



UNITED TO GROW
FAMILY AGRICULTURE

May/June 2013

KANSAS KONTACT

**JUNE 7: KANSAS CITY TOUR OF EPA, GIPSA,
BOARD OF TRADE AND MORE. DETAILS ON PAGE 3**

Co-op Workshop focuses on local food



Vincent Amanor-Boadu, an ag economics professor at K-State, explains the economics of producing and selling local food. The Workshop was held in the Klinefelter Barn at Highland Community College's Farm near Hiawatha.

By Lauren Clary

Part one of Food Hubs and Co-ops: How local family farms can feed our communities, Establishing an Online Food Cooperative, was held April 6 in Hiawatha. The workshop provided a look at food co-ops and local food in general.

“A Cooperative is a tool that helps us reach a goal. It is a business that is owned and controlled by the people who use it. It provides services to its members and has a beneficial impact in the community,”

Bob Mailander, former Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Co-op Director, said. “Doing together what we cannot do alone!”

Darryl Birkenfeld, with Ogallala Commons, explained how his community in the Texas panhandle created enthusiasm about local food. They created and posted weekly to a blog (localllano.wordpress.com) and Facebook page, called Local Llano. The Facebook page and email lists were used to promote the site.

Birkenfeld said the blog is

about local food: what can be grown in the area, gardening tips, recipes, stories about local growers, and canning/preserving.

“Our society is changing how we look at food,” Birkenfeld said. “People have forgotten how to make food, and they want to learn how.”

Birkenfeld noted that to have a flourishing Foodshed, you have to engage youth. Local Llano hosts education events for high school students about how they can come home.

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Workshop from Page 1

Ogallala Commons offers Community Internships for college students in their hometowns, and several have been centered around local food, Birkenfeld said.

Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu, an ag economics professor at K-State, referenced some research projects he has been a part of about consumers purchasing local food.

“Consumers like local food, because it’s fresher, tastes better, and they’d rather support small farmers, but when it gets time to purchase the product they are not willing to pay extra,” Amanor-Boadu said.

Local food consumption is growing, Amanor-Boadu said, by an average of 5.3 percent per year per household. He contributed it to an increasing consumer knowledge about food and their health.

Amanor-Boadu suggested to create a value proposition when starting a local food business. Ask yourself “who is the customer?”, “what do they want?” and “how do I make it so compelling they can’t ignore me?”

“Make it so clear that you switch them,” Amanor-Boadu said. “Their needs have to line up with your needs.”

“As long as you achieve success, then it’s a good thing,” Amanor-Boadu said. “Success can be a profit or an applause.”

Representatives from two food co-ops in the region shared their experiences: Kim Barker, with the Oklahoma Food Co-op, and Chris Schmidt and Chris Sramek, with the High Plains Food Co-op. The two cooperatives have very similar operating procedures.

The two co-ops ordering and delivery system is the same. Consumers submit online orders, the producers have set points to drop off the orders,

the products are then taken to consumer pick up points.

Oklahoma has 40 collection sites and delivers to the Tulsa and Oklahoma City areas. High Plains has two collection sites in Kansas and a few more in Colorado, and delivers to Denver, Colo area.

Both co-ops allow members to receive ‘co-op credit’ after volunteering on delivery day. Barker said some volunteers need the money, others just want to help.

Barker shared some advice for anyone thinking about starting a co-op. He suggested recruiting board members that know something about the products. If they don’t be sure to educate them. Also to “demand integrity from producers and board members, don’t tolerate anything else,” Barker said.

He said to demand good financial reports from the beginning. “You need to know what’s going on every month,” Barker said.

To keep the co-op out of trouble and help producer members, “someone needs to know all the rules and regulations for food sales,” Barker said.

Last, Barker stressed paying attention to your customers, and to make sure you’re speaking the same language.

Schmidt said one of High Plains’ advantages has been modeling after Oklahoma. “We learned what not to do from their mistakes,” he said.

Sramek said High Plains has recently applied for grants from Know Your Farmer (USDA) and a Specialty Crop grant to help expand the Co-op. Before it expands, they’re conducting a feasibility study of marketing, distribution, organizational development and capacity.

High Plains has turned an otherwise boring annual meeting into a marketing opportunity, by having the producers provide product samples for

Cooperatives

as presented by Bob Mailander

8 Steps to Start a Co-op

1. Hold Organizational Meeting
2. Conduct a Feasibility Study
3. Hold a meeting with potential members
4. Prepare a business plan
5. Filing Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
6. Secure financing
7. Recruit members
8. Begin Operations

Keys to Success

- no margin, no mission
- develop an exit strategy
- plan for “hidden bummer factor”
- maintain effective and continuous communication

attendees. This gives producer members an opportunity to market their products directly to the consumer.

Schmidt said High Plains has a strict producer member application process. A review committee makes sure that the applicant shares their values, that they are transparent and then conducts a farm visit.

Jeff Downing, Midwest Agency manager, discussed insurance, including product liability, for farmers selling direct to consumers. “If you are not properly covered, it could result in the loss of your farm,” he said. “Be sure to talk with your agent, and make sure you have coverage for everything.”

Downing said the insurance company will evaluate your risk, including food prep and handling. He brought up that you “lose control” of your product when you have a retailer sell it or a restaurant purchases your product and then prepares it improperly.

During the wrap up, Dan Nagengast, owner of Seeds from Italy, said “it’s remarkable how much local food has grown over the last 20 years. There is a lot of progress to make these kinds of things happen, and I see it continuing.”

Summer Tours in KC and Larned

By Nick Levendofsky

Tour of Kansas City to provide inside look at behind the scenes agriculture

“We’re going to Kansas City, Kansas City here we come...” Ok, so the lyrics may be a little off, but Kansas Farmers Union is going to Kansas City on June 7, where we’ll tour USDA’s GIPSA National Grain Center, the Kansas City Board of Trade, and EPA Region 7 Science and Technology Center.

Starting at 9 a.m. we’ll tour the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s GIPSA National Grain Center facility and observe some of the laboratory work.

