

FBs celebrate Food Check-Out Week



Gray Co. FB gave away \$36 food baskets with more than 225 registering for the baskets.



Seward Co. FB board and collegiate members handed out free bread and two gift cards.



To celebrate Food Check-Out Week, Sedgwick Co. FB provided groceries to Ronald McDonald House.



Pratt Co. FB provided \$19.50 gift certificates to Dillon's and boxes of cereal were sold for 19 cents.

County Farm Bureaus celebrated Food Check-Out Week Feb. 3-9.

The events mark the time of year when the average American family has earned enough income to pay



for their family's annual food bill.

Food Check-Out Day originated in 1997 with Neosho County FB member and former KFB women's committee chair, Linda Reinhardt.



Terry Odle, Saline Co. (left), visits about carbon credits with KFB's Steve Swaffar in Salina. This meeting was held as part of several across Kansas to educate farmers and ranchers about AgraGate Climate Credits, a program that allows members to take advantage of carbon credits. Meetings continue through March. For more information contact Swaffar toll-free at (888) 811-0002, email swaffars@kfb.org or visit www.kfb.org.

KFB Calendar

March 2-8
Ag Safety Awareness Week

March 3
Wheat Quality Tour registration opens

March 9-13
County Presidents Trip to D.C.

March 16-22
Ag Week

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Farm Leader Letter is a publication of Kansas Farm Bureau. It is received in the homes of nearly 40,000 farmers and ranchers who are dedicated to agriculture and rural Kansas.

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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Farm Leader letter

A publication of Kansas Farm Bureau®

A farmer is not a trucker; state transportation regulators back down

Your messages, e-mails and engagement worked. The Kansas Corporation Commission no longer considers transportation from the farm field to the country elevator as interstate commerce, unless you actually cross a state line.

The KCC, which regulates transportation in Kansas, had sought to change that designation using the logic that eventually, that grain will be shipped from state to state. Doing so would have brought the farm truck under a host of new regulations that until now have been reserved only for commercial over-the-road truckers.

Kansas Farm Bureau engaged their Congressional and legislative friends and the result is farmers will be able to continue to operate their farm trucks as they have for decades without new, unwarranted regulation.

Because of the advocacy of your farm organization and others, the KCC has created new policy guidance and is currently reviewing the case law they had relied upon to change their initial interpretation. The bottom line – when it comes to the way farmers and ranchers operate and manage farm trucks, it's business as usual across Kansas.

Farmer/rancher members of Kansas Farm Bureau were instrumental in bringing this

issue to the attention of state lawmakers this winter, during KFB's Day at the Statehouse.

"Ever since farm trucks were invented, we've hauled grain from the farm to the elevator and it's worked great," said Kansas Sen. Steve Morris (Hugoton), who serves as president of the Senate.

KFB is also working closely with the Kansas Congressional delegation, including U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran (Kansas) to seek clarification of the underlying U.S. Department of Transportation intent.

"A farmer is a farmer, not a trucker," Moran said. "It is unrealistic to expect our producers to maintain the same standards as that of someone whose sole job responsibility is the transportation of goods throughout Kansas and America."

Kansas Farm Bureau farmer/rancher voting delegates at the American Farm Bureau Federation convention in New Orleans last month succeeded in moving a nationwide trucking regulation review to the top of the AFBF issues priority list.

KFB remains vigilant

- In Washington
- HR 3098
- US DOT clarification

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The Voice of Agriculture®

Action on power plants

Both chambers of the state legislature have supported a measure to make possible construction of two Sunflower Electric Power plants in Finney County. But in the Kansas House, numbers needed to override the governor's expected veto were not reached. The bill now moves to a joint House-Senate conference committee to iron out differences between the two.

Last fall, Kansas Department of Health & Environment Secretary Roderick Bremby turned down proposed air permits for the construction of new power plants, despite the fact that Sunflower met or exceeded all federal and state technical, scientific and citing requirements.

KFB's involved in an agriculture, business, industry and labor alliance seeking to promote environmentally sound pro-growth energy policies in Kansas.

Your immigration policy: enforce federal law

Some new legislation in Topeka attempts to deal with illegal immigration by unjustly hampering small business owners. The measures would penalize businesses by potentially revoking their state-granted business license for knowingly hiring illegal aliens.

Farm Bureau policy does not promote or condone the presence of undocumented or illegal aliens in the United States.

"Because of its complex and far-reaching nature, Farm Bureau members believe it's an issue best suited for debate and resolution at the federal level," said Terry Holdren, KFB's national policy director. "Federal law already contains severe penalties for those who would knowingly hire illegal aliens and those provisions should be enforced."

Farm Bureau believes the lack of enforcement of existing federal laws should not translate into an effort to place unnecessary burdens or responsibilities on legitimate businesses. Many state lawmakers agree.

Farm bill deadlock?

There appears to be more farm bill gridlock in Washington. This month House Ag Committee Chairman Colin Peterson and Ranking Member Bob Goodlatte proposed a 10 year bill that cuts funding to all titles and limits new spending to roughly \$6 billion over the '07 baseline.

The proposal has serious impacts on the Commodity Title where loan rates and target prices would remain at their current levels, direct payments would be eliminated in year 10 of the bill to achieve \$5.2 billion in savings, and \$3 billion in cuts to crop insurance would remain in the bill. While the proposal may appease the White House, reaction from Senators was swift, with some suggesting the best place for it was the trash can. The Senate suggested its own budget number of \$12 billion over the baseline.

