



Producers Encouraged to Burn Early

With recent rains and snow, drought conditions have eased enough for some early burning of native grass range across Kansas. The Governor's Drought Response Team met recently to discuss the statewide drought conditions and potential safety concerns related to annual range burning during the first two weeks of April. A subgroup of the Drought Response Team was formed to make recommendations and take input into controlled burning and wildfire. Kansas Farm Bureau participated in these meetings organized by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and included the Kansas Turnpike Authority, Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Division of Emergency Management and other state agencies.

The team is recommending that with the recent moisture, producers burn off pastures early if possible. This may lessen the wildfire hazard later in the spring when extremely dry and windy conditions may return. Early burning may also be an open window for burning before counties return to burn ban conditions.

Producers are also being encouraged to burn breaks around farmsteads, barns and other agriculture buildings in effort to protect those areas in case of wildfires. Kansas State University experts recommend burning take place when wind speeds are between 5 and 15 miles per hour, relative humidity is from 40% to 70% and temperatures fall in the range of 55 to 80 degrees.

All counties have notification requirements to local officials prior to planned, controlled burns. This notification is a key to preventing planned burns turning into accidental wildfires and ensuring burning is allowed under the existing conditions. Local contacts for 19 Flint Hills counties can be found at kfb.org/pastureburncontacts.htm

Farm Bureau BVS a Perfect Fit

The stampede is on for beef producers who want to earn premiums for their implementation of animal identification. Beef Verification Solution (BVS) is a private data



sharing network that will capture the value of a producer's animal genetics and herd management through source verification. In addition, BVS will connect producers with the necessary information for NAIS compliance.

Farm Bureau's beef-producing members should also be looking for the nearest Verification Center – and the search won't take long. There are currently 28 BVS verification centers across the state, comprised of Farm Bureau members who have signed on to help implement the beef industry trend of identifying individual animals and working with AgInfoLink to utilize the latest RFID technology.

KFB's Beef Verification Solution is coming to a location near you. For more information, go to agsolusa.com.

April 3

6:30 p.m., Meal provided by Harper County Farm Bureau and Farm Credit Services, Meeting to follow, Memorial Building, Attica

May 11-13

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day, Space I-124, 3i Show, Great Bend

Where Does the Farm Stop and the Community Begin?

Some farm families in one of the most rapidly growing suburban areas of Kansas recently defended their livelihood and way of life in what is clearly a sign of the times in this state.

With the assistance of the Kansas Farm Bureau Legal Foundation, the Harvey County Farm Bureau engaged their local government and successfully fought off a proposed "island" annexation of land adjacent to a golf course, proposed for residential housing development, complete with swimming pool and driving range.

The City of Halstead had sought to annex some 80-acres of land that lies three miles outside the existing Halstead city limits.

"It's wrong," said Bonnie Wendling, who, with her husband, Pat, raise cattle on a farm adjacent to the proposed development. "They're taking good producing farmland to turn into houses, to put alongside of the golf course."

The Harvey County Commission already has in place an existing growth and development

plan that was proper for the area. Since the area is zoned for agriculture and not residential development, the Commission ruled the annexation was not advisable and denied the proposed annexation.

"This is a balance," said Mike Irvin, attorney for the KFB Legal Foundation. "We don't blame the developers. They saw an opportunity and moved forward. But if there are laws and statutes on the books governing these sorts of annexations, then it's the locally-elected government's responsibility to ensure the law is followed."

Farmers and ranchers are fully aware of the larger dynamic at play here. Harvey County's population has increased more than six percent in recent years, due in large measure, to the incremental expansion of suburban Wichita. And it's not just Halstead. It's also occurring in and around Kansas City, Topeka and Lawrence. Inevitably, that growth will bump right into a farmer — who may very well bump back.



No School Finance Plan from Topeka, Lengthy Veto Session Ahead

When the Kansas Legislature adjourned on March 31 for its traditional spring break, several issues of concern for FB members had yet to be resolved. Just before break, the Senate debated three school finance plans and in the end could not find a majority of Senators willing to support any of the plans offered. The Senate Education Committee will go back to the drawing board when it returns to Topeka later this month to craft what many believe will be a multi-year school finance plan with a price tag of \$400 to \$500 million.

The lack of resolution in the school finance debate has held up work in the tax conference committee, which holds several potential tax relief measures including the sunset of the Kansas Estate Tax. Legislators are reluctant to approve tax relief measures before they become aware of the financial ramifications of a school finance plan.

Several other important issues for KFB members remain in conference

Use KFB CapWiz Now for Input on Crop Insurance

The Premium Reduction Program (PRP), which allows farmers a discount on their crop insurance premium, is not scheduled to be funded for 2007. This is a mistake. If an insurance company is able to meet USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) criteria for administrative and operating efficiencies, the savings can be passed on to farmers as a premium discount.