Following the GIPSA tour, we’ll break for lunch, and then make our way to the Kansas City Board of Trade where we’ll view a short film and tour the trading floor.

CME Group, Inc., the world’s largest futures exchange, agreed on Oct. 17 to buy the Kansas City exchange for \$126 million. CME plans to expand futures offerings in wheat on its Chicago trading floor on

July 1 after closing the Kansas City Board of Trade.

The last day of open-outcry trading in the Kansas City futures pit is set for June 28. Don’t pass up this opportunity to see trading history as it comes to a close in Kansas City.

We’ll end our trek by visiting the Environmental Protection Agency’s Region 7 Science and Technology Center, also known as the Kansas City Science and Technology Center (KCSTC).

The Center is one of 10 EPA regional laboratories throughout the country that provide monitoring, analytical support, and data assessments.

In the mid-1990s, EPA realized that affective implementation of the Kansas City laboratory’s mission was no longer feasible in its existing location, which it had occupied for 30 years. In deciding to construct and occupy a new laboratory building, EPA incorporated lessons it learned when successfully designing and building its Region 7 headquarters office building in 1999. That project showcased many green features and strategies that could be in-

corporated in the construction and operation of the regional lab.

More information about the Region 7 green office building project can be found at www.epa.gov/region7/p2/offt/heshelf.

Please RSVP by May 31 by emailing kfu.nick@gmail.com or calling (785) 527-0941. At least one tour stop will require us to turn names in ahead of time, and the number in our group will also determine the number of tour guides needed.

Tour of Dominican Sisters’ farm, Larned tour, stargazing

On August 10, we invite all KFU members and guests to join us for a tour of Heartland Farm, a registered agritourism operation situated on an 80 acre homestead near Pawnee Rock.

Heartland Farm, a ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, is a Christian community committed to working for the healing and care of the Earth and its inhabitants. As

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Calendar of Events

June 7: Kansas City Tour of EPA Region 7, GIPSA Grain Center, Board of Trade. See page 3. 785-527-0941.

June 3-9: Hemp History Week. hemphistoryweek.com

June 12-13: American Agriculture Movement Reunion. See page 6. agriculture-history.org/AAM-reunion.php

August 10-11: Heartland Farm Tour near Pawnee Rock. More details to come. See page 4.

October 12-13: Mother Earth News Fair in Lawrence. motherearthnews.com/fair

January 3-4, 2014: KFU Annual Convention in Topeka

PRESIDENT'S REPORT BY DONN TESKE

Politics suck!

The National Farmers Union board of directors held an extended board meeting conference call on Sunday, May 5. We had to make a decision by 5 p.m. that day on whether or not to sign onto an agreement reached between the conservation groups and all of the major farm and commodity groups in regard to conservation compliance and payment limitations on crop insurance.

The agreement is that all signed-on parties support conservation compliance tied to crop insurance, but ALSO that all parties agree not to pursue payment limits on crop insurance in this farm bill.

This really put Farmers Union between a rock and a hard place. Our policy supports both but payment limits are probably more important to our organization than the conservation compliance is.

The kicker is several points:

-If we do not sign onto the letter we will be alienating our conservation allies.

-Senate leadership is really pressuring us to sign on.

-There is no possibility in the dynamics of Congress right now for payment limits on

crop insurance to actually happen in this farm bill anyhow.

-Most importantly, with everyone but us already signed onto the agreement even if NFU doesn't sign-on or attempts to block it the agreement is going to be included in the upcoming farm bill legislation either way.

Even though it is a written agreement it is a fluid piece and there will be negotiations as the farm bill is developed, if we are not signed onto the letter of agreement we will not be able to participate in future negotiations in this part of the farm bill. This point was very significant to me.

For these reasons I voted yes to sign onto the letter of agreement. The motion passed overwhelmingly.

I hated to do it, I don't think this version of the Farm Bill will pass in the near future and Farmers Union is going to end up with a black eye for signing onto an agreement that we will not push for payment limits on crop insurance this farm bill.

During the Senate Ag Committees work on the Farm Bill they passed out of committee on the May 13, Senator



President Teske meets Finn Kramer, the son of KFU's Office Manager Callie Kramer, who was born on April 18.

Roberts was passionate about not tying conservation compliance to crop insurance.

During one of his tirades he made the comment that "we" do not want or need conservation compliance tied to crop insurance. I found this amusing considering pretty well everybody signed the letter of agreement supporting it.

I had to wonder who "we" consisted of in Senator Roberts' statement. (I guess it's a good thing we signed onto the letter of agreement, if we would have opposed it I'm afraid Senator Roberts might have had a heart attack if he

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Kansas Kontakt

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OFFICERS: Donn Teske (dteske@bluevalley.net), President; Lavern Potuzak, Vice President. Herb Bartel, Treasurer. Callie Kramer, Secretary.

Board of Directors

| | | | |
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| | David Heiens, Abilene | | Herb Bartel, Hillsboro |
| | Chris Schmidt, Oberlin | | Jason Schmidt, Newton |

Tour from Page 3

their website states, “members of the community are committed to exploring and living the principles of community, simple living, nonviolence, justice and peace, and the nurturing of all God’s creation.”

Starting at 10 a.m., we’ll tour the farm, where we’ll enjoy ample space for hiking, strolling, meditating, or walking the labyrinth.

Spiritual companioning, experimental art, and educational tours are also available, as well as the purchase of organic produce in season.

Visitors are also welcome to browse through the gift shop.

Another unique draw for visitors are the alpacas. Their

gentle, humming ways, beauty, wonderful fleece, and inquisitive nature have “added value” to the farm.

Following other local tours, such as Ft. Larned Historical Site, Santa Fe Trail Center Museum, and the Cheyenne Bottoms Wetland Wildlife Center, we’ll return to Heartland Farm at 7 p.m. for their Stargazing Event which includes a cookout and relaxing to live music. Guests are invited to spread their blankets and bring lawn chairs to watch the night sky with all of its surprises.

