



Welcome to the K-State Olathe Horticulture Research and Extension Center's quarterly newsletter.

Fruit & Vegetable Research Update

Current Research Projects



Spinach harvest in the agrivoltaics research plot.

Agrivoltaics: Alex Thill, Urban Food Systems Master's Degree student, continues his research focused on agrivoltaics by evaluating the impact of vertical solar panels on various vegetables grown in the panel array field. First season harvest and data collection from 2024 summer and fall crops is complete. Second year (2025) spring crops are being harvested now; to be followed by summer and fall crops for seasonal and year-over-year comparisons. Tour the agrivoltaics field and learn about this research at Field Day on August 25.

Strawberry Trials: Harvest (data collection) of strawberries planted last August has begun. Dr. Sandhu oversees the project, assisted by Graduate Student Shubham Kumar, evaluating the effect of planting date on yield and post-harvest quality of commercially available strawberry varieties. A companion research project is evaluating the same criteria with a later planting for one variety to compare differences. Preliminary results will be reported at Field Day on August 25.



Part of first strawberry harvest of 2025



Tomatoes (center) and bell peppers (left) variety trial planting.

Tomato and Pepper Variety Trials: A total of 9 tomato and 10 bell pepper varieties have been planted in variety trial plots for evaluation.

Organic Soil Amendments in No Till Transition: Graduate student Courtney Woodworth's research focuses on mitigation options for the challenges growers often experience when transitioning to no till. She has planted into various soil treatments and will evaluate each treatment's impact on soil health as measured by fungal bacteria ratio, soil organic matter, and compaction. This is a multi-year study with preliminary observations shared at the 2025 Field Day.



No till transition plots in the OHREC solo tunnel.

Cantaloupe Trials: Dr. Sandhu and Graduate Student Shubham Kumar will conduct the second year of cantaloupe trials. Eight varieties of cantaloupe will be planted with harvest evaluated for yield and post harvest quality.

Turfgrass Program Update

2025 Turf and Ornamentals Field Day

Mark your calendars now for the 2025 K-State Turf and Ornamentals Field Day on Thursday, August 7 at the Rocky Ford Research Area, 1700 Barnes Road, Manhattan. This annual field day provides updates from faculty researchers and graduate students on turfgrass and ornamentals research being conducted at K-State as well as a robust trade show. More information [here](#).

Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference

The 2025 Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference is scheduled for December 3-4 at Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan. The conference features educational sessions, networking, a trade show, State Pesticide Applicator Recertification Credit Hours, GCSAA Education Points, and Intl. Society of Arboriculture CEUs. Visit <https://www.k-state.edu/turf/events/index.html> for more information including online registration, official program, and hotel room rates at the Hilton Garden Inn.



2024 K-State Turf Research Report

Volume 10, Issue 4 (2024) is available online at:

<https://newprairiepress.org/kaesrr/vol10/iss4/>

Highlights of 2024 report include:

- Rooting Comparison of Zoysiagrass Cultivars in the Greenhouse
- Impact of Sod Growers' Grow-in Strategies on the Performance of Zoysiagrass Sod
- 2019 National Turfgrass Evaluation Program Bermudagrass Test: 2023 Data
- 2019 National Turfgrass Evaluation Program Bermudagrass Test: 2019-2023 Summary Report

Resources for Turf and Landscape Information at K-State

If you're looking for information on managing turf and landscapes in Kansas, there are several resources and social media sites with which you should be familiar.

- K-State Turf and Landscape Blog: <https://blogs.k-state.edu/turf/>
- K-State Turf and Landscape Website: www.ksu.edu/turf
- Twitter: @KSUTURF
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KSUTurf>
- K-State Turf and Landscape Website: www.ksu.edu/turf

The website offers information on undergraduate education at K-State, extension articles, research reports, and much more.

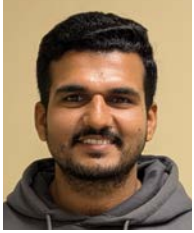
Backyard Garden Update



Flowers nearly ready to harvest in the BYG Cutting Garden.

Johnson County Extension Master Gardeners officially started their 2025 growing year with their first Work Day on Wednesday, March 19. 2025 marks the 20th Anniversary for the Backyard Demonstration Garden, so stay tuned for details about a celebrations being planned for August 20 and September 6 in the Backyard Garden. Production in the BYG is in full swing as of the end of May with more than 500 pounds of spring produce (lettuces, leafy greens, asparagus, radishes, spring onions, broccoli, and strawberries) and cut flower bouquets already donated to three local food pantries.

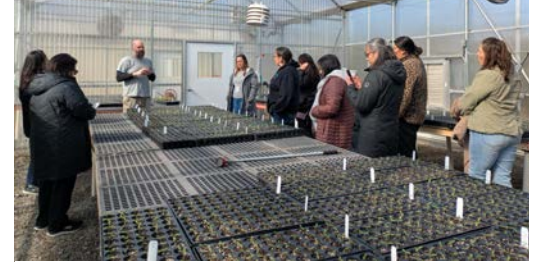
OHREC Update



Shubham Kumar

OHREC welcomes new graduate student, Shubham Kumar, who began in the Spring 2025 semester. Shubham is a Master's student in Horticulture and Natural Resources at the K-State Olathe Campus and a Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Ravneet Sandhu. His research projects involve fruit production and post-harvest quality.

On February 6, OHREC welcomed visitors from the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Extension Master Gardeners and Laura Phillips, Meadowlark Extension District Horticulture Agent for a tour the greenhouse and to learn about our current tomato grafting and research projects.



PBPN EMGs learn about greenhouse operations from Dr. Rivard.



2025 Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Field Day will be from 4-7 p.m., Monday, August 25 at OHREC. Watch the OHREC web site (<https://www.k-state.edu/orec>) and social media (Instagram: @kstateohrec Facebook: KState OHREC) for more details.

K-STATE

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