

Unit Leaders Meeting

August 13, 2020

Jason Ellis:

- Classes begin on Monday, August 17th!
- Updates on Academic Programs
 - Katie Burke will not be on campus at all this semester. She is restricted on travel, so all contact will be remote.
 - AGED 260 Spring 2020 students will be able to finish up their curriculum in late fall on Fridays. The fall semester Fall AGED 260 has been cancelled.
 - We have rearranged furniture in UM 312/313 and secured cleaning supplies for student workrooms.
- Jason spoke with Aliea in Extension for potential development about a Departmental Diversity Committee. He would like to utilize "Intercultural Development Inventory" use that as basis in the department. It gives us area to develop intercultural capacity and develop program and curriculum. She would like to introduce change development and explore your biases. This will not be something we push for individuals to do but see who might be interested in participating.

Gina Nixon:

- Business office staff will have a half-day retreat on August 14 to plan for the Fall semester.
- Patty is working with faculty to schedule Fall classes. She also has rearranged the classrooms to allow for proper social distancing when students or others are using them as a work room or small meeting space.
- Additional hand sanitizer, disinfectant, paper towels and gloves are stocked in the business office and are available for use in offices and shared spaces.
- Signage has been ordered for shared spaces on the third floor. Gina asks that unit leaders let her know of additional departmental signage requests.
- June (2020 fiscal year-end) and July general ledger reports have been posted to the unit leader team files. The department ended the year with \$1.6 million, up a little from the end of fiscal year 2019. We also ended the year with clients owing us \$25K, up from \$4K in 2019. This is likely due to the pandemic and changes in document processing.
- The department has received \$44,000 in federal funds for campus COVID-19 signage.
- ImageNow is being upgraded to a web platform. Testing has begun and on-line training is available. Gina will send a link to the training to faculty and business office staff.

Rob Nixon:

- Staff is busy producing signage for Facilities and departments.
- Looking to move plate processing equipment back into room 11 tomorrow. Rick has reached out to Cory about possible communication issues between server and workstation as well as a failed battery backup replacement for pre-press server.
- KSRE signage and order form was sent out in this week's Tuesday Letter.
- K-State Today article encouraging clients to take advantage of curbside pickup from University Printing.

- Working with Jeff Barnes from Parking Services to produce stencils to be used for chalk sprayed facemask reminders in University parking lots.
- Working with Gina/Patty to end contract and remove the Konica Minolta copier from the Union Copy Center. We now have 2 new Ricoh color production machines.
- Working on our returning student schedules to share staffing between the Union and Umberger facilities.

Jason Hackett:

- The list of top publications for June has been compiled. The top five were:
 - Kansas Garden Guide – 6,079 online visitors
 - Chemical Weed Control – 1,876
 - Food Safety for Kansas Farmers Market Vendors – 1,767
 - Planning Cattle Feedlots – 1,566
 - Vegetable Garden Planting Guide – 1,535
- The publications group has produced 56 numbered print jobs since working from home began, and there are numerous others that have been posted but not yet printed.
- The 2020 Turfgrass Research Report is online: <https://newprairiepress.org/kaesrr/vol6/iss7/>
- The production phase has begun for a set of online marketing training courses for KSRE agents.
- The first batch of College of Ag recruitment postcards using the new university brand guidelines are awaiting final approval to be printed and sent.
- Several members of the team have been devoting long hours to building and rebuilding web pages for the College of Ag website. The new pages are nearly ready to go live, upon approval and “flipping the switch” by DCM’s web team.
- Some photo and video shoots are restarting, with coverage of the Lt. Gov’s visit to the flour mill, blue-green algae experiments taking place in the field, hemp harvest in Haysville, and a soil health field day next week in Lenexa.
- Several team members are working with KSRE leadership to build a portal for online extension courses for the public.
- We were encouraged to submit the Comm Solutions group’s work for consideration in KSRE’s annual awards, so we put together a quick tally of COVID-19 related work that has been done since mid-March – in addition to all the standard KSRE publications, news releases, radio shows, branding efforts, etc., that was already part of the everyday schedule or planned to be done this year. The following is part of what we submitted, tallying what was done in response to COVID-19 over the last five months – while continuing to carry out other duties:
 - In mid-March, as COVID-19 became the primary topic of conversation for the nation and world, and as in-person classes at K-State were canceled and stay-at-home orders took effect, the Communications Solutions group responded right away by putting together a [webpage](#) featuring resources already available in the KSRE bookstore and on various webpages. This happened before anyone in KSRE asked for a collection of information to be made, as the team pulled together its collective expertise and familiarity with existing resources. As the pandemic continued, specialists and administrators provided feedback on the webpage, and it was revised twice to accommodate the vast amount of resources that were at first identified and, as time went on, greatly augmented to serve Kansans. The page continues to be updated as