Guests may camp or stay in the guest houses—or they can head for home when they’re tired. Cost for the evening event is \$15 per family of 4; over-nighters can share a cookout farm breakfast the next morning for \$15 a family

(or \$5 each).

Guesthouse accommodations are extra. **Please make your own reservations** by contacting Heartland Farm at (620) 923-4585. The address is 1049 CR 390 Pawnee Rock, KS 67567 and the farm’s website is: heartlandfarm-ks.org.

Stick around on Sunday and we may get the opportunity to visit numerous limestone churches such as Cathedral of the Plains in Victoria, and we may even swing down and visit the City of Greensburg to observe the community’s growth following a devastating tornado in May 2007.

These portions of the tour are still in the planning stages, so check our website: www.kansasfarmersunion.org for more information as the date gets closer.

President from Page 4

actually fought for the same issue as Farmers Union once.)

In February we had an executive NFU board meeting in DC. Afterwards I had the opportunity to walk the Hill. Our head of Government Relations (fancy name for lobbyist isn’t it?), Chandler Goule, Oklahoma Farmers Union president Terry Detrick and I made up a team.

We met personally in separate meetings with Congressman Lucas (House Ag Committee Chairman) and his staff, Congressman Peterson (House Ag Committee Ranking member), Congresswoman Pelosi (Democrat leader of the House), Senator Moran’s staff, Senator Cochran’s (Ranking member Senate Ag Committee) staff, and the House Democratic Whip’s (Congressman Hoyer) staff.

All of these meetings were

to try and figure out how we might work a Farm Bill through Congress this year.

The meetings were very engaged and I learned a lot, but there was a lot of frustration too, especially in the Whip’s office as we broke down the dynamics of just what a challenge it is going to be in this era to try and work anything through Congress bi-partisan.

I saw no signs that the dynamics are there to move a farm bill forward in the immediate future and I seriously doubt if our current efforts will be successful this push.

This was the first time in all my years of walking the Hill to hear statements like “maybe it’s time to repeal the Farm Act?” and “there are concerns that efforts are being made to separate the nutrition program from the Farm Program!”

If that would happen the Farm Program would be dead. In Senator Dole’s wisdom he knew the future would not have the rural votes to keep a

Farm Program intact. He was right.

But with the House’s version of the Farm Bill the proposed cuts to the nutrition program might very well induce the nutrition folks to fight for a separation, after all, what do they need the Farm Program for?

This was one of the best and informative Hill visits I have ever participated in, but GEEZ! Somebody needs to slap some sense into those nuts out there.

As Dr. Flinchbaugh told me, “we need a Harry Truman, I wonder what Harry would say about both parties today. He would give them both hell!”

You can find the current Farm Bill stuff as it happens at our website, kansasfarmerunion.org or call the office and get on our email list if you aren’t already.

Take care, hope the wheat survives the freeze and hope we all get the moisture we need.

American Ag Movement Tractorcade

By Lauren Clary

On June 12-13 the American Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock, Texas is holding a Reunion of American Agriculture Movement participants and families.

According to the Museum, “in partnership with the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech and numerous volunteers, the two day reunion will allow participants to reminisce while their memories are preserved on film and audio recordings.”

For more Reunion info and registration, visit kansafarmersunion.org/calendar.html.

With this great event coming up, Kansas Farmers Union decided to highlight the tractorcades and AAM.

According to aaminc.org, “the American Agriculture Movement (AAM) was born in the fall of 1977 out of desperation. Congress had just enacted another farm bill that insured four more years of prices paid to farmers below their cost of production. In other word, every time a farmer produced and sold a commodity, he or she went a little further in debt and lost a little more equity in their land and equipment.”

In December 1977 the first tractorcades were held at state capitals, including Topeka. The DC Tractorcade was held in February 1979.

Since I wasn't alive at the time of the tractorcades, I didn't know much about it. I thoroughly enjoyed researching and talking with people about AAM!

As I gathered information for this article, I asked several people if they were involved. It was fun to hear the different takes on it!

I heard that Vernon Deines' tractor was taken from him in DC and it never made it back

to Kansas! The Deines' drove a 4020 John Deere out to DC.

Donn Teske told me that, “in the blizzard Vernon was pulling stuck people out all over the place and everybody was very appreciative. Then the police came and arrested him and confiscated his tractor!”

“Vernon often spoke of that event and he took great pride in stating that ‘Farmers Union insurance had to buy me another 4020 because the cops took mine in DC. I bet that tractor is still around there somewhere.’”

I chatted with KFU member David Heiens of Abilene. He went to Topeka and spent a month in Washington DC.

While he was there, the group visited representatives from every state and protested on the mall. They even offered tractor rides on the weekends and attended a supper and dance in Virginia.

He was in the group that was barricaded in the mall. He said the City finally let them out to clear the snow.

Heiens said he protested with a group of WWII veterans, and “we just did what they told us to do.”

“Protesting kind of opens up your eyes. It was bizarre, but it was quite an experience,” Heiens said.

Heiens said Washington DC is used to protestors, but the farmers were a lot different.

“The police brought dogs, and were frustrated because farmers weren't afraid of dogs.”

“We accomplished awareness,” Heiens said. “Did we do any good? I don't know if anyone knows for sure. I like to



Larry Matlack of Burrton stands in his tractor during the 1979 Tractorcade.

think we did some good.”

I was also able to talk with Larry Matlack, the current AAM President.

His first involvement with AAM was a blockade at Dillon's warehouse in Hutchinson in 1977, where 50 tractors blocked the entrance for 2 to 3 hours.

“We ended up with some sort of agreement with them for a certain number of hours of shut down in observance of the agriculture strike and in support of the farmers,” Matlack said.

Matlack and his brother drove a tractor (Spirit of '76 Case 1570) and support vehicle with the South Central Kansas group on the 17 day trip to Washington DC.

“We called ours the I-70 route,” Matlack said. “As near as I could tell there was about 1,500 tractors, and about the same number of support vehicles. It stretched out 10-12 miles long.”

