

# Poster contest promotes safety

In an effort to reduce accidents by developing “safety-minded” youth, Kansas Farm Bureau has sponsored a Safety Poster Program for more than 45 years. Each year, thousands of youth in grades 1-6 participate statewide. Posters are judged at the county level with the first place poster from each of the three divisions submitted for judging at the state level.



Rebecca Reichel, Rush County

Seward Co. FB (right) participated in Farm Education Day April 17. Area preschool, kindergarten and first grade students saw tractors, animals and crops from area farms and ranches. More than 1,040 students and teachers attended. Seward Co. FB also presented Seward County Community College agriculture department a \$500 scholarship for an SCCC ag student in appreciation of all their assistance with Farm Education Day.



Reno County Farm Bureau (above) presented an Ag in the Classroom presentation on soils at Arlington Elementary School April 12. Seventh District YF&R Chair Derek Zongker explains no-till farming and how it prevents loss of soil to water runoff.

## KFB 2007 Safety Poster state award winners:

### 1st & 2nd Grade

- 1st: Alexis Peck, Lane Co.
- 2nd: Emma Stimatze, Stafford Co.
- 3rd: Sean Royer, Rush Co.

### 3rd & 4th Grade

- 1st: Kimberly Brown, Brown Co.
- 2nd: Rio Esquibel, Labette Co.
- 3rd: Brooke Wineinger, Greeley Co.

### 5th & 6th Grade

- 1st: Rebecca Reichel, Rush Co.
- 2nd: Tiffany Coomer, Elk Co.
- 3rd: Airyan Boyle, Doniphan Co.



## KFB Calendar

May 10-12

3i Farm Show, Garden City

May 15-16

FB Women's State Committee meeting

May 15

Century Farm and Farm Family of the Year applications due

May 21

KFB Foundations Invitational Golf Classic, Hutchinson

## Kansas Farm Bureau

P.O. Box 3500  
Manhattan, KS 66505

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### In this issue

✓ KFB pushes for tax relief for its farmer and rancher members

✓ Wheat damage from Easter freeze varies across the state

✓ Kansas youth showcase their safety-minded ideas

*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.

Editor: Meagan Cramer  
E-mail: [cramerm@kfb.org](mailto:cramerm@kfb.org)

# Farm Leader *letter*

A publication of Kansas Farm Bureau

## Tax relief for farmers and ranchers!

The tax burden on many Kansas farms and ranches will be eased because of votes taken by your elected lawmakers during the 2007 session of the state legislature.

The tax relief is right in line with Farm Bureau member-driven policy calling for restrained government spending and equitable taxes. Your tax bill will be lower, in large measure, because of the working relationships established with individual lawmakers by Farm Bureau members, your county and state leadership and your lobbyists.

The legislature this year passed a sweeping package of income, property and sales tax reductions. KFB played a critical role in the elimination of the Kansas Franchise Tax and in securing a consistent approach regarding sales taxes on farm equipment and machinery.

Beginning next year, the exemption for businesses subject to the franchise tax will rise to \$1 million of net worth from the current \$100,000. This means 16,000 small businesses in Kansas, including thousands of farms and ranches, will be free from this onerous tax. By the time of its complete phase-out in four years, the total savings to business will total \$135 million.

In addition, lawmakers exempted precision agriculture equipment from the state sales tax. This includes equipment that is either portable or installed on other machinery.

“Farm Bureau members should stand proud after the 2007 legislative session,” said Steve

Baccus, an Ottawa County farmer who serves as president of Kansas Farm Bureau. “The hard work of building relationships with our elected state lawmakers is paying off. Let’s keep it up!”

Lawmakers also enacted property and income tax relief aimed at easing the tax burden on older Kansans living on fixed incomes.

## The Value of Grassroots Political Action

Tax relief for farmers and ranchers, financial compensation for idling irrigated farmland, protecting landowners’ rights?

