

## Kansas Farmers Union Convention Speakers discuss the Farm Bill's impact on family farmers

By Lauren Clary

TOPEKA—Kansas Farmers Union (KFU) held its 104th Annual Convention at the Topeka Ramada on Dec. 2-3, 2011.

There Kansas Farmers Union members heard from eight speakers about farm policy and the importance of speaking up for family farms and rural America.

“The first job of a citizen is to keep your mouth open,” Jim Hightower said. “It helps if that mouth is attached to a brain and that is what you bring. Kansas Farmers Union is a grassroots network that can provide information, education, vision, connections to link that brain power to mouth power that then connects to foot power that produces political power.”

“It’s critical that every one of you speak out on these issues and its critical that you reach out to your neighbors

to get your neighbors involved,” Chuck Hassebrook said. “It’s critical that Farmers Union speak with clarity on the important issues to say it’s about how we support farming and what kind of an agriculture it causes.”

### Herb Bartel

Herb and his wife Pat spent about 10 years on the Northern Slope of Alaska while they worked in economic development. They worked with the Eskimos and experienced their way of life.

“We went away with the ethic that we should try and do no harm in our lives and were still working on that. of all these experiences, I’d say that’s the one thing that we benefited from,” Bartel said.

Also on Friday during lunch, Kansas Democratic Party Chair Joan Wagnon stopped by to talk with Kansas Farmers Union members.

**DVDs of each speakers’ presentation are available to rent from KFU 620-241-6630**

“We’re going to be pushing schools and education,” Wagnon said. “We’re going to continue to talk about health care because if we start closing rural hospitals, we’re going to be in a world of hurt.”

**Mercedes Taylor-Puckett** Kansas’ rural communities have an opportunity for 1,000 new fruit and vegetable farmers as a result of the local food movement, Taylor-Puckett said.

“Kansans spend \$767 million in fruit and vegetables and Kansas farmers sell approximately \$32 million in

**Find out more about Convention**

**Policy and By-law Changes** Page 9.

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**Three new Directors were elected** Page 6

**Convention Sponsors** Page 2

vegetables each year,” Taylor-Puckett said. “As you can see, there’s a huge gap. It’s an opportunity that we have for our rural communities.”

“There are a lot of young people who are very excited about farming, about growing food for people, about that interaction and so there’s a significant opportunities for rural communities for rural communities to attract young

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KFU Director Herb Bartel talks about working in economic development on the Northern Slope of Alaska. He shared pictures that he and his wife Pat took of the Eskimo community and the whaling process, which is very important to the Eskimo’s culture.



Kansas Farmers Union members look at Silent Auction Items and socialize during the Convention Banquet.

## Please support the businesses who contributed to the 2011 Kansas Farmers Union Convention

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The following insurance agents advertised in the  
Convention Book:

Tom Clark in Courtland  
Stacey Addison in Syracuse  
Fred Behrens in Marysville  
Jerry Nolte in Seneca  
Todd and Evan Whitehill in McPherson  
Gary Smith in Wichita

The full list of Kansas' Farmers Union Insurance Agents can be  
found on page 15.

Visit [flickr.com/ksfarmers  
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from convention

# National Farmers Union convention to be held March 4-7 in Omaha

WASHINGTON, D.C.—National Farmers Union will be holding their 110th convention on March 4-7 in Omaha, Nebraska.

The convention has been extended one day this year. With the extra time, tours will be offered of local agriculture and agriculture-related industries.

Hotel details, tentative agenda, registration information and other information is regularly updated on NFU's website, [www.nfu.org](http://www.nfu.org). Please check frequently for the most current details and register online today.

Please call the state office 620-241-6630 and tell Callie or Lauren if you plan to attend. The state office had help you register and make hotel reservations.

If you want to stay in the block of rooms with Kansas Farmers Union, contact the state office by Jan. 16.

They can also help you get in touch with someone in your area to carpool with to Omaha.



## A BIG Thank You to the following people who helped make the 2011 KFU Convention possible

Lavern Potuzak of Agenda for selling ads and providing an item for the auction

John Rempe of Corning for selling ads

Daryl Larson of McPherson for selling ads

Tim Olmstead of Marshall County for being our auctioneer during the banquet

Herb Bartel of Hillsboro for selling ads

John Fairbanks of Onaga for selling ads

Stan Fowler of Emporia for making the podium banner and theme banner that were used at Convention and his son Matt for providing an item for the auction

Town Crier Bookstore in Emporia for coming to Topeka free of charge to sell Jim Hightower's book.

Farmers Union Insurance Agents for joining us at Convention and what they do all year.

Mercedes Taylor-Puckett, Mary Hendrickson, Chuck Hassebrook and Fred Stokes for waving their appearance fee to speak to us

## NFU CONVENTION DEADLINES

**Hotel Reservation: Feb. 18**

**Convention Registration:**

**Early rate (\$100): Jan. 27**

**Regular rate (\$125): Jan. 28 - Feb. 24**

**Late rate (\$150): Feb. 25 - March 4**

*meals will not be guaranteed after Feb. 24*

## *Kansas Kontact*

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### Board of Directors

President	Donn Teske, Wheaton
Vice President	Lavern Potuzak, Agenda
North District	Gerard Steinlage, Seneca David Heins, Abilene
South District	Chris Schmidt, Oberlin Linda Hessman, Dodge City Herb Bartel, Hillsboro Jason Schmidt, Newton

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT BY DONN TESKE

Hi, I felt convention went really well. The attendees seemed to really like the dinner-theater and our speakers. Jim Hightower was a true pleasure to have at our convention both as a speaker and also just as a pretty informed feller to visit with during the day and evening.

I want to include a special thank you here to Roger Johnson who was dedicated and gracious enough to attend our convention even though he knew his father, Leonard, was in his final days and who passed on shortly before our banquet began.

Roger loved to tell that his father was 98 years old and that he had flown his own plane until he was 93! I made the comment that I bet the other planes got out of his way but Roger's response was "heck, he did fine in the air, it's when he's on the ground that people have to scatter!"

In a story Roger's brother wrote about their father he tells "In 1934, he found a Curtis Wright Junior in a tree in Idaho and hauled it home on a hay rack pulled by the Model T. He repaired it and learned to fly it over the next several years." Can you imagine driving a model T across North Dakota and Montana pulling a hayrack? And then back again?? WOW!

## Kansas Legislative Session

Last year I felt the Department of Ag was pretty quiet during the legislative session with all focus on the budget, this year it's shaping up quite a bit different.

They held a stakeholders meeting in December to give us a heads up on what they

are up to. Below are my thoughts and interpretations of what I heard. I may not be entirely accurate, a lot was thrown at us that day, and time will define what's all going on but I want to give you all a quick synopsis of what I think I heard.

Secretary Rodman started the meeting by telling us the Dept of Agriculture represents Agri-business and Kansas producers. (He said it in that order too)

They **intend to increase the appeal to corporate farming**, mostly by addressing and eliminating the county option and making it the same as dairy for pork. (Isn't it ironic that the entities who keep telling us there is too much government and over-regulation are the same ones who want to take away the counties rights?) They want to create a Kansas ID card for illegal aliens to give them rights to work and drive in Kansas but not become citizens or vote. (Non-naturalized) (I wonder how insurance companies will deal with illegal aliens legally driving on our highways for our farms and businesses?)

They are **not going to apply to the USDA to allow interstate shipment of state inspected meat**. (This has been an issue fought and won by Farmers Union and placed in the last farm bill and could help value added producers quite a bit, especially on the fringes of Kansas City.

All a state has to do is apply but Kansas isn't. To me this just goes to show how much influence the KLA has on our Dept of Agriculture here in Kansas. It's shameful!

The Dept now has 1,600 applicants who used 2012 irrigation water rights in 2011. They **intend to address this by creating 5-year "blocks" of water rights**, which allows the producers to use the 5-year allotment of water the best way they see fit. (I assume that as climate change becomes dire and that they use the entire 5-year block the first 2 years that they will then create a "generation" or some other title that will let them pump at will.

So much for stewardship of our natural resources) (I shouldn't be so cynical though because I don't know how I would do it differently. At least this way lets them have a chance to survive this drought if predictions are wrong about climate change. But if I was a municipality in western Kansas I would be pretty nervous about this whole game.) They intend to create something called "water banking" which will allow producers to stockpile and then sell their water rights. They were pretty vague about this.

They **want to make the voluntary Water Transition Assistance Program mandatory** for certain watersheds (Prairie Dog Creek & Rattlesnake Creek) because of lack of sign-up in the voluntary program.

They are very public about **fixing the "use it or lose it"** statue of the Kansas law, however it is just going to be the areas in Kansas that aren't closed. I'm stupid about most irrigation stuff but I'm told that most of western Kansas is closed so if I understand it right the law will remain there where water

needs to be preserved the most.

The **"Ag Marketing Advisory board" will be given new power**. They will be the oversight to the specialty crop grant applications and the value added grant applications. This board is comprised of appointees selected by the Governor. (Considering Governor Brownbacks pro-corporate ag statements in recent months I feel this doesn't bode well for the true intent of these grants.)