(Heiens said he was also in the I-70 route)

Matlack said their group ended up parking near an intersection at the USDA building. Every day police came by and threatened them. After a week they moved on, once they ran out of pamphlets.

“In the end, we spent seven

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BARBER COUNTY RANCH TOUR

By Mary Howell

On May 11, 63 people journeyed west of Medicine Lodge in Barber County to the Alexander Ranch. The weather was a warm spring day accompanied with a steady wind. The red soil peeking out of the bright green grass provided the beautiful landscape that felt like scenery from a western movie.

Due to the long very cool winter and spring, the cool and warm season grasses are late growing this year. Tour participants were treated to indoor presentations and two trips out to pasture and cattle.

Discussion focused on range management, fencing, water development, tree clearing, stocking rates, livestock management and wildlife. Speakers for the day were ranchers Ted Alexander and son Brian, NRCS Specialists David Kraft, Dwayne Rice and Dusty Tacha.

Ted's grandfather H.W Skinner settled the ranch about 100 years ago. The ranch always took in cattle, never owning their own. The ranch was put in a trust in 1968 and Ted took over the ranch in 1984. Ted describes his ranch back then as an overgrazed, under-utilized, cedar forest ranch. He bought a tree saw and spent several years cutting a lot of trees. He then built some ponds and installed cross fencing.

His goal was to implement managed rotational grazing, moving away from the "Columbus Style" grazing system where one turns the cattle out in the spring in one big pasture and at the end of the grazing season goes back and discovers them.

In 1988 Ted participated in the David Pratt Ranching for Profit seminars. As a result of the class Ted developed the

Drought Plan that he makes ranch decisions by as well as a Transition Plan for Brian returning to the ranch.

In 1997 Dwayne Rice visited Ted's ranch and encouraged him to add more paddocks, graze faster and rest the grass for longer periods of time.

For 12 years Ted managed the ranch with only the help of his dog. In 2006 his son Brian returned to the ranch to transition to be the next generation of the family operation. They still take in cattle during the summer.

At the same time Brian returned to join the operation lightning struck and a major wildfire took a huge strip of the central portion of the ranch rotation out of production. Two years of recovery followed the fire. The ranch is now dealing with the third year of drought.

They strive for their grazing to simulate the Native American/Bison Grazing System. Big herds of bison moved thru the country then moved on allowing the grass to rest and re-grow for long periods of time.

The animals moved through the country at different times of the year so, therefore, their plan makes sure that the rotation in the various grazing cells is also during different seasons. This keeps the system in a state of change allowing all of the native plant species to go through full life cycles and encourage them to thrive.

Now utilizing the drought plan the grass gets grazed fast with a bigger group of animals taking off 40 percent of the forage. The animals are then



moved and the grass in that cell will be rested and not be grazed again for at least a year.

Ted takes in cattle on the dollars per head per day basis, not rate of gain. His contract allows for the cattle to be modified according to drought and grazing conditions.

David Kraft and Dwayne Rice presented focusing on management for the ongoing drought that we are experiencing. Ranchers need to set benchmarks to know where to begin to manage for the long term.

They encouraged ranchers to go places where they can learn ways to enhance their ranch management.

Ranchers should not feel that because they have been in the business for years they should know what they need to know. Networking with other ranchers and learning from each other provides very valuable information.

With this drought people are realizing that they have to reduce stock numbers. There are ways to improve even in a drought to move past the survival mode. How the plant is treated now effects future production. Normal and average tend to drive how decisions

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KFU joins coalition focused on developing Midwest Food Hub projects

By Mercedes Taylor-Puckett

Kansas Farmers Union recently participated in a gathering of organizations exploring the development of local food hubs in Kansas and Missouri.

The coalition's priorities include sharing information on individual projects, identifying possible areas of collaboration, and drawing on each other's knowledge and expertise.

A food hub can be broadly defined as activity that promotes the aggregation, marketing and distribution of local food.

KFU recognizes that individual communities will have different needs and opportunities when it comes to increasing the production, sale and consumption of local food and so there isn't a one size fits all food hub model.

KFU's current food hub activity focuses on education and networking. Our Food Hubs and Co-ops series kicked-off last month and will resume this fall with a focus on diverse models for food hubs.

Farmers Union advocates cooperative ownership of food hubs, retaining profits within the family farm sector and improving farm viability.

We welcome opportunities to work with communities, organizations and farmers to pursue local and regional food hubs.

KFU is particularly interested in collaborating with producers to develop networks that support education and sharing on production, food safety, value-added processing, and marketing issues.



Amazing Grazing Project Funded

by Mercedes Taylor-Puckett

AUGUST 2013

Range Plan & Ranch Drought Plan

David Kraft, Dwayne Rice & Doug Spencer

Developing a Ranch Plan

Maps and Farm Information
Resource Inventory
Setting Goals and Objectives
Planning Appropriate Actions
Creating a Strategic Plan

Developing a Drought Plan for Your Ranch

Examining Ranch Vision & Objectives
Taking Inventory
Identifying Critical Dates & Conditions
Monitoring Resources
Developing Strategies
Implementing & Evaluating Your Plan

Presented in partnership with NRCS Kansas

SEPTEMBER 2013

Livestock Water and Electric Fencing

Mark Green

Water Development for Serious Graziers

Livestock water requirements
Water Sources: Wells, streams, springs & ponds
Siting water for improved grazing distribution
Permanent and portable tanks
Above and below ground pipeline

Fencing for Serious Graziers

Pros and cons of various electric fence construction materials
Permanent & temporary fencing
Installation techniques

Demonstration

Corner post installation

Presented in partnership with NRCS Kansas/Missouri

Short Grass Prairie Grazing Basics and Research

Keith Harmony & John Jaeger

Hays

Perennial Cool-Season Grasses for Grazing in Western Kansas
Stockpiled Native Rangeland for Winter Grazing
Distillers Grains Supplementation for Late Season Stocker Production on Native Rangeland
Precipitation Effects on Animal Production and Forage Yield from Native Rangelands
Early Weaning of Calves as a Drought Management Strategy
Results of the Early Weaned Calf Performance Studies
Tour stockpiled forages & cattle at KSU Ag Research Center-Hays
Presented in partnership with K-State Research and Extension

Kansas Farmers Union (KFU) is pleased to announce it has received a grant from the North Central Risk Management Education Center.

