

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dan Kerschen at 8:35am on Tuesday, February 09, 2016, 159-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Tom Hawk – Excused

Senator Garrett Love – Excused

Senator Carolyn McGinn – Excused

Committee staff present:

David Wiese, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Natalie Scott, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Fran Lusk, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Kyle Hamilton, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Heather O'Hara, Legislative Research Department

Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

No conferees present

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

### **Informational briefing:**

Kent Moore, KS Corn Commission, reported 2015 produced the second largest corn crop in history. The top customers are the livestock and ethanol industries. In 2015, they completed their fifth year of partnering with Growth Energy, National Corn Growers, and several other state corn checkoffs in the American Ethanol program with NASCAR. They also fund research at K-State, focusing on production and profitability. They support Common Ground, the Kansas Farm Food Connection, Corn Farmers Coalition and US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. These efforts all aim to help consumers gain a better understanding of how farmers produce feed, fuel, food and fiber for the world. Mr. Moore stood for questions. ([Attachment 1](#)) ([Attachment 2](#))

### **Informational briefing:**

Stephen Bigge, KS Grain Sorghum Commission, reported Kansas is the top grain sorghum producing state. An estimated 282 million bushels were produced in 2015, up 41% from last year. K-State is home to the Center for Sorghum Improvement. The Commission has focused research efforts towards increasing yield, cold and drought tolerance, weed control and sorghum management. Mr. Bigge stood for questions. ([Attachment 3](#)) ([Attachment 4](#)) ([Attachment 5](#))

### **Informational briefing:**

Dennis Gruenbacher, KS Soybean Commission, reported all U.S. soybean farmers participate in a

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Agriculture at 8:35am on Tuesday, February 09, 2016 in Room 159-S of the Capitol.

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checkoff. Funded research includes soybean genetics, utilization, pests and disease, nutrients, weeds, and management systems. They recently funded studies of charcoal rot disease at Wichita State University and high-oleic soybean oil at Pittsburgh State University. They also have ongoing projects in agronomy, plant pathology, entomology and grain science at Kansas State University and biodiesel projects at the University of Kansas. About 60% of soybeans are exported with China being the biggest customer. Mr. Gruendbacher stood for questions. ([Attachment 6](#)) ([Attachment 7](#)) ([Attachment 8](#))

### **Informational briefing:**

Brian Linn, KS Wheat Commission, reported growing conditions were plagued with drought, but rains moved in right before harvest, bringing with them diseases and weed pressure. Despite these issues, late season moisture improved yields, resulting in an average production of 321.9 million bushels. The National Science Foundation has named Kansas State University as its lead institution for the world's first Industry/University Cooperative Research Center on wheat. This is the first National Science Foundation established research center for any crop plant. Each year Kansas farmers export roughly half of the Kansas wheat crop. Overall wheat exports were down significantly this year, including hard red winter wheat exports, which were down 39%. The top customers included Nigeria, Brazil, Mexico and Japan. At this time the U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba is working with the Cuban government and flour milling industry in an attempt to open this market to Kansas wheat. Mr. Linn stood for questions. ([Attachment 9](#))

### **Informational briefing:**

Steve Swaffer, Kansas Sunflower Commission, presented Written Testimony. ([Attachment 10](#))

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2016.

Senator Kerschen closed the meeting at 9:29 A.M.