Two statements from the meeting I wrote down were:

1. This year at Dodge City it was the driest and hottest year in the 140 years of recorded records.

2. There were NO private sector job creation in Kansas in the last 10 year census. (This was said during the "we need to make Kansas more friendly to corporate agriculture" statement)

Finally, **Fracking**. The Wichita Eagle reported that on the way down to the bowl game Governor Brownback stopped in Oklahoma to meet with key people to "smooth the way for energy companies to do more of it in Kansas."

Kansas Farmers Union delegates at our December convention voted to include in policy a special order of business: "We support a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing operations in oil and gas recovery until an environmental impact study guided by sound science, proves the activity safe."

Looks like it's going to be a long year!

The next issue I will update what's going on and correct what I messed up in my interpretation in this issue.

# Join Farmers Union members to help feed America's Hungry

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**One in 6 Americans is struggling with hunger**, including 1 in 4 children. Right now, thanks to a \$50,000 matching gift from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, every dollar given through any National Farmers Union member will be doubled — with the member-driven donations going back to the food banks that serve hungry people in their community.

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# Kansas Farmers Union elects new Directors

## **Gerard Steinlage of Seneca, Director representing the North District**

Gerard Steinlage was born in Nemaha County, Kansas during the flood of 1951. He was raised in a family of six children on a small diversified family farm near Corning where he still lives today.

At the age of 19, Gerard enlisted in the U.S. Army in the year 1970. He served in the Army Reserves for 6 years and obtained the basic training skills in cooking, firefighting, pole climbing skills and communication.

In his earlier years, Gerard farmed with his dad and brother. They had a cow-calf operation, sow-pig operation, and grain farming and hay. Later, Gerard had feeder calves and fed them up to 900# and marketed them. His father served on the local Township Farmers Union board and so did his uncle.

In the 1980's, Gerard and his brother had a custom-combining

operation for several years from Oklahoma to Wyoming. Following that he harvested grass seed for area farmers. Through the years, Gerard has had numerous side jobs from building houses to laying hardwood floors to support the farm and family.

Gerard is active in several community organizations. He is a member of the American Legion Post#37, the Knights of Columbus and the St. Patrick's Church. He recently participated in the Vietnam moving wall in 2010 when it passed thru Seneca. He is proud to carry the American Flag in any parade.

Gerard is a strong believer in rural America and has a great love for the land. He supports small businesses and ideas to bring families back to Rural America.

Gerard and his wife Mary Beth of 38 years have 8 children. They have 8 grandchildren and 3 son-in-laws.

## **Jason Schmidt of Newton, Director representing the South District**

Jason Schmidt grew up on a dairy farm close to Whitewater. He and his wife Carol live near Whitewater where they have a dairy farm with Jason's parents and raise grass-fed beef and lamb. Carol is an attorney for the Kansas Appellate Defender Office. Jason also works part-time for the Kansas Rural Center as a Clean Water Farms Field Organizer.

"I have a particular interest in grass farming and grazing livestock having researched finishing cattle on different forages in graduate school, and explored grazing systems across the U.S.," Jason said. "My parents own and operate a dairy and raise crops on the farm settled by my great grandparents. I have returned to the farm with plans to take over the dairy and incorporate my interests in forages and grazing into the farm. In addition to the dairy, I have a small flock of Katadhin hair sheep from which I market all natural 100 percent grass-fed lamb, and also finish all natural grass-fed beef in the summer."

"Kansas Farmers Union aligns with my values of supporting the voice of small family farms. In an era when the industrial agricultural system has an ever greater dominant voice in our food production system, I want to be sure to support organizations like KFU that honestly support family farms and alternatives to the industrial model," Jason said.

Jason participates in events with the Kansas Grazers Association and other informal grazers groups. He is also involved in both the local food and environmental movement through his church and local business groups in Newton.

Jason's interests off the farm include cooking, hiking/canoing, singing, listening to NPR, listening to ecology podcasts while farming, reading my grass-farming monthly publications, traveling, biking, and listening to inspiring people.

## **David Heiens of Abilene, Director representing the North District**

David Heins grew up northwest of Abilene, where he and his wife, Ramona, still reside. There they operate an organic farm, producing wheat, barley-peas, oat-peas, alfalfa, soybeans and milo. They also raise hogs, marketed through Organic Prairie, and cattle.

David enjoys "getting together to visit with family and friends and relaxing at home." His two step children and granddaughter

live in Belleville. His brother and family lives south of Wichita.

David joined Kansas Farmers Union in 1973 after he graduated from high school when his cousin Morris Burwell signed him up.

David is also a board member of Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) Research and Education committee and a member of the board of his church in Talmage - The Lord's Chapel.



# What is Kansas Farmers Union?

*Editor's note: This article is the first in a series of articles that will take a look at what Kansas Farmers Union is and means to its' members.*

Kansas Farmers Union represents its members, who are engaged in various farming and ranching practices through Cooperation, Legislation and Education.

**We believe that family ownership of farm land is the basis for the world's most viable system of food and fiber production and that maintaining this family farm system will preserve our country's natural and human resources.**

Kansas Farmers Union believes that policy should address the needs of the people. The moral and ethical decisions made by individuals and governments have an impact on our daily lives and on the lives of future generations.

Our policy strives to assure that those decisions maintain a just and ethical basis. We must not allow greed, ignorance or carelessness to bring about exploitation of our



natural resources, or of our fellow man.

Kansas Farmers Union believes that its policy will develop farm programs that will diminish hunger, foster peace, justice and the preservation and protection of our natural resources.

## KFU hires Levendofsky as Project Coordinator

By Nick Levendofsky

A few months back, you read in the "Kansas Kontakt" about the grant Kansas Farmers Union received that will allow us to work with returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now that the war in Iraq has ended, many veterans are returning to find little, if any employment available, except for in the nation's heartland, which has weathered the unemployment storm.

As these veterans return home, they bring with them an opportunity to employ their passion, discipline, and sense of service to revitalize America's small farms and rural communities.

A partnership like this makes sense, especially since America's farmers and rural communities are aging, and



few new farmers are getting started in the profession.

By returning to their farming roots, veterans can carry on the proud tradition of small American family farms and revitalize our rural communities.

The Veteran Farmers Project provides veterans with the business and agriculture education that can help them become successful farmers.

By creating sound farm businesses that tap into high value markets, returning vet-

erans can reintegrate gracefully and fruitfully into America's rural communities.

The project also offers workshops conducted by expert speakers on topics in agriculture and finance, farm tours from experienced farmers demonstrating production, marketing, and decision-making, individual consultation with professionals for financial and production advice, as well as a "HelpLine" for phone and email inquiries, resources, and support.

In the workshops, veteran participants will learn from experts about topics in agriculture and business like specialty crops and livestock, land access, financing, crop insurance, high value crop production and marketing, state-level and USDA programs and organizations for

beginning farmers, and resources for disabled veteran farmers.

Workshops, to be held in Kansas and Nebraska, are scheduled for late March with specific dates and locations to be announced soon.

Through this project, it will be important for participants to tour the farms of successful farmers in Kansas and Nebraska to learn about specific production and marketing systems.

Participants will observe and question farmers and ranchers about their experiences, techniques, and approaches, as well as gain some hands-on learning during the tour.

The farm tour schedule is pending, but we are looking at a number of locations in

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Farmers Union celebrates 110 years of rich history this year, and we are looking forward to the next 110 prosperous years to come.

In that spirit, we urge each of you to add to your list of New Year's resolutions to bring one new person to a Farmers Union event this year and encourage them to join. Having friends and family in the organization encourages more involvement, and together we are even stronger.

Both New England and North Dakota Farmers Union elected new presidents during their conventions. Congratulations are in order for Marge Kilkelly (New England) and Woody Barth (N.D.). We also thank outgoing presidents Annie Cheatham and Robert Carlson for their years of service. They will both remain active in Farmers Union in other capacities, and for that we are grateful.

As each state adopts its policy for the year, it helps set the stage for the policy discussion at the NFU convention. We have already started the process with the NFU Policy Committee meeting in mid-January.

This year's policy committee members are Dan McGuire of Neb. (chairman), John Daughenbaugh of Colo. (Rocky Mountain), Jeff Eschmeyer of Ohio, Sarah Lloyd of Wisc., Jeremy Scherler of Okla., David Teigen of N.D., and Gail Temple of S.D. On behalf of all the members of Farmers Union, we are grateful for their work.

It is already 2012, meaning that it is an election year. This election season, please consider contributing to the National Farmers Union Political Action Committee (NATFARMPAC), which contributes to candidates who best represent Farmers Union values. Last election, NFU lost many friends in Congress. Your contributions help establish relationships with members of Congress to ensure that our voice is heard. To contribute, contact your state Farmers Union or the NFU office.

Do you know a college student looking for an internship? NFU's internships are unique. Our paid internships offer real working experience on Capitol Hill. Apply now for the summer of 2012. NFU is now accepting applications at [www.nfu.org/education/internships](http://www.nfu.org/education/internships). Extended internships are available during the fall, winter and spring.

Check out the NFU scholarships. Editable versions of the PDF files are available at [www.nfu.org/education/scholarships](http://www.nfu.org/education/scholarships).