This year, Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company acquired Crop1 Insurance Direct, Inc. the first company approved by RMA to offer discounted crop insurance premiums.

Farm Bureau members are encouraged to use KFB CapWiz, at kfb.org, to contact their lawmakers and urge them to continue funding PRP. A message is already prepared – please personalize this message, including your location and offer input on cost savings for farmers and ranchers.



committee including: SB 323, a measure concerning eminent domain reform; SB 379, which provides for the consolidation of units of government; HB 2432, a measure amending the Rails to Trails Act that has the potential to provide increased enforcement authority to county commissions and HB 2710, which establishes the Water Rights Transition Assistance Program in targeted areas of the state. Negotiators on each of these measures will resume their work during the veto session.

Both Houses have passed resolutions supporting the 25 by '25 plan, an initiative to establish the goal of 25% of the nation's energy being produced from renewable resources by the year 2025.

The Legislature will return for a Veto Session April 26.

Governor Signs Booster Seat Law

Governor Kathleen Sebelius recently signed a new law to require Kansas children to be buckled into their seatbelt when traveling. House Bill 2611, the booster seat law for children, takes effect July 1 and requires children ages 4, 5, 6 and 7 who either weigh less than 80 lbs. or are shorter than 4'9" in height to be placed in an "appropriate child passenger restraining system" that meets federal guidelines.

The new law provides for a one-year warning period (until July 1, 2007) for the booster seat requirement, which will provide public agencies time to educate parents about the importance of booster seats and allow parents time to obtain an appropriate seat. Current law requires use of a car seat until age 4 and children age 4 and older to wear adult seat belts. The booster seat bill passed the House on a vote of 94-27 and the Senate on a vote of 36-4.

Kansas Farm Bureau was a cooperating partner for the bill that came from Safe Kids Kansas, Inc., a nonprofit coalition of 67 statewide organizations and businesses dedicated to preventing accidental injuries to Kansas children ages 0-14. For more info, go to kansassafekids.org.



Limited Liability Company: The Right Business Structure?

A limited liability company is commonly called "LLC." It is a business structure that combines attributes of both corporations and partnerships or sole proprietorships.

Similar to owners of partnerships or sole proprietorships, LLC owners report business profits or losses on their personal income tax returns; the LLC itself is not a separate taxable entity.

Similar to a corporation, all LLC owners are protected from personal liability for business debts and claims. This is a feature known as "limited liability." This means that if the business owes money or faces a lawsuit, only the assets of the business itself are at risk. Creditors normally can't reach the personal assets of the members. However, members may lose this protection if they act illegally, unethically or irresponsibly.

For these reasons, the LLC combines the best features of both the partnership and corporate business structures.

Advantages:

- ✓ Operation – Corporations are required to keep formal minutes, have meetings, and record resolutions. These items are not required with an LLC, which is why it is easier to operate.
- ✓ Flexible Profit Distribution – An LLC can select varying forms of profit distribution.
- ✓ Limited Liability – Owners have liability protection similar to a corporation. Members cannot be held personally liable for debts unless they have signed a personal guarantee. This protection is not absolute. (See above)
- ✓ Taxes – All of the business profits and losses pass through the company to the members called a "pass-through entity."

Disadvantages:

- ✓ Formation – Set up is more difficult than creating a partnership or sole proprietorship.
- ✓ Operation – Management requires more formality than a sole proprietorship.

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

FARM FLASHES . . .

Kansas Economic Development Funding Announced

■ Three Kansas recipients have been selected for \$1.15 million in funding to support economic development efforts in Kansas. Under the USDA Rural Development *Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program*, the agency will make a zero-interest loan to a local rural utility cooperative and in return, the cooperative will then pass proceeds on to a local business to finance job creation efforts. Kansas projects include

- ✓ Midwest Energy, Inc.; Pawnee County
- ✓ Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Pottawatomie County
- ✓ Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

For more info, go to rurdev.usda.gov/ks.

KFB Web site Offers Energy Saving Tips

■ To help farmers and ranchers better address soaring energy prices, your farm organization has compiled an online list of practical ways to save on fuel costs and consumption and boost farmers' bottom lines. The KFB Energy/Fuel Saving Discussion can be accessed by members logging in to kfb.org. The site contains suggestions to reduce the impact of energy costs in the home, in farm buildings and in the field.

Sign-Up Underway for Conservation Reserve Program

■ Kansas landowners have until April 14 to submit offers to enroll land in the Conservation Reserve Program, USDA's largest conservation program.