In any case, the gridlock puts the farm bill in jeopardy with a March 15 expiration looming.

"A lot of the economy in the state of Kansas is generated by the small business person," said Sen. Carolyn McGinn (Sedgwick). "I don't think we want to unjustly punish them and give them a greater cost to just do business."

Farm Bureau will oppose sanctions that include suspension or revocation of a state business license as counterproductive – this type of penalty will shut down businesses.

Follow the issues

Farm Bureau continues to stand up for you in Topeka. Go to www.kfb.org, click on the Government heading and go to Bill Watch. Other issues include:

- Rural development
- Health care
- Property tax relief for seniors
- Irrigation transition
- Graduated drivers licenses
- Hunting sales tax

Farm flashes

Join us in Chicago

Join the KFB Futures Market Tour July 8-10, and visit the largest agricultural futures markets in the U.S. – the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and the Chicago Board of Trade. Tours include education seminars from market participants and regulators. For more information, contact Mark Nelson at (785) 587-6103. Members can register at www.kfb.org.

McCloy Fellowship

Applications are being accepted for the McCloy Fellowship in Agriculture, an exchange program for American and German farmers. Four fellows from each country swap countries for 21 days. For more information go to www.kfb.org.

Cattleman's Day at K-State

K-State's Cattleman's Day 2008 is March 7 in Weber Hall at K-State. World-renowned animal behavior specialist Temple Grandin will present *Animal Welfare From the Consumer Perspective*. Go to www.asi.ksu.edu for more information.

Federal disaster declaration

Sixty Kansas counties were declared a federal disaster area following extensive damage as a result of severe winter storms in mid December that produced heavy rain, ice, sleet and snow. The declaration provides federal assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for disaster relief and emergency assistance.

New educational presentations

Motivated county volunteers looking for educational presentations should log onto www.kfb.org/ageducation and click on "Do-It-Yourself Programs." Check out the six new topics ranging from soil to cheeseburgers.

Mineral rights, leases and royalties

Mike Irvin, KFB Legal Foundation, will speak from 7-10pm, March 5, at the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka on mineral rights, leases, and royalty issues that may impact your farming operation and your income. For more information, contact Shawnee Co. FB at (785) 273-7077.

Make safety a priority

Farm Bureaus across the state are making safety a priority through the Agricultural Safety Awareness Program (ASAP) March 2-8. *Growing Our Most Important Crop* reminds all farm and ranch

families to practice "tough love" when asked to allow children as extra riders on tractors, lawn mowers and all-terrain vehicles. For more information go to www.agsafetynow.com.

Symposium on beef cattle welfare

K-State's Beef Cattle Institute will provide a venue in which all stakeholders in beef cattle production can meet and discuss the many welfare-related topics concerning the raising, feeding and harvesting of beef cattle at the International Symposium on Beef Cattle Welfare May 28-30 at KFB state headquarters in Manhattan. For more information visit www.isbcw.beefcattleinstitute.org.

Women's Leadership Conference

County women's chairs or designees are encouraged to attend KFB's Women's Leadership Conference, *Planting Seeds to Harvest Leaders*. Registration opens Feb. 29 through your county FB office. For more information go to www.kfb.org and click on "KFB Women."



No to annexation

Landowners, including farmers and ranchers, continue to contest the city of Overland Park's attempt to annex 15 square miles on the southern portion of the city.

"It's too much too quick," says Tom Watson, PGA Senior golf pro and landowner. Watson is part of the coalition opposed to the city's effort. He further indicated landowners "are not being given an opportunity to vote on the proposal."

Norman Pishny, landowner and farmer, agrees with Watson, but stresses over 70 percent of the land to be annexed is devoted to agricultural use. Pishny says, "if the city is successful, farmers and ranchers will be adversely impacted in a relative short amount of time."

Jim Orr, the group's attorney, expressed his concern over the city's attempts to modify the municipal service's plan after the deadline had past. "The city is changing the rules to its benefit and to the detriment of the landowners," said Orr.

This month, Watson testified at a House committee meeting on a bill that would require a majority of rural residents living in the annexation area to affirm the vote before it could become part of the city.

KFB's Legal Foundation continues to provide assistance to Johnson County FB and its members.

Wowing at YF&R

Fifteen state Young Farmers & Ranchers members attended the national conference in Baltimore Feb. 15-18. Dalton Henry, K-State Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter, earned his way into the sweet 16 at the national collegiate discussion meet competition. The group placed first among all states in "most time donated" for American Farm Bureau's Harvest for All project donating 1,701 hours to food banks and programs to feed hungry Kansans.



Derek Sawyer, McPherson Co. (left), 7th District State YF&R representative, accepts a \$3,000 check on behalf of the group for placing first in "most time donated" in AFBF's Harvest for All project.

New member benefits

Farm Bureau members in Kansas have two new member benefits. The Sherwin-Williams discount program gives members a 20 percent discount on regular priced merchandise and 5 percent discount off sale priced items.



Members can also purchase EZ-Ranch Profit and Loss Herd Management Software at a discounted price. This low cost, user-friendly management software will save producers time and money when completing annual taxes and will create accurate, easy-to-read itemized reports for filing. KFB members receive 15 percent off by calling 1-888- EZRANCH. Visit www.ez-ranch.com for more information.

For a list of all KFB Member Benefits, visit www.kfb.org/memberbenefits.