Our latest classroom curriculum, available on [www.nfu.org](http://www.nfu.org), is free and offers four different lessons each for students of all ages. This year's curriculum is "Growing Good Taste." It uses fun and engaging activities to explain nutritional values, appropriate serving sizes, the food chain from farming to fork, and more.

The 2012 NFU All-States Camp will be held **June 24 - 29**. Note this is a schedule change from previous years. Contact your state Farmers Union for eligibility requirements for future camps.

The NFU Women's Conference will be held **June 21-23, 2012** (three full days) at the NFU Education Center in Bailey, Colo. An agenda and registration will be available Feb. 15. NFU is developing the national women's conference using the Annie's Project methodology. We will also encourage women to pursue leadership roles on boards such as those for farm organizations and cooperatives.

The mission of Annie's Project is to empower farm women to be better business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information. It is a comprehensive educational program and support network for farm and ranch women.

We are also very focused on the international agriculture stage. Robert Carlson, World Farmer Organization (WFO) president and NFU vice president of international relations, has been working tirelessly to ensure U.S. family farmers and ranchers are represented on the international level. Approximately 40 countries are presently members of the WFO, and there is interest from many more. Food security, climate change and sustainability continue to be the priority is-

ues for the organization.

NFU President Roger Johnson represented the United States at a meeting of the United Nations in mid-December. The meeting was in preparation for the Rio+20 meeting to be held in June 2012. The group discussed the major issues facing agriculture, which are the same as WFO's priority issues.

In November, the ruling from the World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute between Canada/Mexico and the United States was released on Country-of-Origin-Labeling (COOL). WTO said that the COOL law itself was allowable, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) must implement it differently. NFU is working with U.S. Trade Representative and USDA to determine on the next steps. The U.S. is considering whether to appeal the decision or negotiate with Canada and Mexico.

Last month, USDA announced the publishing of the Final Rule implementing provisions for livestock producers and poultry growers under the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). NFU President Roger Johnson issued a statement expressing disappointment that the rule did not include stronger provisions, including the competitive injury portion that was included in the proposed rule. That portion was not among the parts of the bill forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget in November, and the Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill passed by Congress prevented other portions of the rule from moving forward.

# Convention delegates make changes to KFU policy, by-laws

By Lauren Clary

years.

TOPEKA—Kansas Farmers Union (KFU) voting delegates attended the 2011 KFU Convention at the Topeka Ramada on Dec. 2-3 to vote on policy, elect the 2012 Board of Directors and elect delegates to the National Farmers Union Convention.

“Our state and national policy is our bible we work from representing Kansas Farmers Union members in ag and rural policy. It's truly grassroots,” KFU President Donn Teske said.

Delegates, along with others, learned about federal farm policy, including what might happen in the 2012 Farm Bill, market (packing, livestock genetics, fertilizer, seed and grocery stores) concentration, Kansas' local foods market, and much more from eight speakers from across the U.S.

## Policy Changes

Convention delegates made several new additions to Kansas Farmers Union's policy: opposed the proposed elimination of the state corporate income tax, supported maintaining rural post offices, supported subsidy limits on crop insurance premiums coupled with conservation compliance and supported full public disclosure of all GMO ingredients through food labels.

Delegates also added that fraud and abuse of check-off resources and money must be prosecuted. Also that all check-off programs must be subject to a referendum vote by mail ballot every three

## Special Policy Orders

Special orders of business, which highlight the issues that are important this year, addressed interstate shipment of state inspected meat and hydraulic fracturing.

Kansas Farmers Union requests that the State of Kansas pursue the opportunity to sell and ship state inspected meats across state lines.

They also supported a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing operations in oil and gas recovery until an environmental impact study proves the activities are safe.

Delegates also decided to renew one special order from last year: supporting the National Farmers Union Educational Center in Bailey, Colorado.

## By-Law Changes

By-law changes included increasing the charge for lifetime membership to \$1,000 and reducing the amount of a county charter to 10 members.

## 2012 Board of Directors

The KFU Board of Directors elected by the delegation are: President Donn Teske of Wheaton, Vice President Lavern Potuzak of Agenda. Representing the North District are Chris Schmidt of Oberlin, Gerard Steinlage of Corning and David Heins of Abilene. Representing the South District are Linda Hessman of Dodge City, Herb Bartel of



Kansas Farmers Union delegates discuss making changes to the KFU Policy on Saturday, Dec. 3 in Topeka.

Hillsboro and Jason Schmidt of Newton.

## NFU Convention Delegates

Delegates to the National Farmers Union Convention in Omaha on March 4-7 were also elected. They are Daryl

Larson of McPherson, Chris Schmidt of Oberlin and Herb Bartel of Hillsboro.

Visit [www.kansasfarmerunion.org](http://www.kansasfarmerunion.org) to view the new KFU policy or contact the state office at 620-241-6630 to have a copy mailed to you.

## Calendar of Events

### January 21

Kansas Graziers Winter Conference in Emporia. See page 5. 785-562-8726.

### February 16-19

College Conference on Cooperatives in Minneapolis/St. Paul is hosted by National Farmers Union Foundation with support from CHS Foundation and other partners, features presentations by cooperative leaders and tours from all across the cooperative spectrum. Only 2 students from Kansas can attend. The cost is \$50 for registration, transportation, lodging and most meals. Contact Lauren at **620-245-4118 by Jan. 20** if you are interested.

### March 4-7

National Farmers Union Annual Convention in Omaha, Nebraska. See page 3.

# Kansas Farmers Union 2012 Policy Statement

## Adopted by Delegates to the KFU State Convention on December 3, 2011

THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION REPRESENTS ITS MEMBERS WHO ARE ENGAGED IN VARIOUS FARMING AND RANCHING PURSUITS THROUGH COOPERATION, LEGISLATION, AND EDUCATION.

THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION TAKES PRIDE IN DEFINING OUR POLICY. WE BELIEVE THAT POLICY SHOULD ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE. THE MORAL AND ETHICAL DECISIONS MADE BY INDIVIDUALS AND GOVERNMENTS HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR DAILY LIVES AND ON THE LIVES OF FUTURE GENERATIONS. RECOGNIZING THAT FACT, OUR POLICY STRIVES TO ASSURE THAT THOSE DECISIONS MAINTAIN A JUST AND ETHICAL BASIS.

OUR POLICY ALSO ADDRESSES THE USE OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT WITH THE SAME FERVOR. WE MUST NOT ALLOW GREED, IGNORANCE, OR CARELESSNESS TO BRING ABOUT EXPLOITATION OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES, OR OF OUR FELLOW MAN.

WE BELIEVE THAT FAMILY OWNERSHIP OF FARM LAND IS THE BASIS FOR THE WORLD'S MOST VIABLE SYSTEM OF FOOD AND FIBER PRODUCTION AND THAT MAINTAINING THIS FAMILY FARM SYSTEM WILL PRESERVE OUR COUNTRY'S NATURAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

WE BELIEVE THAT THIS POLICY WOULD DEVELOP FARM PROGRAMS THAT WILL DIMINISH HUNGER, FOSTER PEACE, JUSTICE, AND THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

### **AGRICULTURE POLICY**

A POLICY OF PARITY PRICES, FAIR TRADE AND HUMANITARIAN AID SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED BY OUR COUNTRY AND PROMOTED AROUND THE WORLD. WE SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES FOR A FARM POLICY TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURE AND COMMUNITIES.

1. FARMER OWNED RESERVE
2. SAFETY NET – AFFORDABLE CROP INSURANCE, PERMANENT DISASTER PROGRAM
3. FARM PROGRAM PAYMENT LIMITS
4. SUPPLY MANAGEMENT
5. CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND STEWARDSHIP
6. RENEWABLE ENERGY



**National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson explains that about a 1/4 of 1 percent of the federal budget goes to farmers.**

7. FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS
8. PUBLIC FUNDED RESEARCH
9. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
10. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING
11. FAIR AND COMPETITIVE MARKETS
12. ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE
13. ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE AGRICULTURAL CREDIT
14. FULL FUNDING OF FARM AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS
15. GMO LIABILITY AND OVERSIGHT
16. BEGINNING FARMER RANCHER PROGRAM & MINORITY PROGRAM
17. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL WATER USE

### **FARM SERVICE AGENCY REORGANIZATION**

KANSAS FARMERS UNION OPPOSES EFFORTS TO DISMANTLE THE FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) DELIVERY SYSTEM THROUGH OFFICE CLOSURES, ELIMINATION OF COUNTY OFFICE POSITIONS, OR CHANGE EMPLOYEES CLASSIFICATION TO CIVIL SERVICE. WE SUPPORT ADEQUATE FUNDING AND STAFFING TO SUPPORT THE FSA SERVICE CENTERS.

WE SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF FARMER ELECTED COMMITTEES AND STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SUCH COMMITTEES OR ANY ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE POSITION OF COMMITTEEMEN APPOINTED.

WE OPPOSE THE FORMATION OF ANY NATIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE WHICH SUPERSEDES STATE OR COUNTY COMMITTEE JURISDICTIONS.