Farm Bureau members are affected by all manner of legislation at all levels. That’s why it’s so important we elect the people making those laws.

Your farm organization’s political advocacy fund – VOTE FBF – will take us to a new level of political recognition and enhance Kansas Farm Bureau’s influence in state and national politics. Only by actively participating in the political process at all levels, can we control our own destinies. Your involvement is critical to our success!

Join VOTE FBF today. Visit [www.kfb.org/votefbf](http://www.kfb.org/votefbf).



Voters Organized To Elect Farm Bureau Friends

**FB**  
KANSAS FARM BUREAU  
The Voice of Agriculture®

## Damage to wheat a mixed bag across the state

What's being labeled the Easter freeze of '07 hammered most of the eastern two-thirds of Kansas while the western third may have escaped. Heavy damage occurred in central and eastern Kansas because the wheat was growing rapidly, lush with moisture and ahead of schedule – in some cases the winter crop had developed two joints already. Heavy cloud cover and not as cold temperatures helped stave off freeze in western Kansas.

McPherson and Marion counties appear to be hit the hardest. Here, growth of the main tillers was killed outright by the frost and severe lodging has occurred. Even in fields in this part of the state where the crop remains standing the end result may be the same.

Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service reported only 27 percent of the state's winter wheat crop escaped freeze damage, and the remaining wheat suffered far more than had been feared.

The agency estimated freeze damage as 29 percent severe, 24 percent moderate and 20 percent light. The new condition report pegged 41 percent of this season's winter wheat as being in poor to very poor. Conditions for the rest of this year's wheat: 25 percent fair, 24 percent good and 10 percent excellent.

## Water right transition meetings in May

The Kansas State Conservation Commission will conduct two public hearings to consider the approval and adoption of proposed administrative regulations to implement the Water Right Transition Assistance Program (WTAP). The hearings will be held May 1 at the Norton Public Library and May 2 at the Ida Long Goodman Memorial Library in St. John. Both meetings will begin at 7 p.m.

WTAP is a program supported by Farm Bureau and approved during the 2006 legislative session. This program provides for a state-managed water right retirement pilot program.



*Evidence of freeze damage to winter wheat plant is growth of tertiary tillers. According to Jim Shroyer, Kansas State University agronomist, farmers need to look at tillers and make a decision. If a producer has approximately 30 percent of the tillers intact the crop may go either way. If a producer has 50 percent or more of the stems still surviving, Shroyer suggests keeping the crop.*

## KS Senators ask for tax fairness

U.S. Senators Sam Brownback (KS), Byron Dorgan (ND) and co-sponsor Pat Roberts (KS) introduced the Conservation Reserve Program Tax Fairness Act, to abolish federal self-employment taxation of rental payments on land in the Conservation Reserve Program. The IRS has proposed requiring active and retired farmers to pay self-employment taxes on CRP payments that could be retroactively applied to previous tax years.

### KFB Gator™ Giveaway Promotion

Register online for a chance to win a 2007 John Deere Gator



Go to [www.kfb.org](http://www.kfb.org), click on the Gator™ Giveaway icon

*No purchase necessary. You must be 18 years old to enter. One entry per email address. Winners will be drawn at random at the end of the promotion period.*

## Farm flashes

### Value added? USDA offers grants

The USDA announced the availability of \$19.5 million to help independent agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Examples include conversion to organic production, processing of raw commodities to a finished product, and the conversion of farm crops to create renewable energy sources. The deadline for applications is May 16. An application guide and other materials may be obtained at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm).

### Par-tee at the Dunes

The 2007 KFB Foundations Invitational Golf Classic is May 21 at Prairie Dunes Country Club in Hutchinson. To register, go to [www.kfb.org](http://www.kfb.org). Proceeds from the tournament help the KFB Foundations provide funding for programs that improve the quality of life in Kansas through leadership development, agriculture education, information and research.



