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Governor Sam Brownback

**Kansas Department of Agriculture Agency Update  
To the Senate Agriculture Committee  
by Jackie McClaskey  
Secretary of Agriculture  
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Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and provide an update on the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is committed to serving Kansas farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, and the customers/consumers they serve. We have a responsibility to help provide an environment that fosters economic growth and supports and advocates for agriculture. All while maintaining our statutory and regulatory responsibility to help ensure a safe food supply, promote public health, protect animal health and protect consumers to the best of our ability. These efforts are elaborated upon in the agency vision, mission and objectives. This document can be found online at [www.agriculture.ks.gov/mvp](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/mvp)

While the agency continues to make strides in each of these areas, more work needs to be done. In order to better gauge progress, each program and division is developing objectives and measurable goals aligned with the agency vision, mission and priorities.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is not a large agency, but it is diverse. We are organized into five different divisions (Agricultural Business Services, Animal Health, Conservation, Marketing and Water Resources) made up of 20 programs. In addition, services are provided to the agency by Administrative Services (Fiscal, Records, Information Technology, and Human Resources), Legal and the Office of the Secretary, which includes Communications, Economics and Compliance Education/Customer Service.

In 2014, the agency headquarters was relocated to Manhattan, adjacent to the K-State Campus. We are leasing a building from the K-State Foundation. A year ago, I shared that we believed this move would provide greater opportunity for collaborative work with Kansas State University. In the first six months, numerous partnerships have been established and we look forward to new partnerships and collaborations in the future to further enhance the services we provide to Kansans. In addition to the Manhattan office, we have the Office of the Secretary in the Landon Office Building, the Laboratory and Water Resources Field Office at Forbes Field in Topeka, Water Resources Field Offices in Stockton, Stafford, Garden City and Parsons, a Food Safety field office in Olathe and 129 home-based field employees.

While our agency will continue to identify ways to complete our daily responsibilities as efficiently and effectively as possible with a focus on customer service balanced with upholding our regulatory and statutory responsibilities, a few specific policy issues have been agency priorities: water – both the development of the Water Vision and interstate water collaboration, agricultural emergency planning, and addressing overreach by Federal agencies creating scenarios that adversely impact Kansans and the agriculture industry.

In addition, each program and division has their own list of successes for the past year which can be found in our annual report. You can find the complete annual report at [www.agriculture.ks.gov/annualreport](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/annualreport). Just to share a few examples:

#### Agricultural Business Services:

Meat and Poultry: Streamlining our approach to humane handling incidents in meat plants. We are partnering with industry to figure out how to effectively apply some very strict federal regulations in Kansas plants in a way that protects animals and allows businesses to operate.

Food Safety: Successfully merged food safety inspection responsibilities in Sedgwick County into KDA's Food Safety and Lodging Program. We hired and trained six additional inspectors to cover the additional workload. We are also implementing an integrated electronic licensing and inspection software in the program with USA Food Safety.

Dairy and ACAP: Testing electronic inspections with full implementation planned in the coming year.

Weights and Measures: Entered into an agreement with Barton Community College to provide all of our annual continuous education and testing for licensure for industry partners.

Conservation: Implemented nearly \$10 million of soil and water conservation practices with local landowners through cost-share programs via conservation districts statewide.

Animal Health: Implemented a new business model in the Brands program working with the Attorney General to provide investigative and law enforcement services as well as moving over 17,500 brands to an electronic format. Merged the Veterinary Examiners Board into the agency and continuing to manage that transition with the intent to make a permanent partnership.

Water Resources: Implemented online water use reporting system simplifying processes for both water users and the agency.

As we all know, every Kansan is touched by some aspect of the agriculture industry every day. However, few people truly understand that agriculture is our state's largest industry, employer (12% of work force), and economic driver, valued at over \$53 billion dollars and making up nearly 37% of economic activity. When the retail food industry is included, the workforce percentage grows to 19% and the economic contribution rises to \$63 billion (44% of the economy). Agriculture is also Kansas' No. 1 export. Agriculture and food products account for 40%, or \$4.8 billion of total exports annually. (\$12.45 billion total state exports; 2013 Data provided by Kansas Dept. of Commerce and Euromonitor)

We are proud of the work being done growing agriculture in Kansas. I also wanted to provide updated information on the Trademark program and the Ag Marketing Division. Ag Marketing was originally created in the Board of Agriculture but was transferred to Commerce in 1995. In 2011, Governor Brownback transferred the program back into the Department of Agriculture. Since then, we have re-focused the program into four areas: Trademark (local markets), International, Business Development, Education and Advocacy.

Efforts have and will continue to focus on how the state can encourage and help develop growth opportunities in all aspects of the agriculture industry by developing innovative programming and delivering solutions designed to create an environment that facilitates growth and expansion of agriculture and rural Kansas. A few examples of program success include over 200 members representing 67 counties in the newly revamped *From the Land of Kansas* program, 7 outbound trade missions and 6 inbound trade and buying missions in FY14 (with at least 6 outbound trips and 4 in-bound trips expected to be completed in FY15), over 30 individual

businesses assisted by the business development team, development of business licensing guides, launch of a barcode initiative to help small business integrate into retail chains, held first Trademark and farmers' market conference, 38 students from 9 high schools earned the Kansas Ag Skills and Competencies certificate (recognized under SB 155), and the first annual Sunflower Supreme Heifer Sale, coordinated in conjunction with K-State Research and Extension, was held this past fall.

It has been a privilege to provide you with this agency update. I thank you for your time today and I would be glad to address any questions you might have.