KFU will use these funds to support Kansas livestock producers challenged by rising input costs, intensifying drought conditions and increasing land prices.

Amazing Grazing programming includes a conference, six workshops and two field days across the state. The proj-

ect will tap both Kansas experts and nationally-known educators to assist producers in enhancing grazing management.

More than 300 graziers are expected to participate in events covering diverse topics such as range and drought planning, low-stress livestock handling, improved soil health and forage development.

Visit the Amazing Grazing blog for info, event details or to sign-up for the e-news:

kansasgraziers.blogspot.com

The grant is a collaboration with the Kansas Graziers Association (KGA), a grassroots producer organization formed in 2000 to support Kansas ranchers with educational activities including workshops, tours and networking opportunities. "The beauty of this group is the way in which members share their experiences and wisdom with each other—the good, the bad, and the different," explains Mary Howell, KGA Board Secretary and KFU Member Specialist.

"We're extremely excited to organize and offer this high quality programming," states Howell, who will serve as Project Director. "The upcoming year of activities are open to anyone involved in the ranching and livestock industry and will be very worthwhile! Stay tuned for dates and details."

Kudos go to Cal Adams, who worked with Mary, to survey more than 200 graziers in 2012. The results directed us to the most needed education areas and documented producer demand for the proposed programming, a major requirement for funding.

"I'm really happy that KFU can offer the livestock producers of Kansas availability to these great resources, especially as drought management affects our management decisions more all the time," says Donn Teske, KFU President.

Amazing Grazing project collaborators include Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition, Nation Resources Conservation Service, Kansas State Research and Extension, and Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops.

The North Central Risk Management Education Center, supported by USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, awards grants through a competitive application and review process.

OCTOBER 2013

How Animal Selection and Grazing Management Improves Productivity, Profitability and Personal Satisfaction!

Jim Gerrish

Two Locations TBD

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Grazing Basics 101 | What Really Matters in Grazing Management |
| | How to Build a Better Solar Panel |
| | The Dollars and Sense of Grazing |
| | Planning a Low-Labor Operation |
| | Using Winter Annual Pastures and Swath Grazing to Extend Grazing |
| Cattle Management 101 | Managing Beef Cow Costs |
| | The Functional Cow |
| | The Cow's Job Description |
| | Why the Cow Should Work for the Ranch and Not the Other Way Around |
| | Cow Size, Feed Efficiency and Genetics |
| | Breed Differences on Various Factors like Flies, Pinkeye, Udder Trouble etc. |
| | Selecting for Disposition |
| | When Should You be Calving? |
| Setting Goals for Your Operation | |

To Hay or Not to Hay: *Why you should be out of the hay business!*

NOVEMBER 2013

Fall Forage Tour: Converting Sunlight, Soil and Water into Beef

Dale Strickler

Courtland

Is it possible to graze 12 months a year and eliminate feeding hay?

What carrying capacity and weaning weights can be achieved with optimum management?

Is it possible to have more production and profit from grazing crops with animals rather than harvesting the grain?

Tour of grazing system and a wide variety of forages.

Low-Stress Livestock Handling on the Ranch

Lynn Locatelli, DVM

Indoor Workshop

Cattle Behavior

Basic Principles and Herd Movement Techniques

Cow Calf Production

Stocker, Backgrounder and Feedlot Production

Cattle Handling Facility: Design and Use

Low-Stress Livestock Handling Field Day ~ Spring 2014 in Olsburg

SENATE RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZES IVAN WYATT

Senate Resolution No. 1756: A Resolution memorializing the life of Ivan Wyatt

Whereas, Ivan Wyatt served as Vice President of Kansas Farmers Union, the state's oldest active general agriculture organization, from 1973-1981, served as State President from 1981-2000, and passed away on February 25, 2013, at the age of 83; and

Whereas, Ivan was instrumental in organizing and chartering the Chase County Farmers Union, serving as county president for a number of years. He also served on the Board of Directors of National Farmers Union during his tenure as State President; and

Whereas, During his 50 years of involvement in Kansas Farmers Union, Ivan

worked relentlessly to protect family farms and ranches and develop and champion farmer-owned cooperatives. In Topeka, President Wyatt worked on strengthening corporate farming laws to protect family farms from corporate takeover; and

Whereas, Ivan was committed to issues KFU members stood for in policy. He enjoyed being engaged at the state legislature, as well as on the national level. Ivan worked to help build links and bridges, and he made sure Kansas' elected officials were never left thinking there was only one side of an issue; and

Whereas, During his career in Farmers Union, Ivan made hundreds of friends and was well-respected in the agriculture industry where he met agriculture leaders from

across the U.S. and the world. Family farming was in his heart, and he worked persistently to ensure its success and future.

Whereas, Ivan leaves behind his daughters, Cheryl Leitnaker of Ottawa and Colette Freeman of Effingham, IL; six grandchildren and eight great grandchildren: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we memorialize the life of Ivan Wyatt and thank him for his service to the farmers, ranchers and rural communities of Kansas.

Senate Resolution No. 1756 was sponsored by Senator Anthony Hensley (of Topeka).

The full resolution will hang in the State Office in McPherson and will also be available at kansasfarmersunion.org.

Tractorcade from Page 6

weeks," Matlack said. "It's something that I wouldn't have traded the experience for anything, and certainly wouldn't have traded the people that I met. It's an experience that I think was needed and its time was there."

One thing Matlack noted he learned was the diversity of farming.

"You came in contact with, made friends in that tractorcade that remained a lifetime. And even though you had common goals that you worked very hard on together, you also learned how different and how independent every one of those were and you understand why its hard to get a single voice in agriculture," Matlack said.