### **INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS**

WE URGE CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION TO RE-NEGOTIATE SO THEY REFLECT THE NEEDS OF MANKIND.

WE OPPOSE "TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY" THAT CIRCUMVENTS THE ABILITY OF CONGRESS TO NEGOTIATE TRADE AGREEMENTS.

### **FOOD FOR PEACE**

THE P.L. 480 P PEACE, AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL.

### **CROP INSURANCE AND DISASTER PROGRAMS**

WE SUPPORT A FEDERAL PREMIUM SUBSIDY OF AT LEAST 50% FOR ALL LEVELS OF COVERAGE. YIELDS SHOULD BE BASED ON APH (ACTUAL PRODUCTION HISTORY) OVER A 5 YEAR PERIOD. FSA YIELDS SHOULD BE UPDATED TO REFLECT THE TRUE COUNTY AVERAGES. WE URGE A MINIMUM LEVEL OF MULTI-PERIL CROP INSURANCE (50%) BE PROVIDED AS A BENEFIT OF FARM PROGRAM PARTICIPATION TO TRADITIONAL FAMILY FARM SIZE UNITS.

WE SUPPORT SUBSIDY LIMITS ON CROP INSURANCE PREMIUMS, COUPLED WITH CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE.

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WE SUPPORT CONTINUATION OF DISASTER PROGRAMS UNTIL SUCH TIME AS CROP INSURANCE IS FULLY A FUNCTIONAL ALTERNATIVE.

WHENEVER A NATURAL DISASTER STRIKES DESTROYING ANY PROGRAMMED CROPS, AFFECTED PRODUCERS SHOULD RECEIVE AN LDP PAYMENT BASED ON THE COUNTY AVERAGE YIELD.

WE OPPOSE THE RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY ALLOWING PREMIUM DISCOUNTS PROMOTING THE USE OF SPECIFIC CROP INPUTS AND OR FARM EQUIPMENT.

### **FOOD SAFETY**

SINCE THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION'S GOAL IS A SAFE FOOD SUPPLY, FOR ALL CONSUMERS WE SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING:

1. BAN BSE PRESUMPTIVE POSITIVE ANIMALS FROM THE HUMAN FOOD SUPPLY.
2. BAN IMPORTS OF LIVE ANIMALS AND PROCESSED MEAT WITHOUT DOCUMENTED LABELING AND VERIFICATION.
3. BAN ALL RUMINANT MEAT PROTEIN PRODUCTS FOR FEED.
4. IMPLEMENT A VOLUNTARY, AFFORDABLE AND WORKABLE NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED AND ADMINISTERED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND NOT BY A PRIVATE ENTITY.
5. IMPLEMENT A FULLY FUNDED COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING (COOL).
6. LABEL PROCESSED FEEDSTUFFS.
7. REVIEW THE FOOD PROCESSING SYSTEM AND ADD ADDITIONAL INSPECTION.
8. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR A MORE DECENTRALIZED PACKING INDUSTRY AND FOOD SYSTEM.

### **GMO LABELING**

WE SUPPORT FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ALL GMO INGREDIENTS THROUGH FOOD LABELS.

### **IMPORTED FOODS**

WE SUPPORT THE ENFORCED USDA INSPECTION OF ALL IMPORTED FOODS TO MEET THE SAME REQUIREMENTS AS INSPECTED PRODUCTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

IN ORDER FOR MEAT TO BE LABELED A UNITED STATES PRODUCT, IT MUST BE BRED, BORN, RAISED, PROCESSED AND PACKAGED IN THE UNITED STATES

### **DAIRY IMPORTS**

WE OPPOSE ANY REDUCTION OF IMPORT QUOTAS ON DAIRY PRODUCTS.

### **LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY IMPORTS**

ALL LIVESTOCK ENTERING THE U.S. MUST BE HELD IN QUARANTINE UNTIL SUCH TIME THERE IS PROOF POSITIVE THE IMPORTED STOCK IS DISEASE FREE.

INTER-STATE MARKETING OF PROCESSED MEATS WE SUPPORT FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO ALLOW THE SMALLER INDEPENDENT MEAT PACKERS, WHO MEET STATE MEAT INSPECTION STANDARDS, TO MARKET INTER-STATE.

### **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

WE URGE ALL UNIVERSITIES TO PURSUE ADDI-

TIONAL RESEARCH AND SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ORGANIC FARMING AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRACTICES AND COOPERATE WITH OTHER ENTITIES DOING SUCH RESEARCH.

### **CORPORATE VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION AND PRICE FIXING**

WE DEMAND THE STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF THE ANTI-TRUST LAWS.

WE FULLY SUPPORT THE KANSAS LEGISLATURE ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE PRODUCERS PROTECTION ACT.

WE ALSO CALL FOR STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION THAT WOULD REQUIRE BINDING MEDIATION IN THE EVENTS OF DISPUTES BETWEEN GROWERS OR THEIR ORGANIZATIONS AND CONTRACTED PROCESSORS OR MARKETERS. WE SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ABOLISH PACKER/FEEDER COMBINATIONS THAT CONTROL MORE THAN 2% OF THE MARKET SHARE.

### **FEDERAL ANTI-CORPORATION FARMING LAW**

WE SUPPORT LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD PROHIBIT DIRECT INVESTMENT BY CORPORATIONS OR PRIVATE CORPORATION SIZE ENTITIES AND THEIR STOCKHOLDERS IN THE BUSINESS OF FARMING.

### **FOREIGN AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT REPORT (FAIR) ACT**

WE SUPPORT THE "FOREIGN AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT REPORT (FAIR) ACT".

### **COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION**

WE BELIEVE THE HISTORIC SYSTEM OF COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING CONTINUES BANKRUPTING FAMILY FARMERS, RANCHERS AND CONSUMERS AND IS NOT A PRUDENT RISK MANAGEMENT TOOL. THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE ENACTED:

1. TRANSFER REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION (CFTC) TO THE SECURITY EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC).
2. SUPPORT REGULATIONS THAT MAINTAIN PRICES ABOVE THE COST OF PRODUCTION.
3. WE OPPOSE AG COMMODITY OPTIONS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR FARM PROGRAMS.
4. WE ARE OPPOSED TO ANY GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN AG OPTIONS OR FUTURES TRADING AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH FARM PROGRAMS.
5. WE OPPOSE ANY SPECULATIVE TRADING OF COMMODITIES FUTURES BY ANY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, COMPANIES OR INDIVIDUALS.
6. ALL COMMODITIES SOLD ON FUTURES OR OPTIONS SHALL BE TREATED AS A POSITIVE SALE AND TAXED THE SAME AS ANY ORDINARY SALE OF THE SAME COMMODITY.
7. WE SUPPORT LEGISLATION REQUIRING ALL SPECULATIVE FUTURES CONTRACTS TO BE ASSESSED ANY FEDERAL CHECK-OFF.
8. WE SUPPORT THE ELIMINATION OF SPECULATIVE SHORT SELLING OF COMMODITY FUTURES CONTRACTS.

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### **FEDERAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICE**

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF ALLOWABLE DOCKAGE BE REDUCED. WE SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROHIBIT ADDING FOREIGN MATERIAL TO ANY COMMODITY. KANSAS FARMERS UNION REQUESTS THAT THE STATE OF KANSAS REQUIRE THAT THE GRAIN TRADE GIVE EQUAL CREDIT TO GRAIN THAT EXCEEDS THE STANDARD WEIGHT IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO THE DISCOUNT FOR GRAIN UNDER STANDARD WEIGHT.

### **FEDERAL TAXATION**

WE SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PROGRESSIVE INCOME TAX.

THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION SUPPORTS THE PHASE OUT OF ALL TAX PREFERENCES THAT MADE AGRICULTURE A TAX SHELTER FOR OUTSIDE, SPECULATIVE INVESTMENT.

WE RECOMMEND A CHANGE IN THE FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS TO ELIMINATE INCOME TAX LIABILITIES OF FORCED LIQUIDATIONS.

ROAD TAX ON FARM FUELS SHOULD BE EXEMPT AT POINT OF SALE. WE SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF THE DEDUCTION OF STATE AND LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES FROM FEDERAL TAX RETURNS.

WE SUPPORT INCOME TAX AVERAGING FOR FAMILY FARMERS.

WE SUPPORT INCREASING THE NUMBER OF TAX BRACKETS TO FACILITATE A MORE EQUITABLE TAX STRUCTURE.

WE SUPPORT THE TAX INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF WIND, SOLAR AND OTHER RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS.

INDIVIDUALS SHOULD BE ALLOWED THE SAME HEALTH INSURANCE DEDUCTION AS CORPORATIONS.

WE SUPPORT INCREASING THE LIMIT ON CALCULATING SOCIAL SECURITY TAX.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY**

THE SOCIAL SECURITY FUND SHOULD BE HELD IN ITS OWN ENTITY AND NOT BE USED TO FINANCE OTHER GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS. ADJUSTMENT SHOULD BE MADE IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM TO ABOLISH "NOTCH YEAR" DISCRIMINATION.

