

THE ROOSTER

Educator gets ginned up for state fair

Consultant illustrates cotton processing

Abby Oliver
Scholastic Press Corps

People use cotton in common household items, such as clothing, plastics and soaps. Educators, like Rex Friesen, want to make sure individuals are aware of these cotton products and the processes used to create them.

Friesen works as a crop consultant for Southern Kansas Cotton Growers. He also serves as a public relations adviser, and gives presentations about the processing in cotton. Friesen showed his exhibit at the Kansas State Fair in the Domestic Arts Building.

Friesen first encountered cotton as a child, and later worked in cotton fields.

"My hometown, San Joaquin Valley (Calif.), is where I first met cotton," Friesen said. "My mom is who introduced me to the crop, when we went to chop weeds in the cotton field as kids."

Friesen found the crop to be fascinating and his interest in the cotton business continued as a young adult.

"While I was in high school, I received a job at a USD cotton research station just out of where I lived," he said. "I researched all different aspects of cotton and ended up working there for at least five summers."

Although he is not originally from Kansas, Friesen visited often as a kid and was familiar with the agriculture.



Rex Friesen demonstrates the cotton ginning process in the Domestic Arts Building. Due to improvement in equipment and climate changes, the cotton acreage in Kansas has skyrocketed 40 percent since 2016. This has inspired the gins in Kansas to look at increasing in size. After this explosion in acres we've been having, our gins in Anthony and Winfield both are going to have to double our capacity to fit more of the cotton that is being brought in," Friesen said. Photos by Abby Oliver.

"My parents are from Kansas and so is my wife," Friesen said. "I told her if there were ever any jobs available in the Kansas cotton business, that we would go. So here we are and I've been working at Southern Kansas Cotton Growers ever since."

"I guess in my mind, I think of myself not as a consultant but as an educator."

— Rex Friesen

Friesen presents "Field to Fiber" to audiences in various events, like the Kansas State Fair. In his exhibit, he explains how complex cotton is compared to other crops in Kansas, and what he looks for in an

ideal crop.

"While examining cotton, consultants look for 6 main characteristics: fiber color, length, strength, maturity, uniformity and the amount of foreign material," Friesen said. "The first, and most important, step of examining is seeing how clean it is."

He believes his presentations as one the most important things he can do.

"I love giving these presentations. I guess in my mind, I think of myself not as a consultant but as an educator," Friesen said. "I want people to understand what's involved in the process of cotton and the crop itself. It's all important and I really believe that these are fascinating plants."



Friesen stands behind a young and mature cotton plant.

FIND YOUR FUN

-  U.S. dollar bills consist of 1/3 cotton and 1/3 linen.
-  Cotton seed oil can be used as a high grade cooking oil and feed for dairy cows.
-  Cotton contains a natural chemical that repels insects.

New 'moo-thers' give birth in exhibit



Children admire a 3-day-old Jersey calf born during fair week at the Animal Birthing Center. Although the mothers are sent home, calves stay for the rest of the fair. Photos by Kendyl Bolinder.

FIND YOUR FUN



Shipley H. admires newborn sheep at the birthing center. She said her favorite animals are piglets, although all of the little babies are cute.

Birthing Center puts miracle of life on display

Emma Frey, Kendyl Bolinder
Scholastic Press Corps

The Birthing Center at the Kansas State Fair draws in hundreds of excited visitors every year hoping to witness the miracle of life.

Veterinarian professors and students from the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine staff the exhibit.

Preparation for the Birthing Center starts long before the fair. Livestock arrive a week before opening day, all from local farmers and ranchers. Staff rotates in new cows after giving birth at the fairgrounds to increase the chances of a birth every day.

As of September 14, the 2018 fair has witnessed the



Dr. Chuck Dodd uses Bessie, the simulation cow, to explain how to pull a calf from its mother. He demonstrated the process for the Cheney FFA group so they could teach children throughout the day.

birth of 10 piglets, six lambs and seven calves, with three or four more calves expected.

Dr. Chuck Dodd, K-State Director of Outreach, has been a Vet since 1992. This is his first year attending the Birthing Center as a professor since he was a resident. Dodd said he enjoys his job work-

ing with FFA members and students and watching them get inspired. "For some of them it's their first time assisting in births. They get excited and the rest of the day they're walking on air," said Dodd.

Vet students Kay McKinnon, Allie Schmidtberger and Karen Letteny are staffing the Birthing

Center for the first time.

"I've always had a big medical interest. I love animals so when I got to college I just wanted to work with animals in some capacity," McKinnon said.

To prepare for upcoming births, the vet students make sure to keep a close eye on the expecting livestock and examine them regularly to make sure everything is running smoothly.

The main thing that the vets want visitors to take away from this exhibit is a better understanding of where food comes from and how livestock are taken care of. People often express concern for the calves and their welfare after birth, as they are often separated from the mother.

