

Asian Longhorned Tick identified in Kansas

TOPEKA – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) are alerting the public to the first known occurrence of the Asian longhorned tick (ALHT), *Haemaphysalis longicornis*, in Kansas. KDHE identified the ALHT after it was found on a dog in Franklin County last week.

ALHT is an exotic, invasive tick species that was first identified in the United States in New Jersey in 2017. Since then, it has spread westward across the U.S. and, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has now been documented in 21 states, with Kansas being the most recent (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/cattle/ticks/asian-longhorned/asian-longhorned-tick-what-you-need-know>).

“We have been monitoring the spread of the Asian longhorned tick, especially since it was confirmed in neighboring states,” Animal Health Commissioner Dr. Justin Smith said. “Now that it has been identified in Kansas, we have been in contact with accredited veterinarians across the state to remind them to be alert for this tick and to ensure they understand the risks.”

This prolific tick, which can reproduce without the need for a male tick, has both human and animal health implications. In 2019, an ALHT in Virginia was found to be infected with Bourbon virus, while Connecticut recently identified an ALHT infected with ehrlichiosis, both of which are tick-borne diseases that occur in Kansas but are currently transmitted by the Lone Star tick.

“We’re still learning about this tick and the ecologic role that it currently plays and may play in the future in terms of disease transmission to humans.” Dr. Erin Petro, KDHE State Public Health Veterinarian, said. “While the human health implications are uncertain, this tick has serious implications for animal health.”

The ALHT can cause extreme infestations on affected animals, sometimes leading to severe anemia or even exsanguination. Beyond the physical threat, the ALHT also transmits the cattle parasite *Theileria orientalis* Ikeda strain, which causes bovine theileriosis.

In 2024, KDHE piloted a program to create a passive tick surveillance network of veterinary clinics throughout the state. Through this program, participating clinics submit tick samples from animals

in their care to KDHE for identification. This program has been successful in providing information on where various ticks are found across the state and has been especially useful in under-surveyed areas. One of these partners submitted a routine sample which was later identified as ALHT by KDHE and confirmed by the USDA. In both humans and animals, tick bite prevention is key.

To reduce the risk of disease, follow these precautions:

- Be aware of where ticks are found and using preventive measures when in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas.
- Dress preventively by wearing long pants tucked into socks and shirt tucked into pants.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin.
- Use an EPA-approved repellent such as DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) when enjoying the outdoors or being in a tick habitat.
- After coming indoors, perform a thorough tick check, being sure to focus on the waistband, under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, back of knees, and in and around the hair.
- Check pets for ticks, especially around the tail, between the back legs, under the front legs, between the toes, in and around the ears, around the eyes, and under the collar.
- Shower soon after being in a tick habitat or engaging in outdoor activities. This will help remove any unattached ticks and identify any attached ticks.
- To remove attached ticks, use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick near the skin, and apply gentle traction straight outwards until the tick is removed.
- Help prevent tick-borne diseases and tick infestations on pets by consulting with your veterinarian on use of a veterinary-approved flea and tick preventative.
- More information on tick bite prevention and controlling ticks in your environment can be found at Preventing Tick Bites | Ticks | CDC.

For more information on the Asian longhorned tick including where it has been found in the US, visit the USDA Longhorned Tick Story Map at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/cattle/ticks/asian-longhorned/asian-longhorned-tick-what-you-need-know>. To find more information on other ticks, their geographic distributions, and the diseases they transmit in Kansas, visit KDHE’s Tickborne Disease Data Stories at <https://maps.kdhe.state.ks.us/kstbdhome/>.



Asian longhorned ticks are light brown in color and are very small, often smaller than a sesame seed. They are difficult to detect, given their small size and quick movement. In fact, the adult female is only about the size of a pea when it is full of blood. Males are rare, and the female ticks can reproduce without a male. It only takes a single tick to create a population in a new location.



Opossums
Opossums are native to Kansas and found throughout the state in both urban and rural areas, where they act as opportunistic foragers that eat insects, garbage, and fruit. While they may seem alarming when they hiss, drool, or play dead, these behaviors are defense mechanisms and they are not aggressive unless provoked. Opossums are important to the ecosystem, consuming ticks and acting as natural scavengers. The main difference between an opossum and a possum is geographic: opossums are native to the Americas, while possums are native to Australasia (Australia and surrounding areas). Physically, opossums are larger with bare, scaly tails, while possums are smaller with thick, furry, prehensile tails.

Rural Development Group offers \$240,000 homes

City of Beloit offers \$30,000 down payment assistance

Rural Development Group from Clay Center is building eight new homes on 21st Street, north side of Beloit. The homes offer three (three) bedrooms, two (two) baths, a two (two) car garage, concrete reinforced storm shelter, and a total of 1,886 square feet, catering to the needs of families seeking quality housing options. The homes are built to meet the Kansas accessibility requirements and are priced at \$240,000 for individuals or families whose income falls within the moderate income guidelines outlined by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation. To enhance affordability, the City of Beloit is offering \$30,000 in down payment assistance, per home.

