

Report to the Legislature: 2017 Activities

The Situation

The Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) serves as a resource center for producers and professionals for information about diversified, sustainable agriculture. As part of K-State Research and Extension, KCSAAC facilitates research, education and outreach activities about sustainable agriculture practices, alternative food, fiber, and medicinal crops in Kansas. The Center is also home to the Kansas Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (KS SARE) Professional Development Program. Advised by a committee of producers, extension agents, extension specialists, non-governmental organization representatives, and governmental agency personnel, the Center's goal is to provide educational training and professional development activities to producers, Extension professionals, and other agriculture professionals. Program focus topics for 2017 established by an Advisory Committee were soil health and cover crops, and local foods and specialty crops.

KCSAAC Initiatives

Carbon, Energy & Climate

Activities focused primarily on soil health and environmental stewardship this year. Highlights included a Feedlot Field Day in Lyon County attended by 60 producers and ag professionals, the Field Day focused on optimal placement of non-confined feedlot pens, cleaning schedules, grass buffers, and low-stress cattle handling techniques. Other activities with KCSAAC involvement included: Soil Health Field Day in Holton; Women in Farming Workshops in Palmer and McPherson; Playa Lake Workshop in Garden City; Winter Grazing Conference in Topeka; and lectures to the K-State FNDH 132 Class about sustainable agriculture practices in Kansas.



Feedlot Field Day, October 2017, Lyon Co.

Local Food & Specialty Crops



FSMA Training/Farm Tour, August 2017, Sedgwick Co.

Interest in specialty crops and locally grown food products continues to grow. Highlights from 2017 included providing travel scholarships for producers and ag professionals to attend local, regional, and national conferences. Kansans attended the following conferences with a little help from KCSAAC: Great Plains Growers Conference, St. Joseph, MO; Mid America Organic Conference, Kansas City, MO; Women Food and Ag Network Conference, Madison, WI; National Incubator Farm Training Initiative National Field School, Pacific Grove, CA; American Society of Agronomy Annual Meeting, Tampa, FL; Range Beef Cow Symposium, Cheyenne, WY; Fuller Field School, Emporia, KS;

Master Gardener Bus Tour to Arkansas; National Ag in the Classroom Conference, Kansas City; Midwest Cover Crop Council Meeting, Grand Rapids, MI; Changing Lands, Changing Hands Conference, Denver, CO; Kansas Farmers Market Conference and Regional Workshops; Soil Health Bootcamps, various locations in Kansas; Food Safety and Modernization Act Trainings, various locations in Kansas.

NCR-SARE Grants

KCSAAC's affiliation with SARE creates opportunities for grants through the North Central Region SARE (NCR-SARE) grant programs: Farmer Rancher, Youth Educator, Graduate Student, Research and Education, Partnership, and Professional Development. A total of \$78,774 was awarded for NCR-SARE grants in 2017.

NCR-SARE grants in Kansans:

- \$22,500 Farmer Rancher Grant to Rosanna Bauman for "Exploration and Expansion of a Mobile Meat Market Concept for Kansas"
- \$22,493 Farmer Rancher Grant to Katie Nixon for "Food Hub Development in the Rural Midwest"
- \$14,305 Farmer Rancher Grant to Nicholas Ward for "Lawrence Worm Farm: Sustainability in Food Waste Reclamation"
- \$7,492 Farmer Rancher Grant to Brad Dilts for "Evaluation and Comparison of Paper Pot Transplanter to Other Hand Transplanting Methods in No-Dig Beds and Cover Crop Residue"
- \$11,984 Graduate Student Grant to Nithin Jayaram Shetty, KSU, for "Unlocking wild wheat potential for enhancing water use efficiency and to sustain yield gains under extreme water-deficit and heat stress"

KCSAAC Enabling Legislation

KSA 76-4, 103 –...Functions and duties of the center of excellence on sustainable agriculture and alternative crops shall include but are not be limited to:

- Emphasizing research, education, outreach and marketing for sustainable agriculture and alternative food, fiber and medicinal crops.
- Assisting farmers to increase their share of the food system dollar.
- Collecting and analyzing basic information on the Kansas food system and opportunities for production and direct marketing.
- Focusing research on value added processes and new crops that offer low-volume, high margin niche opportunities.
- Assisting small farmers to access lower input costs through a delivery system with expanded access to sustainable agricultural practices.
- Marketing assistance to promote products produced and processed in Kansas.
- Expanding small farm research to include: Organic products; less capital intensive investments; energy saving technology; and agricultural practices that reduce soil erosion and restore soil health.
- Developing and distributing a guide of all state services for small farms and value added agriculture

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K-STATE
Research and Extension

Center for Sustainable Agriculture
and Alternative Crops

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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