



KFB Launches Excellence in Teaching Grants for Kansas Educators

The Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is offering *Excellence in Teaching Grants* to exemplary teachers who integrate agriculture into their curriculum.

Agriculture is an important part of everyone's life. Clothing, food, fuel, housing, medicine and much more are rooted in agriculture. Agriculture has no subject matter boundaries and can be a part of social studies, language arts, science, math, environmental education, art, music or in a combination of areas that effectively integrate key agricultural principles.

The Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is offering ten mini-grants of \$200 each to Kansas certified educators of Grades K-6 who are integrating agriculture into their classroom lessons. The grants can be

used to purchase supplies related to agricultural lessons or projects including but not limited to: garden equipment,



materials for hands-on activities, literature books and lab supplies.

"Teachers are dedicated to their students and their work," said John Shostak, director of the Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation. "The *Excellence in Teaching Grants* will encourage many teachers who often use their personal resources to enhance the learning experience and put together creative

agriculture projects."

Interested teachers should complete an entry form and include the information requested on a separate sheet in the order listed in the instructions. A printable copy of the application can be downloaded at kfb.org/foundation. Applications can be mailed or submitted via E-mail.

All entries must be post marked by June 30 for the first school semester. All applicants will be notified of the status of their grant application within four weeks of the funding deadlines. One half of the amount funded will be provided to start the project. The balance of the grant is payable upon submission of receipts and a final project report.

For additional information, contact John Shostak (785) 587-6608 or shostakj@kfb.org.



WE SMELL PROGRESS. Ellis County FB leader Lance Russell organized a huge turnout of FB members to support the renewal of the wastewater control permit at the KSU research feedlot south of Hays.

'A Teachable Moment'

One of the subtle nuances of population shifts are things rural residents take for granted, which may be new and different to city folk. Take what's happening in Hays, where in response to constituents, city fathers began asking questions about the aromas emanating from the K-State experiment station feedlot south of town. Ellis County Farm Bureau leader Lance Russell saw it as a "teachable moment."

"Nothing has changed, with respect to the research that's done at facilities like this one, except for the number of people who have moved back from the more urban areas to the rural area," he said. "They bring their city expectations to the country."

At Russell's urging, more than a hundred farmers and ranchers from

surrounding counties turned out for a public hearing Feb. 22 in Hays to show their support for the renewal of the KSU at Hays Research Center Livestock Permit.

"What is offensive to some who have complained about the odor is not offensive to many of us who also live in and around this community," Russell said. "In fact, we smell progress, innovation and scientific discovery."

Folks who move to rural areas know a good thing when they see it — that's why they move out to the country in the first place. But country living in Kansas sometimes comes with things like slow moving farm implements and the occasional aromatic feedlot — tools of the agricultural trade.



Landowners Rights Are Important, Says KFB and Kansas Legislature

The Kansas Legislature is in full swing and then some, with numerous issues being discussed and moved through both Chambers. At the top of the list is work by the Senate regarding eminent domain. At press time, Kansas Farm Bureau lobbyists have helped secure an agreement to offer a comprised bill regarding eminent domain that would require all land condemnation to be subjected to increased procedural action and compensation, with a scale based on length of ownership. The bill, called the Kansas Property Owner Protection Act, also explicitly prohibits the taking of agriculture land outside city limits, including grain-handling facilities, feedlots, farm homes and property where residences are adjacent to active farm ground.

Thank you to all Farm Bureau members who contacted their Senators regarding eminent domain by using KFB's Web-based legislative action program, CapWiz, at kfb.org. Those efforts need to continue so be sure to engage in CapWiz and call or E-mail your Senator and ask for support of the Kansas Property Owner Protection Act.

The House Select School Finance Committee discussed a plan to shift 12% of LOB dollars to a districts general fund (LOB dollars are currently reported in the Supplemental General Fund and not counted toward total state spending for education. State wide the LOB currently totals approximately \$600 million). That shift would result in a maximum of 8 mills that districts would be required to levy. The shift would also reduce to 15% for 2006-07 and 17% in 2007-08 the maximum LOB that any district would be allowed to approve.

Senate leaders introduced their finance plan on Thursday. The bi-partisan plan would provide \$480 million in new funds over three years, largely targeted to increased spending on base state aid per pupil, at-risk and special education students. The plan also creates over the three year period a 6% shift in LOB dollars to a state-wide funding structure that would result in a reduction in local option budget authority and potentially in local property taxes by equalizing the LOB over the entire state. KFB offered testimony in the Senate Education Committee last week in support of property tax relief concepts in the plan.

The effect of both the Senate and House LOB shift would be a reduction in

property tax payments in many districts across the state. The gain comes from shifting from a local revenue source to a statewide source, which spreads the tax over a larger number of property owners. Landowners should be cautious of efforts to shift LOB dollars that do not result in lowering the current cap on authorized LOBs. KFB supports efforts to reduce reliance on the LOB and local property taxes and will closely monitor both plans as they move forward.