I spoke with Lisa Ochs, President of the American Federation of Teachers - Kansas, who got her first taste

of activism through her family's involvement in AAM. They attended the Topeka Tractorcade.

"I remember it was a cold day and we were all bundled up and there were lots of tractors around," Ochs said. "I remember thinking, as a kid, wow there are a lot of people here and that it was exciting!"

Through AAM, Ochs' father drove his grain truck to Missouri to help Wayne Cryts get his grain back from an elevator which declared bankruptcy.

"It was an interesting time. My mom had four girls at home and she wasn't working at the time, and not knowing what's going to happen: will he come back? will he end up in jail?" Ochs said. "They ended up fighting for what they felt was right, and I believed that they did the right thing then, and I would hope that people would stand together and help each other if that was the case now."

"It's amazing how organized farmers were back then, because this was before cell phones and everything," Ochs said.

I found that the Kinsley Library recorded area AAM farmers' stories. I spent hours on their website! kinsleylibrary.info/Tractorcade.htm.

One of the Kinsley interviews was with Jerry Stapleton, a member of Edwards County Farmers Union.

"We had hope and belief at that time that the powers that be would see the good sense of all that we had to say and the situation would get taken care of with no problem, but that was not to be," Stapleton said. "We continued with our strike meetings and decided to start using our tractors to gain attention, to rally the troops, to let the Kansas representatives know that there were problems out here on the farm, and that they needed to pay attention to it."



2012 Farm Bill

On May 14, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry passed the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013 (2013 Farm Bill) out of committee by a 15-5 vote. The bill ends direct payments and offers disaster assistance measures while cutting \$4 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

As of press time, the Senate farm bill has been introduced on the Senate floor (S.954) and is expected to be voted on in late May. To view the bill, please visit: <http://www.ag.senate.gov/issues/farm-bill>.

The following day, the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture followed suit by passing its version of a farm bill, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 out of committee by a 36-10 vote. The \$940 billion bill is expected on the House floor in June. Hot topics during markup included dairy policy reforms, cuts to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, catfish inspection and interstate commerce.

Regarding safety net provisions, NFU supported language included in the respective Senate and House farm bill commodity titles that will provide protections to family farmers when disasters strike and during times of long-term price collapse. The Senate's version included target price language (as opposed to last year's failed farm bill), albeit at low and unbalanced levels, while the House bill put better price protection in place in its version of the

farm bill.

While these steps in both the House and Senate represent progress toward providing a fiscally responsible farm safety net directed to family farmers and ranchers, there is much work to be done. President Johnson and staff members will continue to talk to members of Congress in both the House and the Senate before the current, one-year extension expires on Sept. 30, 2013.

For the latest information on NFU and the Farm Bill, please visit www.NFU.org/farmbill.

COOL

May was a busy month of activities for Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL).

On May 2, NFU, along with other supporters of the COOL law, hosted a press conference highlighting the regulatory changes made to COOL by USDA and the importance to consumers, farmers and ranchers, and the general public. Speakers were NFU President Roger Johnson; Patty Lovera, assistant director, Food & Water Watch; Lori Wallach, director, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch; and Jon Wooster, president, U.S. Cattlemen's Association.

NFU also sent a letter in early May to House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Collin Peterson, asking him to defend against potential farm bill provisions or amendments that would make legislative changes to the COOL law, or undo the producer protections provided by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

On May 15, there was an

amendment submitted that would eliminate COOL requirements for livestock and poultry in the House farm bill markup, but it was withdrawn. We anticipate more discussion and a battle on the House floor on this issue.

COOL was passed as a part of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 and amended in the 2008 Farm Bill, going into effect in 2008, with regulations being put forward in 2009.

The WTO recently required the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to adjust its rules requiring American retailers to label certain foods with the country (or countries) in which the animals are born, raised, or slaughtered. The WTO said that while the United States can require meat labeling, current U.S. COOL rules do not meet WTO standards. The WTO has given the United States until May 23, 2013 to bring its COOL rules into compliance.

For more information on COOL, please visit www.NFU.org/policy-nfu/cool.

Become a FFAN

Family Farmer Advocacy Network (FFAN) is a group of grassroots advocates who will lead Farmers Union members in grassroots activities across the country.

To become a FFAN, fill out the form at SurveyMonkey.com/s/96XG2RM. NFU staff will contact FFAN members occasionally with requests to contact lawmakers about specific legislative proposals to educate them about how the legislation will affect family farmers and ranchers.

KANSAS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By **Nick Levendofsky**

A few months ago, we shared with you a list of bills we have been watching in Topeka. Below is an update on what has happened at this point in time (May 15). Keep in mind, the Legislature could still be in session or the session could be over by the time you receive this update. For a more up-to-date version, go to www.kfucapitolbeat.com.

Bills KFU was opposed to:

SB191 & HB2404 – Corporate Ag repeal bill. The House Ag Committee referred their bill on to the Kansas Judicial Council which will hold its review sometime this summer. The Senate Natural Resources Committee referred their bill to an interim committee that is yet to be appointed. That committee will also review the bill this summer. Bottom line: These bills will be back next session. Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Pork Association, Kansas Livestock Association, and many individuals want to see one of these bills passed and signed by Gov. Brownback, and they vehemently want the county option removed. Kansas Farmers Union is strongly opposed to the removal of the county option. Stay tuned for more information on this issue as time goes on.

SB82 – RPS Bill: Would have delayed certain percentage targets of the RPS requirement which would mean instead of an RPS of 20 percent by 2020, it would be an RPS of 20 percent by 2024. The bill would also give authority to the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) to delay a utility's RPS requirement if there was a "showing of good cause." UPDATE: failed in emergency final action on Feb. 28 with a vote of 17-23.

HB2241 – RPS Bill: Would completely get rid of the 20 percent target by 2020, and change the law to a 15 percent requirement by 2018. UPDATE: essentially "died in committee," was not voted on, so it never made it to the House floor.