CRP participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years. In exchange, participants receive annual rental payments and a payment of up to 50 percent of the cost of establishing conservation practices.

Offers accepted under this sign-up will become effective Oct. 1. Details are available at local FSA offices and fsa.usda.gov.

State Grain Commodity Growers Elect Commissioners

■ Kansas Farm Bureau applauds producers to the state's five commodity commissions – corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers and wheat. The newly elected commissioners took office April 1 and will serve for three years. Farm Bureau members include:

Kansas Corn Commission

District 1, Brian Baalman, Sheridan County

District 2, Harvey Heier, Gove County

Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

District 1, Richard Calliham, Thomas County

District 2, Greg Graff, Wichita County

Kansas Soybean Commission

District 1-3, Kurt Maurath, Logan County

Kansas Wheat Commission

District 1, Mike Brown, Thomas County

District 2, Ron Suppes, Lane County

District 3, Larry Kepley, Grant County

Farm/Ranch Input Needed on Natural Resources

■ Nearly 2,000 farmers and ranchers across the southern High Plains received a survey in the mail asking for their opinions about the Ogallala Aquifer, wetlands and other natural resources in the region. The questionnaire titled "High Plains Landowner Survey" is being conducted by the Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV), a non-profit partnership of wildlife and agriculture agencies, corporations and conservation groups and landowners dedicated to conserving wildlife habitat in the Ogallala Aquifer region.

The survey aims to assess agricultural producers' experience with and willingness to conduct natural resource conservation. The data collected will help resource managers create future and modify existing conservation programs to better serve producers' needs. The survey can also be complete online at playasurvey.com.

KFB's Water Information Network: Your Rapid Response Team

■ Worried about state government management of water issues? Concerned decisions are being made without adequate grassroots input? You should be.

Kansas Farm Bureau offers the Water Issues Network (WIN), a group of active farmer/rancher members with an interest in staying fluent on water policy and the process of forming it.

State law in existence since 1945 provides for the establishment and protection of water rights based on seniority – "first in line, first in right." One of the 2010 objectives identified in the Kansas Water Plan is to reduce water level decline rates within the Ogallala Aquifer and implement enhanced water management in targeted areas. Additionally, other similar objectives, including stabilization of groundwater levels and maintenance of sufficient stream flows have led to the establishment of stakeholder working groups within the Rattlesnake Creek, Middle Arkansas River and Pawnee-Buckner basins of south-central Kansas and the Solomon River basin of north-central Kansas.

Without active agriculture producer input into these critical decisions being made with regard to the future of Kansas water, your policy and interests may not be represented or protected. By remaining silent and uneducated, we give up our privilege to help direct this process. Contact your District Administrator to become a member of WIN.

Kansas Farm Bureau CALENDAR

April 22
Earth Day

April 26-27
County Professionals Leadership
Conference, Manhattan

May 11-13
3i Show, Great Bend

KC Area Kids Get Taste of Ag Through Pizza

As part of the 2006 bi-state observance of National Agriculture Day, more than 600 school children and educators from across the Kansas City metropolitan area attended a pizza party at the National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame in Bonner Springs.

Students and educators rotated through six stations on each pizza ingredient – dairy, meat, vegetables, wheat, food harvesting equipment and soybeans. A noon lunch of pizza and ice cream was served and the

celebration concluded with magician Rex Getz's, *The Magical World of Agriculture* presentation.

A team of nearly 30 agribusiness professionals from both Kansas and Missouri volunteered to plan and orchestrate the yearly event, including logistics to raising the funds necessary to hosting the pizza party. Kansas sponsors included Kansas Farm Bureau and county Farm Bureau organizations in Douglas, Johnson, Leavenworth and Wyandotte Counties.




AGRICULTURE LIBRARY. Johnson County Farm Bureau celebrated National Agriculture Day by supplying local 4th grade teachers with ag education packets and opening their own agriculture education library as a resource for teachers to check out curriculum materials. Pictured above are Johnson County FB President Lois Moss (left) and Johnson County Coordinator Lyneda Rogers.



MORE MOORE. FB members in the 3rd U.S. House District recently dined with U.S. Rep. Dennis Moore to talk about the farm bill, estate tax and more. Pictured here (L to R) are: Wyandotte Co. FB Vice President Lee Eddy, Johnson Co. FB President Lois Moss, Rep. Moore, Wyandotte Co.

Coordinator Lynn Spring, Johnson Co. FB Coordinator Lyneda Rogers, Miami Co. FB member Mike Martin, Miami Co. FB Coordinator Marjorie Pretz, Wyandotte Co. FB President Frank Van Fleet, 2nd District KFB Board member George Pretz and 2nd District Administrator Les Regier.



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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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