The Kansas Senate unanimously passed SB 365, to eliminate the Kansas Estate Tax by January 1, 2010 and contains "use value" provisions for valuing land in estates until that time. KFB is optimistic the bill will receive similar treatment in the House.

KFB testified in the House and Senate Ag Committees on HB 2432, a measure that places limitations on liability for landowners who own land that is adjacent to rail trails.

"Kansas Farm Bureau supports limitations on liability for landowners adjacent to rail trails. To the extent HB 2432 provides modest additional protections against lawsuits from those that may be unfortunate or irresponsible in the use of trails, we urge your favorable consideration."

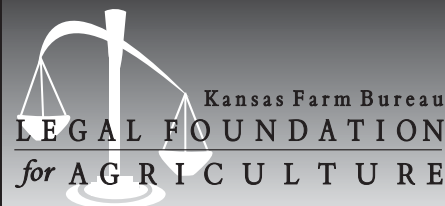
— Brad Harrelson,

KFB State Director of Governmental Relations

Farm Bureau also testified in the Senate Agriculture Committee in support of HB 2798, a measure to extend limits on landowner liability from lawsuits by individuals tampering with anhydrous ammonia for the purposes of producing methamphetamine or other illicit purposes.

KFB is monitoring SB 537, a measure heard in the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, that would prohibit the use of mercury ethyl-based preservatives such as Thimerosal, often used in multi-dose vials of veterinary vaccines. If passed, the measure would remove most veterinary vaccines from the Kansas market and result in significantly higher costs for the remaining vaccines. The bill would also restrict sales of over the counter eye-drops, nasal spray and flu vaccinations that contain the preservative theoretically linked to autism. KFB does not expect the bill to move forward.

KFB will testify in the Senate Tax Committee on SB 389, to provide tax credits for biofuel mixing facilities, and is monitoring SB 576, to provide clarification to the gas gathering statutes as they relate to the differences between pipeline facilities and gas gathering systems.



Sole Proprietorship: The Right Business Structure?

The most basic of all business legal structures is the sole proprietorship. For many operations the choice of becoming a sole proprietorship is the simplest of all business forms but is it the best?

A sole proprietorship is a one-person business that is not registered with the state as a limited liability company (LLC) or corporation. You don't have to do anything special or file any papers to set up a sole proprietorship. You simply create one just by going into business for yourself.

Legally, a sole proprietorship is inseparable from its owner. The business and the owner are one and the same. This means the owner of the business reports business income and losses on his/her personal tax return and is personally liable for any business-related obligations, such as debts and/or court judgments.

Advantages:

- ✓ Quicker Tax Preparation – Filing your taxes is generally easier than a corporation. The business is not taxed separately. The IRS calls this "pass-through" taxation.
- ✓ Lower Start-up costs – Limited capital is a reality for small business. The cost of setting up a corporation involves higher set up fees.
- ✓ Ease of Operation – Handling money for the business is easier than other legal business structures.

Disadvantages:

- ✓ Personally Liable – You will be personally liable for all debts and actions of the company. Unlike a corporation or LLC, your business doesn't exist as a separate legal entity.
- ✓ Loose Financial Controls – The lack of structure of a proprietorship won't require the production of minutes or financial statements like a corporation. The lack of accounting controls can result in the demise of your farming operation.

For more information, please call Terry Arthur, General Counsel at (785) 587-6614 or visit the KFB Legal Foundation Web page at kfb.org.

FARM FLASHES . . .

Kansas FB Members Featured on America's Heartland

■ *America's Heartland*, a new weekly public television series celebrating our nation's agriculture, will profile three Kansas-based segments:



Mike and Dee Martin's emu operation in Miami County; Linda Hubalek's buffalo ranch in McPherson County and a feature on 4-H, shot at the Kansas State Fair. In Kansas, *America's Heartland* airs on these broadcast channels:

- ✓ KPTS Wichita, Sundays at 2:00 p.m.
- ✓ KTWU Topeka, Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
- ✓ KOOD Bunker Hill, Fridays at 8:30 p.m.
- ✓ KSWK Lakin, Fridays at 8:30 p.m.
- ✓ KCPT Kansas City, Saturdays at 3:30 p.m.

Check your local cable or satellite listings for the appropriate channel in your area.

USDA Offers Energy Estimator for Nitrogen

■ Agriculture could save up to \$1.5 billion annually by improving nitrogen applications and USDA is offering a way to help farmers and ranchers identify potential nitrogen cost-savings. USDA's Energy Estimator for Nitrogen is a Web-based awareness tool to help manage major crops and commercial nitrogen fertilizer applications.

The Energy Estimator for Nitrogen estimates savings in nitrogen fertilizer applications to help farmers and ranchers make practical and sound decisions. This is the second tool USDA has developed as part of its overall energy strategy to mitigate the impacts of high energy costs and develop long-term solutions for agricultural producers.