HB2188 – Concerned non-profits who bring in over \$350 in public funds would have to publish receipts and expenditures online. Geared more toward municipalities and chambers of commerce, but unless the wording is changed, it would affect any non-profit that brings in over \$350. UPDATE: Last hearing was held Feb. 12, so it died in committee.

HB2366 – Concerning the use of public funds to promote or implement sustainable development. UPDATE: Referred to Committee on

Energy & Environment on 2/18. Died in committee.

HB2090 & SB87– Establishes the Kansas equine education and promotion board. (Funded by up-front assessment fee {tax} on horse feed sold). UPDATE: House Bill was referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources and died in committee. Senate Bill was referred to Committee on Agriculture, which recommended bill be passed as amended on Feb. 26. No action has been taken on the Senate floor at this time, but it will likely pass.

Bills KFU watched:

SB 168 -This bill expands the 'right to farm' in Kansas. It amends law relating to the protection of farmland and agricultural activities from certain nuisance actions. The bill creates a new section setting out compensatory damages that may be awarded to a claimant from a nuisance action against farmland used primarily for agricultural activity. Compensatory damages are limited to the reduction in the fair market value of the claimant's property caused by such nuisance.

This expansion of 'right to farm' allows the farmer the right to reasonably expand acreage, animal units or change agricultural activities as long as all applicable local, state, and federal environmental codes, resolutions, laws and regulations are complied with. This expanded right can be sold or be inherited. Signed into law by Gov. Brownback on April 17.

HB 2292 – AN ACT concerning agriculture; relating to agricultural activities; protection of farmland and agricultural activities from certain nuisance actions. UPDATE: Bill died in committee.

HB 2362 – Written by KLA, in House Ag Committee, basically eviscerates the Endangered Species Act. UPDATE: Hearing held Feb. 20, bill died in committee.

HB 2051 – Concerning water, relating to limited transfer permits, exempts certain dams (CAFOs) from jurisdiction; enacts penalties for lack of dam inspection, removes the inspection responsibility from KDA, who will now recommend private inspectors. This bill would allow stockpiling and selling under a temporary permit 1 to 4 million gallons of water rights (mostly for fracking.) UPDATE: Passed House 117-2, referred to Senate Natural Resources Committee which offered a substitute bill that

Continued on Page 13

Legislation from Page 12

passed the Senate 39-1. Non-concurred with amendments, conference committee appointed, motion to accede adopted.

SB123 & 124 - This bill creates or amends sections of the Kansas' antitrust law - Kansas Restraint of Trade Act (KRTA). It creates a new section declaring the purpose of the new section and the amendments to existing sections is to clarify and reduce uncertainty in the application of the KRTA.

KRTA damages sections are amended or repealed to eliminate the ability to recover full consideration damages and clarify that a plaintiff may recover treble the actual damages sustained. This bill contains a retroactivity clause applying the new law and amendments. UPDATE: 123 is dead in committee, 124 is on General Orders in the Senate.

HB2224 & 2225 - Basically the same bills as SB123 & 124, restraint of trade act. UPDATE: Both bills are dead in committee.

HB2295 - Concerns KDHE; relates to water pollution control permit system with a focus on CAFOs. Bill died in committee.

SB147 - Relates to permits, fees, and liability requirements on anhydrous tanks. Bill died in committee.

SB120 - KANSAS FARMERS' MARKET PROMOTION ACT This bill establishes a central, free, and voluntary registration of farmers' market in Kansas under KDA's newly resurrected "From the Land of Kansas" program. It will be used to encourage and promote farmers' markets across Kansas.

The bill also requires the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture to maintain a list of all registered entities for dissemination to the public. KDA will be the registration authority for all farmers' markets in Kansas, and will be able to apply for any federal, state, local, private grants or funding opportunities that will assist in the creation or promotion of farmers' markets in Kansas. The bill also provides limited liability for farmers' markets. UPDATE: Passed both Senate and House. Enrolled and presented to Governor for signature April 8.

HB 2365 - Bill relating to conservation easements. Died in committee.

HB 2207 - CONFINED ANIMAL FEEDING FACILITY REGULATION; Sub. for HB 2207 This bill continues the requirement that any Confined Animal Feeding Facility (CAFO) with an animal unit capacity of 300 or more must register with the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), and pay a fee of \$25. The registration will be

required to indicate the prescribed tract land where the proposed construction will occur and that the separation distances for the CAFO comply with the requirements listed in the bill.

The bill requires KDHE to identify any significant water pollution potential or separation distance violations within 30 days of receiving the registration. There are provisions provided to waive separation distances. The assumption is that the CAFO will be constructed within 18 months but an additional 18 months can be granted. UPDATE: On General Orders in Senate.

HB 2171 - Establish agreed local management areas. (Ground water) Died in committee.

HB 2363 - This bill establishes limited water transfer permits up to 4 million gallons for one year. It exempts land-based sand and gravel permits or aggregate mining operations utilizing wash water ponds from certain KDHE rules and regulations.

It also modifies the statutory definition of a 'dam'. It exempts hazard Class A dams proposed for construction or modification from the requirement to acquire a permit or written consent unless the Chief Engineer determines it is necessary for the protection of life or property. The bill establishes a new methodology for the application fee for a permit to construct, modify, or add to a water obstruction or to change or diminish the course, current, or cross section of a stream based on the watershed area. The bill amends law to allow county commissioners to clean and maintain the banks and channels of streams and watercourses.

Local Enhancement Management Area orders are added to the list of orders made by the Chief Engineer that are subject to review in accordance with the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act. UPDATE: Signed into law by Gov. Brownback on April 17.

HB 2321 - Standards for use of graywater (fracking) - Dead in committee.

HR 1711 - A Resolution opposing the black-footed ferret programmatic safe harbor agreement and environmental assessment. UPDATE: Adopted and enrolled Feb. 26.

HB 2201 - Deregulates AT&T from being a 'carrier of last resort' by becoming an electing carrier. The Kansas Corporation Commission will have no authority over minimum quality of service standards and statewide long distance price regulation for electing carriers. Electing carriers are no longer required to participate in the Kansas Lifeline Service Program. Thousands of rural consumers will be impacted by this deregulation bill. UPDATE: Signed by Gov. Brownback on April 17. Goes into effect July 1, 2013.