TO BE VIABLE AND ASSURE BENEFITS INTO THE FUTURE, SOCIAL SECURITY MUST BE A MANDATORY, UNIVERSAL SYSTEM. WE OPPOSE PROPOSALS THAT WOULD PRIVATIZE ANY SEGMENT OF THE SYSTEM.

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

WE DEMAND MEANINGFUL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM, SPECIFICALLY PUBLIC FUNDING OF CONGRESSIONAL AND PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS. WE OPPOSE THE USE OF "SOFT" MONEY IN CAMPAIGNS.

WE SUPPORT ELIMINATION OF CORPORATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE THROUGH "CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP."

### **FEDERAL COMMODITY CHECK-OFFS**

WE OPPOSE ALL FEDERAL CHECK-OFF PROGRAMS.

FRAUD AND ABUSE OF CHECK-OFF RESOURCES AND MONEY MUST BE PROSECUTED TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW.

ALL CHECK-OFF PROGRAMS MUST BE SUBJECT TO A REFERENDUM VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT EVERY THREE YEARS.

### **BANKRUPTCY**

THE F.D.I.C. (FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION) SHOULD NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO "CLASSIFY" LOANS DUE TO REDUCTION OF LAND VALUES.

WE OPPOSE ANY FEDERAL EFFORT TO ELIMINATE CHAPTER 12 BANKRUPTCY AND ANY OTHER ACTION TO FURTHER LESSEN THE BORROWERS' RIGHTS. WE SUPPORT THE RIGHT OF MEDIATION TO PREVENT BANKRUPTCY.

### **ENERGY**

WE SUPPORT CONSERVATION AS THE MAJOR EFFORT TO REDUCE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS. WE SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES SUCH AS SOLAR, GEOTHERMAL, WIND, HYDROGEN, ETHANOL, BIODIESEL AND ALGAE WITH EMPHASIS ON COMMUNITY-OWNED WIND GENERATED POWER. FEDERAL AND STATE LOW-INTEREST LOANS AND TAX CREDITS SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THESE AND OTHER PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

WE URGE PRODUCERS TO ADOPT FARMING PRACTICES AND CROP MIXES THAT WILL PERMIT EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF LOCALLY PRODUCED FUELS AND NITROGEN FERTILIZERS, THEREBY REDUCING AGRICULTURAL DEPENDENCE ON THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

WE FAVOR RATIONING OF FUEL IF NEEDED. WE ARE OPPOSED TO EXCESSIVE TAXES AND/OR PRICE INCREASES TO CONTROL FUEL USE.

WE FAVOR THE ABOLITION OF TAKE OR PAY CONTRACTS. WE OPPOSE THE DEREGULATION OF NATURAL GAS PRICES.

WE SUPPORT A RESILIENT EXPANDED ELECTRICAL GRID SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS FOR DEPENDABLE TRANSMISSION NATIONWIDE.

WE SUPPORT A 15% RENEWABLE ENERGY MANDATE FOR ELECTRICAL GENERATION. WE SUPPORT SECURING 25% OF THE NATION'S ENERGY UTILIZATION FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES BY 2025(25x25).

WE ARE OPPOSED TO RETAIL WHEELING AND DEREGULATION OF ENERGY.

WE SUPPORT C-BED (COMMUNITY BASED ENERGY DEVELOPMENT).

WE SUPPORT NET METERING OF ELECTRICITY. WITH A 12-MONTH AVERAGING PERIOD.

### **RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION**

WE OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO "PRIVATIZE" THE REAL SYSTEM.

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE LOSS OF RURAL ELECTRIC TERRITORY TO PRIVATE POWER COMPANIES.

### **TELECOMMUNICATION**

WE URGE THE CONTINUATION AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF REASONABLE PRICED, STATE OF THE ART TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE TO RURAL CUSTOMERS. WE OPPOSE CONSOLIDATION OF TELECOMMUNICATION PROVIDERS.

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### HEALTH CARE

WE SUPPORT USING A SINGLE PAYER HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM.

HEALTH CARE COVERAGE MUST BE COMPREHENSIVE AND THERE SHOULD BE PUBLIC EDUCATION TO PROMOTE HEALTHIER LIFE STYLE CHOICES.

UNTIL SUCH TIME AS UNIVERSAL SINGLE PAYER COVERAGE IS ENACTED, WE SUPPORT A 100 PERCENT TAX DEDUCTION FOR HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM PAID BY THE SELF-EMPLOYED, AND WE SUPPORT EQUALIZATION OF MEDICARE PAYMENTS TO RURAL AND URBAN HOSPITALS ALIKE.

WE SUPPORT INCENTIVES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING DOCTORS TO PRACTICE IN RURAL AND OTHER UNDERSERVED AREAS. DOCTORS WHO RECEIVE AID TO PRACTICE IN KANSAS FOR A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME BE REQUIRED TO FULFILL THEIR OBLIGATION. WE SUPPORT PRESCRIPTION COVERAGE UNDER THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SYSTEM.

WE OPPOSE THE SALE OF KANSAS BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD.

### FRAN

WE SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION AND FULL FUNDING OF FRAN (FARM & RANCH STRESS ASSISTANCE NETWORK).

### TRANSPORTATION

WE URGE THE REVITALIZATION OF OUR NATION'S PASSENGER AND FREIGHT RAILROAD SYSTEM. WE OPPOSE THE CLOSING OF BRANCH RAIL LINES WHICH SERVE RURAL COMMUNITIES.

WE OPPOSE THE DEREGULATION OF ALL NON-COMPETITIVE TRANSPORTATION ENTERPRISES.

WE SUPPORT THE RETENTION AND EXPANSION OF EXISTING AMTRAK ROUTES IN KANSAS.

WE OPPOSE ALL COAL SLURRY PIPELINES.

WE OPPOSE THE CUMBERSOME IRS REGULATION REQUIRING FARMERS TO LOG FARM CARS, PICKUP AND TRUCK MILEAGE.

WE OPPOSE FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF DOMESTIC RAILROAD LINES. WE OPPOSE THE PRIVATIZATION OF HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES USED IN THE AGRICULTURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

WE OPPOSE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE.

### FARM COOPERATIVES

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES SHOULD BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED IN THE AMERICAN FARMING SYSTEM TO ENABLE FARMERS TO ACHIEVE GREATER BARGAINING POWER BOTH IN MARKETING AND PURCHASING.

FARMERS UNION OPPOSES ANY ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE WITH THE PRESENT CAPITAL STRUCTURE OF THE COOPERATIVE AND ITS PRESENT TAX STATUS. WE ARE OPPOSED TO ANY CO-OP MANAGER OR NON-MEMBERS SERVING ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF OUR LOCAL OR REGIONAL CO-OPS.

WE SUPPORT CURRENT LEGISLATION THAT REQUIRES 10 MEMBERS TO FORM A CO-OP.

WE OPPOSE THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEVERANCE PAY TO BOARD MEMBERS, CEO'S AND OTHER EXECUTIVES DUE TO MERGERS OR ACQUISITIONS.

WE OPPOSE CHANGING REGULATIONS THAT REQUIRE A 2/3 VOTE OF MEMBERS TO CHANGE THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

WE OPPOSE PLANNED ENTRY INTO LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND FEEDING FACILITIES WHICH WILL PLACE OUR COOPERATIVE INTO A VERTICAL INTEGRATION POSITION.

WE MUST NOT USE OUR COOPERATIVES' RESOURCES IN ANY WAY WHICH CREATES DIRECT COMPETITION OR WEAKEN OUR MEMBERSHIPS FINANCIAL WELL-BEING.

WE SUPPORT THE ROCHDALE PRINCIPLE (ONE MEMBER/ONE VOTE).

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY COOPERATIVE ENTITY FROM CREATING AN ALLIANCE WITH ANY COMPANIES WHO HAVE THE INTENT ON MARKET CONTROL.

### STATE TAXATION

WE SUPPORT A STATE-WIDE PROPERTY TAX IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN INCOME BOOSTER TAX, TO SUPPLEMENT EDUCATION FUNDING, AND PROVIDE LOCAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.

WE OPPOSE AN INCREASE OF STATE SALES TAX.

WE RECOMMEND A GRADUATED STATE INCOME TAX.

WE OPPOSE THE ELIMINATION OF THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX.

WE SUPPORT EXEMPTING ROAD TAX ON FARM FUEL AT THE POINT OF SALE IN LIEU OF REFUND. WE ARE IN FAVOR OF THE CURRENT HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION AND WE SUPPORT ITS INCREASE TO \$25,000.

THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION SUPPORTS THE CONTINUATION OF A MINERAL PRODUCTION TAX ON OIL, GAS, SALT AND COAL TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING NEEDED FOR SCHOOL FINANCING AND ROAD AND HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE. WE SUPPORT A PROPERTY TAX ON THE TRANS-CANADA KEYSTONE PIPELINES.

WE SUPPORT A FAIR AND REASONABLE TAX ON PERSONAL PROPERTY.

WE SUPPORT A STATE-WIDE INTANGIBLE EARN-



Felix Revello, delegate from Pawnee County, reads an addition to the KFU Policy he would like to see added.

