lasting habits that will make participants' lives healthier and fuller. Southwind Extension continues to find partners in our communities to create more life-changing programs like this.





Homeschool Youth STEM Day - Global Expo

The Southwind District hosted the Homeschool Youth STEM Day to give homeschooled students the opportunity to take advantage of the school enrichment programs that agents present at various public schools in the district.

Seventy-five students aged 4-18 attended the program. Youth aged 13 and over participated in

a "United Nations Challenge," in which they were divided into teams representing their own "country" and challenged to work with other groups to trade resources. This was a great activity for learning leadership, cooperation, and debate. The younger participants moved through 25-minute stations featuring topics on traveling the world. Students learned how to make a tortilla in a bag, how agriculture is handled in China, facts about beef production in Scotland, the history of Aboriginal art (and they got the chance to make their own in the form of dot paintings), and the life cycle of Monarch butterflies, including their migration patterns to the forests of Mexico.

The older youth group was very focused and engaged in their United Nations activity, and the students said they learned a lot about leadership. The food-based activity was the clear favorite among the younger groups, but both children and parents reported that the morning was well-spent and educational.

Outreach Efforts:

NCCC Student Resource Fair

Southwind Extension District participated in the Neosho County Community College's annual Student Resource Fair, promoting K-State Research and Extension programs, internship opportunities, and career pathways. The event provided valuable opportunities to engage both domestic and international students, increasing awareness of Extension's educational resources and strengthening connections with individuals who may be unfamiliar with available community services and support networks.

Artist Alley

Southwind Extension District maintained a presence at Chanute's Artist Alley, where educational materials and district updates were shared with community members. Outreach efforts included increasing public awareness of Alpha-gal syndrome and connecting attendees with relevant Extension resources and educational information.



Fort Scott Outdoor Recreation Event

Extension programming was showcased at Fort Scott's Outdoor Recreation event through educational outreach focused on health, wellness, and quality of life. Participants were introduced to Extension resources designed to support personal well-being, healthy living, and community

Chamber of Commerce Partnerships

Regular participation in the Chanute, Iola, Erie, and Fort Scott Chambers of Commerce strengthened Southwind Extension's relationships with local businesses, community leaders, and partner organizations. These engagements provided opportunities to promote Extension programming, identify emerging community needs, and foster collaborative partnerships that enhance local impact throughout the district.

Farm Stress and Resiliency Education

Southwind Extension District collaborated with Farm Bureau leadership in Woodson and Neosho counties to deliver stress management and resiliency programming for agricultural producers and community members. By coordinating educational content, securing speakers, and connecting participants with local support resources, Extension helped address mental well-being and strengthen individual and community resilience.

Iola Feedlot Expo Outreach

Staff engaged agricultural producers and community members at the Iola Feedlot Expo, promoting the upcoming Rooted and Ready homesteading series and sharing information about Extension grant opportunities. These interactions expanded awareness of educational programming and resources available to support lifelong learning and community development.

Every Door Direct Mail Campaign

Southwind Extension District continued its district-wide Every Door Direct Mail initiative, distributing more than 15,800 program guides to households across the district. This comprehensive marketing effort increased visibility of Extension services, promoted educational opportunities, and ensured residents were informed of resources available to support individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

Southeast Kansas Library System Strategic Planning Partnership

Southwind Extension District provided leadership and expertise to the Southeast Kansas Library System through presentations on strategic planning and facilitation services. Discussions focused on the benefits of neutral facilitation and long-term organizational planning, strengthening partnerships between regional libraries and Extension while demonstrating Extension's capacity to support community organizations in achieving their strategic goals.



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