additional resources are created, news releases and audio interviews are conducted and information is updated.

- Within the first days of the stay-at-home orders, KSRE administration asked for a [video](#) to be produced and shared to convey the fact that, even though offices were closed, KSRE staff would continue to be ready, willing and able to help just as extension has been there for Kansans since the beginning. Without the ability to shoot new video or access existing video from home, the team accessed existing video and wrote and recorded a voiceover track to reassure the public that service would not be interrupted. This video was posted to [Facebook](#) and Twitter. On Facebook alone, nearly 15,000 people viewed it, and 510 people left reactions, comments or shared it.
- The Communications Solutions team was consulted in the early stages of community outreach to create a digital media plan which could unify KSRE's presence across the state. The goal was to meet Kansas where they were – online. With assistance from Comm Solutions, the state PLC leaders team devised a plan to conduct a survey that resulted in more than 600 responses identifying immediate needs from Kansans. From those results, agents were able to use match needs with resources provided through the team including publications, programming, social media efforts, etc., to guide their support for community members.
- The Publications team helped FCS specialists quickly produce a new "[Suddenly in Charge](#)" series for families who had children staying at home and providing care for younger siblings when schools were closed. This series currently includes a dozen titles, many translated into Spanish. The team also assisted with a rapid update and re-release of the "[When Your Income Drops](#)" series of publications to help Kansans suddenly faced with unemployment and furloughs.
- The daily, almost hour-long [Agriculture Today](#) radio program has included dozens of producer-specific segments related to dealing with COVID-19's effects on short- and long-term markets for various segments of the ag sector, governmental programs, financial planning and more. The radio show is distributed to stations covering all of Kansas and reach into adjacent states. It is also served up online as a podcast. Not counting November and December, which have fewer overall production days due to holiday, the podcast version of Ag Today had a pre-pandemic average of 18,945 downloads per month over five months. In the first five months of the pandemic, Ag Today averaged 23,440 downloads per month – nearly 4,500 more downloads per month. Looking closer at the download numbers, every time "COVID-19" or "coronavirus" was in the episode description, there was a spike in downloads.
- The Content team generated 196 [news releases](#) between March 13 and August 10, and nearly half of them were COVID-19 related, ranging from ag economics to virtual 4-H events to managing children's stress. These news releases have helped ensure that K-State has been well represented in news coverage at the state, regional and national levels, both in mainstream news and industry publications. By being able to include photos and embeddable podcast audio from radio interviews, these news releases have been truly multi-platform methods of promotion for KSRE experts.