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INGS TAX TO BE USED FOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AND FUNDING EDUCATION.

WE URGE THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE DOUBLE EXEMPTION FOR INDIVIDUALS OVER 65.

WE SUPPORT AN ESTATE TAX WITH A 7 MILLION DOLLAR EXEMPTION.

### **STATE COMMODITY CHECK-OFFS**

WE SUPPORT VOLUNTARY CHECK-OFFS AT POINT OF SALE.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

WE URGE THE KANSAS LEGISLATURE AND THE U.S. CONGRESS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN FUNDING A PROGRAM TO PROVIDE INFORMATION, CONSULTATION AND REFERRALS TO RURAL RESIDENTS. WE SUPPORT LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED VALUE-ADDED ENDEAVORS.

WE ALSO CALL FOR THE REJUVENATION OF A RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

WE SUPPORT MAINTAINING RURAL POST OFFICES.

### **FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL LAND**

WE URGE PASSAGE BY THE KANSAS STATE LEGISLATURE OF A LAW TO PROHIBIT ENTRY INTO BUSINESS OF FARMING AND RANCHING OR THE OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND BY ALIEN INVESTORS, EXCEPT THOSE RESIDENT FARM FAMILIES OR INDIVIDUALS SEEKING UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP.

WE URGE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION STRENGTHENING THE REPORTING OF KANSAS AGRICULTURAL LAND OWNED BY ALIENS, CORPORATIONS, AND LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS.

### **STATE BANKING REGULATIONS**

WE SUPPORT THE SYSTEM OF INDEPENDENT RURAL BANKS. WE URGE THOSE BANKS TO SUPPORT KANSAS FAMILY FARMERS AND TO SERVE THE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS OF KANSAS FAMILY FARMERS. WE FAVOR THE SAME REGULATIONS FOR SAVINGS AND LOANS.

### **INTERSTATE BRANCH BANKING**

WE OPPOSE THE RIEGLE-NEAL INTERSTATE BANKING AND BRANCHING ACT MANDATES THAT AN OUT-OF-STATE BANK BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE BANKS ACROSS STATE LINES WITHOUT REGARD TO INDIVIDUAL STATE LAW.

WE SUPPORT STATE LEGISLATION TO OPT-OUT OF THE INTERSTATE BRANCHING PROVISION OF THE RIEGLE-NEAL INTERSTATE BANKING AND BRANCHING ACT.

### **ELEVATOR BANKRUPTCY**

STATE LEGISLATION SHOULD PROHIBIT SPECULATION IN THE FUTURES MARKET BY GRAIN ELEVATOR OWNERS AND OPERATORS, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF LEGITIMATE HEDGING. STATE LEGISLATION SHOULD ALSO PROHIBIT INVOLVEMENT BY ELEVATORS IN DELAYED OR DEFERRED PRICING SCHEMES.

GRAIN ELEVATOR OPERATORS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT MORE DETAILED FINANCIAL INFORMATION TO THE KANSAS GRAIN INSPECTION DEPARTMENT.

WE SUPPORT TIMELY AND IN DEPTH AUDITS.

WE SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF THE RECEIVERSHIP PROCESS FOR FINANCIALLY TROUBLED ELEVATORS, WITH PROVISION FOR A TEMPORARY RECEIVER TO BE NAMED INSURING IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION OF A BANKRUPT ELEVATOR TO GUARANTEE THAT GRAIN IS PROTECTED WHILE THE COURTS APPOINT A PERMANENT RECEIVER.

WE SUPPORT FARMERS BEING GIVEN PRIORITY THROUGH "FARMERS FIRST LIEN" IN ELEVATOR BANKRUPTCY PROCEEDINGS.

WE OPPOSE THE GRAIN WAREHOUSE TRUST FUND CONCEPT FUNDED BY A CHECK-OFF ASSESSED AGAINST GRAIN SOLD BY FARMERS.

WE ENDORSE A FEDERAL OR STATE INSURANCE PROGRAM PROTECTING ANY STORED AND/OR PRICED GRAIN FOR ALL STATE AND FEDERALLY INSPECTED ELEVATORS, SIMILAR TO THE FDIC FOR BANKS.

WAREHOUSE RECEIPTS AND SCALE TICKETS SHALL BE RECOGNIZED AS LEGAL PROOF OF OWNERSHIP OF GRAIN, AND SHOULD BE GUARANTEED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

WE SUPPORT SIMILAR PROTECTION FOR THE SALE OF LIVESTOCK THROUGH PUBLIC AUCTION.

### **INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM**

WE SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM WHICH ALLOWS OUR CITIZENS TO VOTE ON MAJOR ISSUES AND TO INITIATE BALLOT QUESTIONS BY PETITION.

WE SUPPORT MAINTAINING THE COUNTY OPTION VOTE WITH REGARD TO CORPORATE SWINE AND DAIRY OPERATIONS.

WE SUPPORT COUNTY HOME RULE.

### **KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

WE SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF A SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AND CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE.

### **PHARMACEUTICAL GMO PRODUCTION**

WE SUPPORT STRICT REGULATION AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ANY KANSAS GROWN PHARMACEUTICAL GMO'S. ALL FIELD RESEARCH SITES OF GMO'S MUST BE APPROVED AND HAVE PERMITS ISSUED BY THE KANSAS DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE.

### **KANSAS SEED LAW**

KANSAS SEED LAW SHOULD NOT RESTRICT PRODUCERS OF WHEAT, BARLEY, OATS, SOYBEANS OR ALFALFA FROM REPLANTING OR SELLING SEED PRODUCED ON THEIR FARM.

WE OPPOSE ANY EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE OR ALLOW THE USE OF THE "TERMINATOR GENE" ON OUR NATION'S SEED SUPPLY.

### **BRAND LAWS**

WE URGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY LIVESTOCK BRAND INSPECTION AT ALL MARKETS.

### **DAIRY**

WE SUPPORT A FLOOR ON THE BASIC FORMULA

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PRICE, I.E., THE BASE PRICE FOR DETERMINING THE MILK PRICE FOR PRODUCERS.

WE SUPPORT THE USE OF THE MARKETING ORDER SYSTEM IN KANSAS TO EFFECTIVELY SET A FLOOR ON DAIRY PRICES PAID TO THE DAIRY FARMERS.

WE SUPPORT AN APPEAL PROCESS FOR THE AMERICAN DAIRYMAN WHEN AN INSPECTION IS CONSIDERED UNJUST BY THE FARMER.

**STATE MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION**

WE OPPOSE THE ELIMINATION OF THE STATE'S MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION DIVISION.

**NOXIOUS WEED LAW**

WE OPPOSE ANY LEGISLATION THAT WOULD DISCONTINUE THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED DEPARTMENTS SELLING, DISTRIBUTING AND APPLYING PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES AND OTHER CHEMICALS.

**INDUSTRIAL WATER USE**

WE RECOMMEND INDUSTRIES, WHICH ARE HEAVY USERS OF WATER, BE REQUIRED TO USE SURFACE WATER INSTEAD OF GROUND WATER, AND TO RECYCLE, WHEN POSSIBLE.

WE URGE THAT ALL OIL PRODUCERS BE PROHIBITED FROM USING FRESH WATER IN FLOODING FOR SECONDARY OIL RECOVERY. WE OPPOSE THE USE OF ANY KANSAS WATER FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF COAL SLURRY.

**IRRIGATION**

WE STRONGLY URGE THAT PRESENT IRRIGATION PRACTICES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CONFORM TO STRICT CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES TO ASSURE THE WISEST USE OF WATER TO MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ON AFFECTED COMMUNITIES.

WE SUPPORT ELIMINATION OF THE "USE IT OR LOSE IT" RULE ON IRRIGATION WELLS.

WE RECOMMEND ANY MULTI-YEAR VARIABLE GROUNDWATER RIGHT PROGRAM INCLUDE A MANDATORY REDUCTION IN TOTAL ALLOCATION AS A CONSERVATION MEASURE TO OFFSET POTENTIAL UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES.

WE RECOMMEND THAT ALL WELLS HAVE METERS.

**WATER TRANSFER**

WE OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OF SURFACE OR GROUND WATER FROM ONE WATERSHED TO ANOTHER.

**WATER AND WIND RIGHTS**

WATER AND WIND RIGHTS MUST NOT BE SEVERED FROM SURFACE OWNERSHIP.

**WATER RETENTION STRUCTURES**

WE SUPPORT FLOOD CONTROL BY THE USE OF AREA WATERSHED PROJECTS AS OPPOSED TO LARGE GENERAL DAMS. WE SUPPORT CONTINUING TAX BENEFITS TO REMAIN IN EFFECT ON LANDS WITH DONATED EASEMENTS FOR THE ENTIRE LIFE OF BOTH NEW AND EXISTING STRUCTURES.

**STATE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES**

WE SUPPORT STATE FUNDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PRACTICES.

**CONSTRUCTION WORK IN PROGRESS (CWIP)**

THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION IS OPPOSED TO COSTS FOR POWER GENERATING FACILITIES UNDER CONSTRUCTION BEING ADDED TO CURRENT UTILITY RATES.

