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**Kansas State University
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Station and Cooperative
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Kansas State University, County Extension
Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S.
Department of Agriculture Cooperating.

K-State Research and Extension is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.

Communicating about a COVID-19 outbreak at a KSRE event

If a positive COVID-19 test can be connected to attendance of a program offered through your local KSRE unit, direct all health-related media questions to your local public-health officials. Do not share personal information about attendees. Don't speculate about other details. Don't guess. Don't assume. Don't provide anything other than the facts that you know.

COVID-19 is, first and foremost, a public health matter, thus any information about the spread of the novel coronavirus should be shared by the prevailing public health organization in your area. K-State Research and Extension personnel are not the public information officers for public health matters.

Example response

"We are cooperating with [NAME OF COUNTY] public health officials to clearly understand the situation as quickly as possible and protect the health and safety of our community. As a result, questions about the situation and investigation should be directed to the [LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH] office."

If asked about the setting of the meeting in question, provide the basics: time, date, place, number of attendees, site of meeting. Include information about all of the precautions you took in setting up the site, including details about mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing/sanitization, etc., as detailed in the document "[K-State Research and Extension Meetings and Event Guidance – COVID 19.](#)"

General Crisis Communication Tips

- Think of the audience's needs: Give the audience (the media and/or the general public) what they need to know in ways that will be helpful and understandable to them.
- Provide timely information simply, truthfully, directly, courteously: The longer you wait to share information, the more time people will have to speculate, share misinformation and become frustrated. Whatever you have to share, spell it out clearly so it can be fully understood. Always keep your cool when fielding questions.
- Know that it's OK to say you don't have all of the answers: If you don't have information sufficient to answer a question, admit it. Again, in the case of COVID-19 questions, redirect questions to local public health officials.