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SB 314

Testimony supporting SB 314

1-26-16

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Kansas Farmers Union very strongly supports SB 314, an act concerning the local food and farm task force, which extends its expiration date.

In many parts of the country value-added and local foods agricultural production has become an accepted, and often profitable, alternative to conventional production. Sadly, Kansas has really lagged behind many of our neighboring states, especially those states geographically surrounding the Great Lakes region, in recognizing, and accepting, niche-market Ag as a viable business enterprise.

As the past years' experience by the Local Food and Farm task force found, there are some real opportunities in Kansas that aren't being fully utilized. The success of the High Plains Food Co-op, out in the middle of no-where consumer-wise, and with challenging rain fall is a great example of if THEY can do it then there should be opportunities across the state.

Kansas Farmers Union's work with beginning farmers and Veterans interested in entering agriculture strongly revolves around value-added agricultural opportunities for these entities, obviously because of their lack of equity and their lack of opportunity to land access. Value-added agriculture is an attractive opportunity for those willing to do it to turn their sweat equity into profits. It is obvious to us that Kansas has great opportunities in these enterprises but in the shadow of conventional agriculture gets little credibility. The Local Farm and Food task force has done great work exploring these opportunities and it would be great to continue this work forward.

Thank you for your time.