### Private data accessible by the public

According to USDA officials, private identification information on 38,700 people was accessible to the public on a government Web site. Those individuals are being notified by USDA about the security breach and will be offered free credit monitoring services. The 38,700 people were awarded funds through the Farm Service Agency or Rural Development programs. The information was removed from the Web site shortly after the potential exposure was detected. According to USDA, there is no evidence that the posted information has been misused. Any USDA funding recipient with questions may call (800) FED-INFO.

### FSA extends DCP deadline

Farmers have a few more months to sign up for the FSA's Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, or DCP. The deadline, previously June 1, has been moved to Aug. 3. The extension has been attributed to the performance of the Farm Service Agency's Web-based computer system. For more information contact your local county FSA office.

### Country Stampede discount

Farm Bureau members in Kansas can receive \$20-\$90 discounts on Country Stampede tickets. Coupon code 6423 can be redeemed by calling (800) 795-8091, and must be used before May 14. Country Stampede is June 21-24 at Tuttle Creek State Park in Manhattan. For event details go to [www.countrystampede.com](http://www.countrystampede.com). For questions regarding the discount call KFB Member Services at (800) 406-3053 ext. 6666.



### Kansas in bioeconomy consortium

Kansas is among 12 north central states with the potential to produce up to two-thirds of the nation's perennial bioenergy crops and crop residues. To help guide this transition and ensure coordinated policy and research, directors from 12 state departments of agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service and university agriculture experiment stations have formed the North Central Bioeconomy Consortium. The states are Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. More information about the consortium is available at [www.ncbioconsortium.org](http://www.ncbioconsortium.org).



## Negotiating easements

The utility representative begins the negotiating process by presenting an easement and/or legal document(s) to the property owner. The representative will provide maps of the line route or site and an offer of compensation for the easement. The landowner can consider the offer and present material to the utility that he believes is relevant in deciding the value of the property.

The following are suggestions to review prior to signing an easement:

- Location: proximity to your residence or out buildings
- Construction: notification of start and length of time
- Temporary workspace: where and how much area needed
- Compensation:
  - \* Value of land – number of acres
  - \* General disturbance – farm around construction or relocate livestock
  - \* Damages - loss of crop or pasture and production
- Government programs: activity doesn't interfere with programs
- Topsoil, compaction and weeds: heavy equipment will be used during construction
- Indemnification: insurance for spills or leaks, and soil sinks
- Restoration: clean up, reseeding, drainage, fences, terraces and roads

*In the next issue of the FLL we will explore the utility company's right to use eminent domain in the acquisition of an easement. For specific situations be sure to consult an attorney.*

## FSA alters closure list again

First, the USDA's Farm Service Agency sought to close more than two dozen county offices in Kansas where farmers do their federal farm program business. Then, they pared that list to 11. Now, after public meetings in those 11 affected counties, FSA has trimmed the list to eight.

Under the latest closure plan offered by Kansas FSA Director Bill Fuller, offices in Chase, Chautauqua/Elk, Comanche, Geary, Johnson, Leavenworth/Wyandotte, Wabaunsee and Woodson counties will be closed.

Rep. Jerry Moran (Kansas) chastised FSA for not providing assurances that their closure plans will mean taxpayer savings or better service.

"I'm worried that the problems farmers are experiencing today are just the beginning and without significant technology changes, a catastrophic computer collapse will occur," Moran said.

During their visit to Capitol Hill in March, dozens of county FB presidents lobbied for those very technology upgrades, urging Congress to beef up FSA hardware/software systems. KFB has been involved with this issue since late 2005, when FSA first proposed closing 29 of its county offices.

## Check it out - [www.kfb.org](http://www.kfb.org)

KFB's website, [www.kfb.org](http://www.kfb.org), has been redesigned and restructured. It offers streamlined surfing and new features including the KFB Market Watch.

In partnership with DTN, KFB Market Watch allows you to see weather, futures, ag and market news, and you can create your own portfolio and track the commodities you choose.