- Of the more than 110 [Better Kansas](#) blog entries posted from early March to end of July, many have referenced COVID-19 and linked back to KSRE resources, including agent columns, publications, news releases, podcasts and programs.
- Members of the Comm Solutions group helped brainstorm and execute ideas for the Horticulture PFT's "[Pandemic Homesteading 9-1-1](#)" 10-part video series on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. From social media expertise to on-camera work to all post-production, captioning and posting online, the team was deeply involved in all aspects of this timely and well-received series. In all, the 10 videos added up to 14,333 minutes viewed, with 1,039 engagements. The full social media report for the campaign [here](#).
- The Marketing team has been extremely busy helping strategize and deliver numerous targeted messages on the main KSRE social media feeds as well as helping local units all over the state ramp up output on their own social media accounts. Staff members have consulted with agents from around the state on an almost daily basis, providing guidance, templates for graphics, feedback on strategies and execution on the local level, and project-level support for initiatives such as the weekly "[Mindful Monday](#)" series that goes on Facebook, the above-mentioned "Pandemic Homesteading 9-1-1 series," and copy-and-paste social posts that can be used statewide. The team also introduced the "Marketing Mashup" email newsletter to offer tips, guidance and support to agents and specialists on a weekly basis in addition to custom help via Zoom conferences. The newsletter is delivered to approximately 287 K-State Research and Extension professionals each week. On average, those emails receive a 59.1% open rate and 12.8% click rate.
- The team has created dozens of newly designed fliers, posters, signs, fact sheets, booklets and reports specifically for COVID-19 informational purposes.
- The weekly [Sound Living](#) radio program has featured FCS specialists' COVID-19 related expertise since late March. In addition to the dozens of radio stations it also reaches, the podcast version has yielded 3,429 downloads. Topics included retirement planning post-COVID-19, food safety, healthy habits, resilience, supporting young and older adults during the pandemic, business tips and support for the "Suddenly in Charge" series.
- The [Extension Files](#) podcast began a special "Season 2: Coping while Cooped Up" which ran from March 30-July 9. Because of the urgency at the outset of the pandemic, the first 20 episodes were released daily (five days a week) in order to share as much as possible as soon as possible with the public to demonstrate the various ways KSRE can help. In total, 29 episodes were produced for Season 2, and they were downloaded a total of 3,226 times. Episodes featured specialist and agent information about financial issues (stimulus checks, student loans, retirement), public health, domestic violence, child and teen psychology, parenting, food safety, victory gardens, rural community effects of COVID-19, exercise and more. Some episodes also helped cross-promote podcasts of Ag Today and Sound Living.
- Comm Solutions staff helped coordinate and host first-of-their-kind [virtual field days](#) on Zoom and YouTube. Each of these has provided experience that helps improve each successive virtual event.
- The team supported 4-H and KSRE administration in developing specific messaging related to bans on in-person activities from March-July, changes to state- and county

fairs related to virtual activities, messaging for local units to use when asked about positive tests, and adapted and disseminated COVID-19 procedures set in place by the university for KSRE staff throughout the state.

- The team changed plans late in the production cycle of the AgReport alumni magazine for the College of Agriculture by adding a special fold-out section to update alumni on the breadth and depth of KSRE responses to the pandemic. This special report was also reformatted to be used by administrators to share with peer institutions and government funding agencies to demonstrate the incredible responsiveness KSRE has mustered for the sake of the people we serve.
- A video was quickly created to present to a potential major industry partner when an in-person visit was canceled due to COVID-19. The video showcased the university's research capabilities.
- Because of the KSRE/Communications Solutions group involvement in the [Extension Disaster Education Network](#), other land grant universities and USDA/NIFA are aware of KSRE's response to the pandemic.

Cory Spicer:

- The firewall request for EPMS Connect was submitted to EST team, once that is closed we will be ready for testing with it
- I did my best to tidy up "my" area in the Grad Student workroom, and the cable/accessory boxes in the vault yesterday. Since I had last been there, a new box of laptops has arrived, it looks like more from that same group of old Macbooks and HP laptops. I will work with a student worker to come over and pull hard drives and fill out a disposal form.
- We have a large pile of e-waste in that grad student area. Once we get these additional laptops ready I can contact Facilities to arrange a pickup.
- Upon renewal for this upcoming year, we are switching Adobe named licenses over to @k-state.edu Enterprise IDs, which are integrated with K-State Single Sign-On. For anybody who has saved files in Adobe Cloud Storage or custom settings associated with their account, there is a process for transferring to the new account.
- Cory will be out Monday-Wednesday, August 17-19th. He is moving to Texas.