Corporate farming laws and Kansas politics

By **Donn Teske**

There isn't much left anymore in the laws of Kansas to prohibit corporate farming. In my memory they started whittling away at them back in the early '90s when Seaboard hog farms wanted to move into Kansas.

I wasn't involved with any farm organization at the time and I was operating a dairy but I knew that what happened would affect my future so I went down to Topeka and raised hell with a lot of other people too.

That was my first exposure to Kansas Farmers Union because they were in the middle of the fight.

Since then it seems they just keep coming at it and neutering most of the remaining laws. Last year they took away a large hunk when they greatly limited county commissioners options with decision making, in regards to outside ownership of corporate hogs or dairies moving into a county. There is already a feedlot exemption and several other exemptions that allow many other outside corporate operations into the state.

If I understand the Kansas laws correctly the only things left now, besides some minor stuff, is the prohibition of foreign ownership of Kansas land, and something called the "county option" that allows the residents of a county, if they can get 5 percent of the counties voters to sign a petition, to place on the ballot the question of whether to let outside ownership of corporate hogs or dairies to come into a county. This is only right.

Now, this administration, and especially Secretary of

Agriculture Rodman has made it a priority to eliminate what little remains in Kansas law to somewhat govern the influx of corporate ag into the state. I heard Secretary Rodman state that "Kansas is welcoming with open arms corporate agriculture."

They had all their ducks in a row and they were steamrolling SB191 through the legislative session with the Kansas Livestock Association, Kansas Pork Producers, and Kansas Farm Bureau passionately supporting the effort.

The Kansas Farmers Union, Kansas Cattlemen's Association, Kansas Rural Center, and Sierra Club submitted testimony opposing the effort.

The bill would have sailed through the legislature except it hit a snag. The bill, which should have been a one-pager but was eight pages, would have eliminated the "county option." During the Natural Resources Committee hearing, as they worked the bill, Senator Tyson introduced an amendment that would give the counties the right to decide for themselves, on a one-time shot, whether they wanted to be included in a pool welcoming corporate ag or if they did not. It wasn't much but it was better than nothing for the counties.

The Chairman of the Committee Senator Powell and all of the proponents went ballistic. They demanded that the elimination of the county option HAD to be a part of the bill to be passed through.

The Kansas Farm Bureau surprised me because their written policy explicitly supports the county option in regards to corporate agriculture.

When Senator Powell fig-

ured out he didn't have the votes needed to pass the bill on through if it included the elimination of the county option he chose not to bring it to a vote. They referred the bill to interim committees.

This isn't over. Corporate ag will be back next year out of interim committees in a more organized effort. It was so very, very close.

If one Senator had wavered Senator Powell would have had the votes to move the bill forward out of committee intact. One Senator!

Three Senators held their ground in the face of intense pressure, Senator Tyson from Parker, Senator Ostmeyer from Grinnell, and Senator Kerschen from Garden Plain. We owe a debt of thanks to these brave souls who did the right thing at the right time. (I heard through the rumor-mill at the Capital these three were pulled into the Governors office the night before the vote was to happen and grilled for hours to change their votes.)

Many farm operations in the state are set up as corporations, it's a useful tool for many and that's fine.

Kansas law as it is allows that to happen without any problem at all. But I have yet to be convinced that outside corporations, where the profits leave the state while competing with family farms, makes Kansas a better place to live for you or I.

How does allowing foreign ownership of our precious land make Kansas a better place to live for you or I?

Why did this administration make corporate agriculture such a priority issue this session?

Alexander Tour from Page 7

are made. Plants do not have a connection to the calendar. They grow in response to the environmental conditions at the time. Ranchers need to monitor the current conditions and make decisions based on the state of the plant's health.

As ranch managers we have to understand the cycles and we have to be in tune with what is happening on the

ground to manage for long term survival and success. A rancher can't make decisions on what he doesn't know. We have to evaluate what we have and where the ranch is, to effectively plan for now and the future. We can't graze what we can't grow!

Early on in his ranching career Ted was inspired by a quote from Leopold that said, "We will never be conservationists as long as we approach agriculture as production oriented."

We must address proper

conservation focusing on water quality, water quantity, and air quality. Ted's closing remarks at the tour were, "As managers, we need to look at our environment and determine what we can do to keep this range as healthy as we can to sustain wildlife and graze animals on it. This model is not production agriculture."

Education partners for the tour were NRCS, KGLC, Kansas SARE, KSCAAC, Kansas Farmers Union, Comanche Prairie Pool and Kansas Graziers Association.

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A portion of the gross income sales in Kansas comes back to Kansas Farmers Union to support your policies without any influence on what those policies should be.

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The Spring of 2013 was a cold one in Kansas. The state experienced several ice, sleet and snow storms in April and early May.

According to the National Weather Service, Salina's average low temperature in April is 43. This year it was 38.

For example, according to USDA NASS, "just under half of the crop had no freeze damage. As of May 13, the crop was 9 percent headed, 3 weeks behind 52 percent average."

The weather also affected spring planting. According to NASS May 13 report, "corn planting was 31 percent complete, behind a 73 percent average."

photos by Lauren Clary Left: Ice covers a wheat field in McPherson County on April 10.
Below: A wheat field in western McPherson County shows frost damage (taken May 15).



KFU President Donn Teske presents Linda Hessman, Director from Dodge City, with the Ruth Hirsch Award.

Linda has served on the KFU Board of Directors since 1995. She continues to serve Kansas Agriculture as a Farm Advocate and Mediator.

"It gives me great pride for Kansas Farmers Union to honor Linda with the Ruth Hirsch award. Linda has given many years of great service representing Kansas Farmers Union and especially our members on the KFU board," Teske said. "Her passion for rural family and farming advocacy has kept her running across the state of Kansas defending the less fortunate. I respect her immensely and she's a dear friend."



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