Nitrogen fertilizer is one of the largest indirect uses of energy on an agricultural operation. Fertilizer accounts for 29 percent of agriculture's energy use, according to USDA research data.

For more info, go to usda.gov/energy.

KFB Selects Legislative and Congressional Fellows

■ Since 2000, the KFB Foundation has recognized four outstanding Farm Bureau members to be a part of their annual Legislative and Congressional Fellowship leadership program. The 2006 Legislative Fellows are Clint Blaes, Montgomery County, junior at KSU and Lucas Maddy, Norton County, senior at KSU. These two will spend one week in Topeka shadowing legislative leaders and learning the state's public policy process from KFB Governmental Relations staff.

The Congressional Fellows for 2006 are Meghan Mueseler, Sedgwick County, employed at Cargill Meat Solutions, Wichita, and Sarah Sexton, Dickinson County, who is a junior at KSU. Mueseler and Sexton will travel to Washington, D.C. in June to learn day-to-day Congressional activities and receive a close-up view of how the legislature works.

Fellowship Offers Overseas Agricultural Opportunity

■ FB members are encouraged to apply for the John J. McCloy Fellowship, an opportunity for young American and German leaders to enhance their careers and establish working relationships with their transatlantic counterparts. Each year, AFBF and the German Farm Organization nominate four candidates from each country to be considered for a 21-day agricultural tour. The tour will occur between Sept. 1 and Nov. 2, 2006.

Candidates are nominated by state FB presidents to AFBF President Bob Stallman. Nominees should be between 28 and 40 years of age, exhibit outstanding leadership qualifications, be engaged in production agriculture and can include state and county staff. The nomination should be accompanied by a one-page autobiography and cover letter.

Applications and questions about the process can be directed to Kerry Spencer at (785) 587-6160. Nominations must be submitted by March 23.

Agriculture Education Info Available on KFB Web site

■ Thanks to the efforts of KFB Safety and Ag Education staff, you can now educate



elementary-age and high school students about the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. New agriculture education coloring pages are available AT kfb.org. In addition, Capitol Experience Train-the-Trainer information is available on the KFB "Members Only" Web site. County FBs can access this info using their KFB Membership System login. Other FB members will need to create an account using their KFB membership number.

FSA to Host Meetings on Potential Office Closings

■ USDA's Farm Service Agency is conducting an independent local-level review of the efficiency and effectiveness of its offices. Attend one of these three meetings to offer your input.

- ✓ March 28, 1-4 p.m., Garden City, Plaza Inn, North Ballroom
- ✓ March 29, 1-4 p.m., Great Bend, Barton County Community College, Auditorium
- ✓ March 30, 12:30-3:30 p.m., Topeka, Kansas Museum of History

Kansas Farm Bureau CALENDAR

March 12-16 – County President's Trip to Washington, D.C.

March 13 – Beef Verification Solution (BVS) Meeting, Hutchinson

March 14-15 – Campaign Management Training Seminar, Manhattan

March 15 – BVS Meeting, Burlington

March 21 – WIBW Farm Profit Conference, BVS Meeting, Bern

March 21 – BVS Meeting, Paxico

March 22 – BVS Meeting, Sylvan Grove

March 23 – BVS Meeting, Sharon Springs

March 23 – BVS Meeting, Oakley

Brian Dunn Graduates from AFBF Leadership Program



Brian Dunn

Stafford County Farm Bureau member Brian Dunn is a new graduate of the Partners in Agricultural Leadership honors program. The class of 10 FB members from across the country recently completed their year-long study and are now the third class to complete the program. Dunn earned the right to participate in the class after he and his wife,

Carolyn, were named to the top five in the 2005 national Young Farmer and Rander Achievement Award competition.

The program was established as a partnership between Altria, through its Shared Solutions Agricultural Initiative program, and the American Farm Bureau Federation. It is designed to strengthen participants' leadership skills and put their abilities to work for the benefit of agriculture.



21 COUNTY FBs PONY UP. County Farm Bureaus in the 4th and 7th District of Farm Bureau have offered up serious dollars to support agriculture education. Thanks to financial contributions, totaling \$27,500, from 4th District counties: Butler, Chase, Chautauqua, Cowley, Elk, Greenwood, Harvey, Marion, Sedgwick and Sumner and 7th District counties: Barber, Barton, Comanche, Harper, Kingman, Kiowa, McPherson, Pratt, Reno, Rice and Stafford, an agriculture exhibit will be developed at Exploration Place, Wichita. The grand-opening of the Kansas agriculture exhibit will take place in approximately 18 months. Pictured is John Kuzmaul, Kingman County Farm Bureau, presenting a check to Exploration Place last week.



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Kansas Farm Bureau represents grassroots agriculture. Established in 1919, this non-profit advocacy organization supports farm families who earn their living in a changing industry.

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