**PROPERTY RIGHTS**

A. EMINENT DOMAIN.

WE OPPOSE THE TAKING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY WITHOUT DUE PROCESS.

WE OPPOSE GRANTING EMINENT DOMAIN POWER TO NON-REGULATED PRIVATE CORPORATIONS.

WE OPPOSE THE USE OF (EMINENT DOMAIN) BY THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND PARKS TO ACQUIRE LAND THAT HAS BEEN CULTIVATED FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS, THAT HAS BEEN DESIGNATED WETLANDS.

B. ZONING.

PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY IN ALL ZONING DECISIONS.

C. REGIONAL PLANNING.

REQUIRED APPOINTMENT ON ZONING OR PLANNING BOARDS FOR FARMERS, ASSURING THEM REPRESENTATION ON A PAR WITH NON-AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS IN THE REGION.

D. WE SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT ALLOWS FARMERS A VOICE IN ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW GAME OR PREDATOR SPECIES IN THEIR AREA. WE REQUIRE THE KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS DEPARTMENT TO NOTIFY THE PUBLIC OF ANY PREVIOUS OR FUTURE RELEASES.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

WE SUPPORT EFFORTS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS OF HEAT-TRAPPING GASES AND TOXIC POLLUTANTS FROM ELECTRICAL GENERATION RESOURCES.

**2011-2012 Special Order of Business**

**FARMERS UNION'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER**

KANSAS FARMERS UNION SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION EDUCATIONAL CENTER IN BAILEY, COLORADO.

WE SHOULD SUPPORT ALL ASPECTS OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION YOUTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM AND CONTINUE FULL UTILIZATION OF OUR BAILEY CAMP FACILITIES SO THAT IT IS AVAILABLE FOR OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE FARMERS UNION MEMBERSHIP.

WE RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT ALL THE DEDICATED EFFORTS THAT WENT INTO MAKING OUR EDUCATIONAL CENTER A REALITY BY THOUSANDS OF LOYAL FARMERS UNION MEMBERS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

**Interstate Shipment of State Inspected Meat**

Kansas Farmers Union requests the State of Kansas pursue the opportunity to sell and ship state inspected meats interstate.

**Moratorium of Hydraulic Fracturing Operations**

We support a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing operations in oil and gas recovery until an environmental impact study guided by sound science, proves the activities safe.

# Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch

By Mary Howell

The Kansas Graziers Association (KGA) and the Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition are co-sponsoring an all day conference, "Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch," presented by the National Drought Mitigation Center, based at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The conference will be held Saturday, January 21 at the Harvest House Meeting Room of the Flint Hills Christian Church, 1836 E. U.S. Highway 50 in Emporia, Ks. This is the KGA's annual winter conference.

"The workshop will address both the natural resource concerns and the financial and business planning end of drought," said Tonya Haigh, Drought Center researcher.

"The goal is to come through the drought with both your finances and resource base intact, as much as possible."

Speakers will include **Barry Dunn**, Ranch Management Specialist and Dean of Agriculture and Biological Sciences at South Dakota State University; **Jerry Volesky**, professor and range and forage systems specialist at the West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte, Neb.; **Ted Alexander**, a Kansas rancher who operates according to a detailed management plan; **David Kraft** and **Dwayne Rice**, Kansas-based USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Range Management Specialists; **Amy Roeder**, USDA RMA Risk Management Specialist in Kansas City;

**Charles Griffin**, director of the Kansas Rural Family Helpline and research assistant professor in the School of Family Studies and Human Services at Kansas State University; and **Mary Knapp**, Kansas State Climatologist.

Speakers are provided through a grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency.

Participants will receive a copy of a Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch handbook with worksheets.

The materials will also be freely available on the web. The information is condensed from a comprehensive drought management website, online at <http://drought.unl.edu/ranchplan>, which was also made possible by the USDA RMA.

Other sponsors for the conference are Kansas Rural Center, Kansas Farmers Union, Kansas Center for Sustainable Ag and Alternative Crops, Flint Hills RC&D, National Drought Mitigation Center, in addition to KGA, KGLC and RMA.

Registration is \$25 for the main registrant per family/ranch and \$15 for each additional person.

Students are being offered a reduced registration rate of \$10. Lunch is included. To register, please visit <http://www.kansasruralcenter.org> for information and a printable mail-in registration form. For more information or questions call Mary Howell, Kansas Graziers Association at 785-562-8726.

## Project Coordinator from Page 7

Kansas, including the Topeka/Lawrence/Emporia area in May and the High Plains Food Cooperative, Atwood, in late June or early July. Nebraska tour locations are pending, but will be held in mid to late June and July.

Participants in the program will also gain personalized professional assistance and counseling on farm production, business, financing.

Other assistance includes production and marketing, farm business development, loan applications and farm financial advising.

There will also be information on state and federal financing and loan options, land access strategies and linking programs, and programs for disabled farmers.

## How KFU Members Can Help

Outreach is our number one priority at this point in the project, and that's where Kansas Farmers Union members can be of the most assistance.

If you or someone you know might be interested in participating in this program, whether as a veteran, farmer, workshop speaker, tour host, or through support of any kind, please **contact me at (785) 527-0941 or e-mail me at [kfu.nick@gmail.com](mailto:kfu.nick@gmail.com)**.

Our future members could be at one of these workshops or tours, so let's do all we can to be a resource for these returning veterans who are agriculturally inclined.

I look forward to the upcoming months as KFU and

its partners work on this project, and I am grateful for this unique opportunity.

## About Nick

My story begins on a diversified crop and livestock farm near Republic, Kan. in Republic County. Besides cattle, we raise corn, milo, alfalfa, wheat and soybeans.

After graduating from K-State in May 2010, I returned home and took a sales position at C&W Farm Supply in Courtland, Kan.

I began working for the Kansas Wildlife Federation as their Farm Bill Coordinator in June 2011.

I'm very involved in my community, serving as Rae Hobson Memorial Library Chairman, Courtland Arts Council member and Republic County Farmers Union President.

Being able to work from home, stay involved in my community, and assist with our own family farm is extremely important to me.

## POTUZAK FARMS

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# 11 proposed GIPSA rules did not make the final cut

By Daryll Ray and  
Harwood Schaffer

After a year-and-a-half of wrangling and responding to Congress and input from stakeholders, the USDA published a final GIPSA rule on December 9, 2011. For some producers the result was far less than they hoped for while packers and representatives of the meat industry still found lots to complain about in the new rule.

In announcing the publication of the final rule, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack noted that the most recent Agriculture Appropriations bill included language prohibiting the Department from moving forward on a number of important provisions in the proposed rule. A full copy of the full rule is available at <http://www.gipsa.usda.gov/Federal%20Register/fr11/12-9-11.pdf>.

In this column, we will focus on the issues that were in the proposed rule and not included in the final rule. Some would say that the elimination of many of these items represent an outsized influence of the meat industry compared to the ranchers and growers who actually produce the animals that are slaughtered.

In the final rule, the USDA noted eleven provisions in the proposed rule that were not finalized in the rule published on December 9, 2011.

**Value-Added Production and Premiums** - “The proposed rule included several provisions related to the potential use of price premiums and related types of contracts such as marketing agreements in a manner that are potential violations of the P&S Act.” This portion of the rule was intended to ensure that all producers of like animal quality

would be entitled to the same pay. These provisions were not included in the final rule.

**Recordkeeping** - “Section 201.94(b) of the proposed rule that would have required packers, swine contractors and live poultry dealers to retain records justifying differential pricing decisions is not included in this final rule.”

**Packer-to-Packer Sales and Relationships With Dealers** - “Section 201.212 related to packer-to-packer sales and packer relationships with dealers will not be finalized. Although some comments supported inclusion of these provisions, many comments raised serious concerns about potential adverse effects on the marketplace, such as encouraging further vertical integration and reducing the number of dealers and other buyers. While this section will not be finalized, we expect covered packers and dealers to continue to comply with the related portions of the Act (7 U.S.C. 192c–g) and existing regulations (9 CFR 201.69–70).”

**Prohibitions and Requirements Related to Capital Investments** - “While section 201.217 of the proposed rule establishing specific requirements related to capital investments is not included in this final rule, the criteria required by the 2008 Farm Bill are being finalized, in modified form. Considering the variation that exists with respect to capital investments and payment terms in contracts, we believe stating criteria that the Secretary may use to determine whether certain terms in arrangements and contracts are in violation of the P&S Act is more appropriate. The asso-

ciated definition of ‘Capital Investment’ (proposed section 201.2(n)) will also not be included in this final rule.”

**Definition of Competitive Injury and Likelihood of Competitive Injury** - “Sections 201.2(t) and (u) of the proposed rule provided definitions for ‘competitive injury’ and ‘likelihood of competitive injury’ in an attempt to provide more clarity on the meaning of these terms. These definitions are not necessary for the purposes of this final rule and therefore are not included.”

**Applicability of Contracts** - The USDA eliminated this paragraph because the “sections related to price premiums and discounts are not included in the final rule.”