Dodd hopes to remind visitors that the farmers do care about the welfare and health of their livestock and our food. For instance, milk is brought back daily to bottle feed the calves and their environment is left as natural as possible.

Keeping a lost art alive

FIND YOUR FUN



Jeannine Goertz demonstrates how to paint the first layer a rose on a piece of china. It requires an even coat before being fired and painted again to add shading and detail. Photos by Kaytlyn Meseke.

Presenters hope to hook fair goers on a new hobby

Eleanor Badeker, Kaytlyn Meseke
Scholastic Press Corps

At the Kansas State Fair, two women work to keep the art of china painting alive.

Jeannine Goertz of Hutchinson has been painting for 18 years, and Labina Schroeder of Goessel has been painting for 10 years.

Both were drawn into china painting when they caught sight of others practicing the trade. Schroeder was inspired by artists at the state fair.

"I would go to look at the china painting," Schroeder said, "and I just admired it so much." When she saw a sign-up sheet for classes, she jumped at the opportunity and has been painting ever since.

Goertz was first taught by the women who first showed her china painting until she became sick. "I had to find another teacher," Goertz said, "and there's not very many around. It seems like kind of a lost art in Kansas." Schroeder and Goertz agree that anyone



Labina Schroeder shows a zentangle design. Zentangle is an intricate pattern of lines and shapes. Schroeder prefers to follow instead of free handing. The pattern will burn off in the kiln leaving behind the painted design.

can get hooked on a new hobby.

Goertz and Schroeder annually attend conventions of state and rural china painters, as well as conventions in other states. It is an opportunity for them to meet more painters and discover new techniques, ideas and patterns.

Once a year, Goessel High School art students visit Schroeder and she teaches them how to paint china. "It's so much fun to have them come in," Schroeder said, "they just have such neat ideas."

By demonstrating their art to a wider audience, Goertz and Schroeder hope to spread awareness and interest in a little-known trade.

FIND YOUR FUN

The paint used for china is made from ground minerals and mixed with oil before being brushed onto the object being painted. If a mistake is made, it can easily be wiped away. After a light, even coat of a small amount of paint, the china is fired in a kiln at about 1,360 degrees Fahrenheit.

After being fired, another coat is painted on for shading and detail and the process is repeated.

I had the most fun at the fair...

"... eating the fried food."

— Maclin Stubbs, Hutchinson



"... visiting the exhibits."

— Sherry Smith, Wichita



"... eating the funnel cakes."

— Connie Bowan, Newton



"... eating the nachos."

— Alana Maldonan, Madison Carlin, Buhler



"... riding the horses."

— Jubilee Hill, Wichita



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Lumberjacks go ax to ax



Lumberjack Zach Ray competes to cut a log with a modified Stihl MS 660 chain saw in an event called “the hot saw.” Ray has been competing professionally for four years. His favorite events are “the dangerous ones,” such as climbing and chopping. Photos by Kaytlyn Meseke.

Performers use competition to teach history

Eleanor Badeker, Kaytlyn Meseke
Scholastic Press Corps

At the Timberworks Lumberjack show, half of the crowd cheers and the other boos as two men furiously saw at logs.

Each event is accompanied by a piece of lumberjack history. After a season’s work, lumberjacks would traditionally have competitions between logging camps to see which had superior workers. Timberworks lumberjacks travel all over the world to recreate these competitions, adding chain saws and humor to the mix.

The show is a fierce rivalry between two opponents, but is also lighthearted and interjected with moments of comedy. Events performed in the show include chopping and throwing with a traditional ax, speed carving with the modern chain saw, speed climbing, log rolling and the carving of an odd-looking rabbit.

Logan Aldean from Frederic, Wis., has been competing in lumberjack shows for five years. Aldean was drawn to

the sport because he thought it looked cool and would be a good challenge. His favorite event is the speed climb, which is a race up to the top of a 45-foot pole and back down. The speed climbing event still resembles the gear that traditional lumberjacks would have used.

“Safety first, but sometimes you have to risk it to get the biscuit.”

— Zach Ray

Zach Ray, another Wisconsin native, grew up watching the Lumberjack World Championships in his hometown of Hayward. “Going to watch that as a kid,” Ray said, “I thought it was so cool. I just wanted to be involved too, and I took the opportunity when it came along.”

Learning to compete as lumberjack takes many hours of strenuous training, and has the potential for both minor and serious injury.

“You kind of get bumps and bruises every single day,” Aldean said. To competitive lumberjacks, the risk is just another part of the job. “Safety first,” Ray said, “but sometimes you have to risk it to get the biscuit.”



Lumberjack Logan Aldean climbs a 45-foot pole during a competition. “I have trained with a lot of guys who have done it for a long time, a lot of the pro guys that you see on the professional circuit. It takes years to get proficient, you just have to focus on one event at a time,” Aldean said.