Purchasers of these homes will also

benefit from a transfer of the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Rebate. This strategic approach alleviates the property tax burden on the new homeowners during the initial five-year period and further addresses affordability.

Currently, two homes are sold, one is in the framing process and the other has the slab poured. Progress is being made daily.

Applications and more information can be found at <https://rural-devgroup.com/details> and <https://www.discovermitchellcounty.com/explore-live-grow/beloit-moderate-income-housing/> or contact the Listing agent, Chris Wagner, Associate Broker Wildlife Properties Land Company at 785-534-7184.

LMC Class 25 visits Ringneck Ranch, Tipton

TIPTON – Leadership Mitchell County (LMC) hosted their two-day orientation session at Ringneck Ranch in Tipton on September 17 & 18. This session focused on personal development, community leadership and was an introduction to the Kansas Leadership Center (KLC) competencies. The class started off with breakfast sponsored by S&S Drug.

Prior to the session, class members took the Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator from the Enneagram Institute. During the morning of the first day, they received their results and discussed how this impacts them as leaders and working with others. Guest speaker Luke Thornton, Vice President of Operations at Harper Industries, spoke on personal development to the class. He referenced the book Atomic Habits and challenged the class to do just one percent better than they are currently doing in different aspects of their lives.

After lunch, provided by Ringneck Ranch, the class dove into the KLC Competencies. These are Diagnose Situation, Intervene Skillfully, Manage Self and Energize Others. Each participant was then asked to come up with a personal challenge they would like to overcome throughout the year. They were also given time to start brainstorming their class project for the year.

Next, a Tipton Volunteerism panel and discussion was held. The members of this panel were Jarrod Shivers, Lexi Thomas, Doug Palen, Doug Schmitt and Gery Hake. The takeaway from this panel was that Tipton is able to thrive and keep going because of the volunteerism happening in the community. The class was then led on a tour by Avery Lacombe to get a look at the inner workings of

Ringneck Ranch. Dinner was sponsored by the Guaranty State Bank and Trust and Hilltop Lodge, and was served by members of LMC Class 24. After dinner, the class was joined by Lucille Heller, Curt Frasier and Debra Houghton. A special tribute was made to the late Keith Houghton and Debra for all their support behind the Leadership Mitchell County program. The class rounded off the first day with a sunset “Dog Wagon” ride to Clark’s Knob, one of the highest points in Mitchell County.

Day 2 began with breakfast served by Ringneck Ranch. Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu, from the Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics, spoke on community leadership. Next, Emily Benedick of the Solomon Valley Economic Development provided the class with Mitchell County demographics, taking a closer look at growing population trends. Julia Rabe of the Solomon Valley Community Foundation challenged the group to determine strengths and challenges of Mitchell County based on the perspective from different demographics. Julia also talked about turning your passion into your purpose and civic engagement. Lunch was served by Ringneck Ranch.

That afternoon, LMC Class 25 took a deeper look at the KLC Competencies and how they have been applied in their lives. The session ended with the participants taking a tour of downtown Tipton lead by Tracey Palen. These stops included Ellenz of Tipton, Blue Hill Hatchery and Game Birds, Tipton Museum, the Tipton Sports & Arts Complex and Great Plains Manufacturing. The next session of Leadership Mitchell County will be held on October 8, 2025.

CVA returns \$4.9 million to member-owner through equity redemptions

The Central Valley Ag (CVA) Board of Directors approved Revolving Fund Credit equity redemptions of \$4.9 million dollars for equity earned in 2013. Year Earned redemption payments and the amount redeemed is based upon the performance of the cooperative.

Redeemed equity may be qualified or non-qualified, which will be indicated on the check stub. Qualified revolving equity will be nontaxable in the 2025 tax year, while non-qualified will be taxable. CVA is grateful for the loyalty of its member-owners and is appreciative of the opportunity to share its success.


“As a cooperative, we are proud to fulfill our commitment to returning value to our member-owners,” said Nic McCarthy, CEO of CVA, “By distributing equity, we not only honor the contributions of our members, but also strengthen our cooperative’s foundation for future growth and shared success. Your trust and investment continue to drive us forward, ensuring the long term prosperity of both our members and the communities we serve.”

As an owner of CVA, a member’s

business is returned in the form of cash patronage or reinvested into the cooperative as equity. That equity is then used to strengthen and improve the co-op’s ability to serve its members. When the cooperative performs well, the board may vote to issue equity redemptions, providing cash back as a return on the member’s investment in the cooperative.

When combined with the expected patronage for the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2025, which is set to be paid out in November 2025, CVA will have returned more than \$170 million to its patrons over the past 10 years. The investments made on behalf of its members, along with their continued utilization, have proven successful. CVA values the ongoing support and business of its member-owners.

Central Valley Ag is a farmer-owned cooperative with locations in Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska. CVA is an innovative leader providing products and services in grain, agronomy, feed, and energy. You can find more information about Central Valley Ag by visiting www.cvacoop.com



CENTRAL VALLEY AG

\$4.9 MILLION PAID TO FARMERS

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2025 IS THE YEAR OF THE CO-OP.

Cooperatives Build a Better World. It's time to take YOUR SEAT.