**Scope of Section 202(a) and (b)** - What could be seen as the most important provision in the proposed rule was eliminated from the final rule. This eliminated provision clarified that these two sections of Packers and Stockyards Act describing unfair practices on the part of packers does not require “harm to competition” for producers to be able to sue a packer in court. As a result, for instance, slaughter facilities can still prohibit producers from watching their animals being weighed at the slaughter facility—an activity parallel to one that grain producers take for granted and exercise on a regular basis—without fear of being sued for unfair practices.

**Unfair, Unjustly Discriminatory, and Deceptive Practices or Devices** - In the proposed rule the USDA listed conduct that it considered to be unfair or deceptive and thus a violation of Section 202 (a). Because the clarifica-

tion of 202 (a) was eliminated, the list of unfair and deceptive practices was eliminated as well.

**Undue or Unreasonable Preference or Advantage** - Because the clarification of Section 202 (b) was not included in the final rule the criteria determining conduct that would violate 202(b) was eliminated as well.

**Livestock and Poultry Contracts** - The proposed rule included provisions to improve the transparency of poultry contracts by requiring that samples of each type of contract be published. This requirement was not included in the published rule.

**Tournament Systems** - The proposed rule prohibited paying growers less than the base pay and that growers being ranked together include only growers with the same type of houses. From the wording of the final rule it remains a possibility that the USDA may revise the proposed rule in the future.

For those producers for whom these eliminated provisions would reduce harm that they believe they are suffering at the hands of slaughter facilities, there appears to be few means of addressing their grievances.

*Daryll E. Ray holds the Blasingame Chair of Excellence in Agricultural Policy, Institute of Agriculture, University of Tennessee, and is the Director of UT's Agricultural Policy Analysis Center (APAC). Harwood D. Schaffer is a Research Assistant Professor at APAC. (865) 974-7407; dray@utk.edu and hdschaffer@utk.edu; <http://www.ag-policy.org>.*

## Convention from Page 1

young people,” Taylor-Puckett said.

### Roger Johnson

National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson discussed the 2012 Farm Bill and the cuts of roughly \$20 billion. Johnson said the cuts more than likely won't come out of nutrition programs, which account for 80 percent of the Farm Bill. He sees direct payments being cut and crop insurance being left alone.

The circumstances that we face in agriculture today are not a whole unlike they were in the 96 farm bill debate: high commodity prices, rapidly increasing costs behind those prices. Didn't have budget concern that we have today, but a lot of attitude in the rest of the country, you know what agriculture's doing pretty well,” Johnson said.

Johnson said the House and Senate Ag Committees are looking at passing the 2012 Farm Bill very differently. Senate Chairwoman Stabenow said she intends to hold hearing in February, with the goal of passing the Farm Bill by June.

“[House Ag Chairman] Lucas said no, no we're not going to do anything in the house. We're going to wait

until the new budget scores are out and wait and see what the Senate does. He's saying that because he doesn't believe he can pass a farm bill of any sort,” Johnson said. “My personal view is that its going to be a really heavy lift to get it passed in June as well and I think its probably more likely we're going to be looking at a 2013 Farm Bill.”

### Henry Strnad

Longtime KFU member from Republic County Henry Strnad shared his “philosophy.”

“What are the difficult things to do?” Strnad said. “Let me tell you it's difficult to be a responsible citizen. It's difficult to be a good steward of that which was given to us. It's difficult to be accountable, and I think we're failing miserably.”

### Mary Hendrickson

Concentration can be found in every aspect of agriculture and food production, Mary Hendrickson, University of Missouri professor, said.

“There's just a few fertilizers suppliers, just a few seed suppliers, we can count them on one hand, maybe two. There's just a few folks to sell to, and then there's just a few food manufactures,” Hendrickson said. “We're relying on fewer and fewer mammals, birds and crop species to provide our human food supply. Sometime the environment is going to hit us

back.”

What makes this problem, concentration in our food, something everyone should be concerned with is that it is taking away consumers' ability to exercise democratic control our food system.

“I think it's really important to understand, what's happened is we've shifted the focus of control and decision making about food away from households and communities to corporate boards and we do this because its more efficient, its better for us. That's the argument,” Hendrickson said.

“I know we're disheartened [about the recent rulings on competition policy, ie GIPSA]. We don't feel like its going anywhere, but we have to keep our eye on the ball, because competition policy and antitrust is crucial. and we're going to have to think about it on a global scale.” Hendrickson said.

Hendrickson sited that as Taylor-Puckett said, local food and farmers markets are seeing steady increases.

“At the same time we're getting these global production networks, we're also reinventing these things at the local level. It makes the food system very exciting and very interesting,” Hendrickson said.

### Chuck Hassebrook

“Policy determines what kind of agriculture and what kind of rural communities we're going to have and what kind of agriculture communities we pass on to the next generation,” Chuck Hassebrook, Executive Director for the Center for Rural Affairs, said.

Hassebrook spoke a lot about the importance of the Farm Bill, not only on agriculture, but also for rural communities. Although, the

main point he addressed is how large, corporate farms are succeeding, causing the small, family farms to be squeezed out, which also causing rural communities to dwindle.

“The problem is that as long as we keep up that same kind of public policy, that over subsidizes the big and powerful and under invests in our future, we're going to keep going the way we've been going in rural America,” Hassebrook said. “If we keep up this policy, its going to keep destroying family farming and it's going to keep driving our communities to their death and we got to do something better.”

### Fred Stokes

Fred Stokes, President of the Organization for Competitive Markets (OCM), stressed the fact that family farmers have “got to come alive.”

“If we're going to come out of this thing with the family farm and ranch still being alive, we've got to move and we've got to move soon and we can't be too passive,” Stokes said. “We've simply got to come together and work together on our common mission of promoting the interest of farmers and ranchers and ensuring our national food security and fostering a more livable rural America.”

Stokes also shared some facts on how the Beef Checkoff is corrupt.

“They can say we don't use checkoff money to give to campaign contributions and advocate with it, but the fact of the matter, in my opinion, NCBA (National Cattlemen's Beef Association) exists because of the checkoff,” Stokes said. “They have gone and become a powerful political force, thanks to the checkoff.

## Concentration by the numbers

**82** percent in beef  
packing market

**44** percent in animal  
feed

**37** percent: amount of

the grocery market  
Walmart owns

**12** plant species and

**5** animal species

provide 70 percent of all  
human food supply

## Convention from Page 18

We have funded our own opposition. There's some gross, terrible abuses that have occurred."

OCM has started a Beef Check-off Reform Task Force which has been successful in having an audit done by the Inspector General for USDA. The audit is expected to be done in February.

Stokes said the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance "scares me to death." The Alliance is a confederation of about 50 entities, including Farm Bureau, NCBA, and "essentially all the commodity programs," Stokes said.

"They are putting together a massive fund and putting together a big PR (public relations) company and others to spin this thing and convince the public that they ought to institute the industrial model for agriculture rather than the family farm," Stokes said. "I see it as a terrible thing that's going to be perpetrated on the American people if we don't move pretty soon."

### Jim Hightower

Former Texas Ag Commis-



KFU member Henry Strnad of Republic County speaks during lunch on Saturday.

sioner and Political Activist Jim Hightower entertained during the Convention Banquet with his political humor and a message about the need to speak up in rural America.

"My message to you is that we can have the kind of farm policy, we can have the kind of democratic economy, we can have the kind of communities, the good food culture, the kind of country that we want, if we do something that is very important in America,

and that is to be disobedient," Hightower said.

Hightower also talked about the importance of Farmers Union and why we need to continue to fight.

"You (Farmers Union) have the guts and the gumption to stand up for future generations of family farmers, for the purity of our land. Stand up for rural communities, the culture of agriculture," Hightower said.

"The great fight that you are

making at a grassroots level all across this country is changing the food economy, but it's also changing the American perception of what America is and how big we can be," Hightower said. "Our leaders are small, but our people are not. And that's the importance of farmers union, to invest in the people, lift up the people, encourage the people themselves, because they are the powers who can make the difference."

## Patronize Your Local Farmers Union Agent

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.

### Agent

Stacey Addison  
Art Alcalá

Matthew Anderson  
Fred Behrens  
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Ron Buddenhagen  
Jerry and Jeff Cady  
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Roy McCoy  
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Tom Clark  
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David Snyder  
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Steve Yearout  
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Mitchell, Lincoln, Ottawa  
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Sherman, Wallace

Republic  
West District Manager

Finney  
Smith

Ford

Clay, Dickinson, Washington

Cloud, Republic, Ottawa  
Eastern District Manager

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Saline, Dickinson, Ottawa

Finney

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in your Community!  
More information on Page 5**

## 2011 Convention Banquet



KFU member Annie Wilson of Chase County performs her songs about the Flint Hills during the Convention Banquet.



Kansas Farmers Union Convention Keynote Speaker Jim Hightower, former Texas Ag Commissioner and Political Activist, discusses the disfunction in our government and how we can work to change it.



Kansas Farmers Union President Donn Teske (left) presents Tom Giessel of Larned with the Ruth Hirsh Award. Giessel was named the official Farmers Union Historian in 2011 by National Farmers Union. Thank you Tom for preserving our history!

