

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Joann Flower at 9:00 a.m. on January 29, 1997, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Faber - excused  
Representative Lloyd - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department  
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes  
Kay Scarlett, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Chris Wilson, Director of Member Services, Kansas Seed Industry Association  
Allie Devine, Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture  
David Pope, Chief Engineer, Water Resources Division, Kansas Department of Agriculture

Others attending: See attached list

Chairperson Flower called for requests for introduction of committee bills.

Chris Wilson, Director of Member Services, Kansas Seed Industry Association, requested the introduction of a committee bill that would amend the Kansas Seed Law in two ways (Attachment 1):

1. Establish a requirement for those in the business of cleaning seed to register, at no fee, with the State Department of Agriculture.
2. Amend the reference to the federal plant variety protection law to state, as amended, and adopted by rule and regulation by the secretary of agriculture, to reflect that the federal law was amended in 1994.

Representative Correll moved to introduce a committee bill to amend the Kansas Seed Law as requested. The motion was seconded by Representative Peterson. Motion carried.

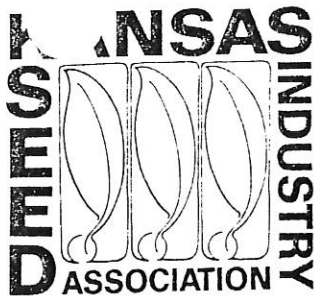
Allie Devine, Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, returned to the House Agriculture Committee to answer questions concerning issues addressed in the department's report to the committee on January 22. The Secretary reported that some states are urging USDA to relax its regulations on Karnal bunt; however, the major wheat producing states oppose this. She stated that Kansas will continue a restrictive policy and that the department plans to conduct another Karnal bunt survey this year. With new equipment, she said the tests will be able to be done much faster and with fewer personnel.

Ms. Devine and David Pope, Chief Engineer, Water Resources Division, answered committee questions on water structures in the state. The department surveyed 6,000 Kansas dams, and 500 of those dams have been categorized as "high or significant hazard," meaning that a dam failure would likely cause loss of human life. Mr. Pope reported that 40 percent of the dams in Kansas are owned by public entities and 60 percent are privately owned. The committee was told that legally the owner is responsible for maintaining dams. However, if the owner fails to do so, Mr. Pope said it would be a policy issue as to who would pay for repair of these privately owned dams.

Concern was expressed about the increase in the cost for inspections of scales in some parts of the state. The Secretary said there have been no new state fees as a result of the new weights and measures regulations on scale inspections. It was learned that 38 states regulate moisture meters for testing grain. Kansas does not regulate moisture meters, although this was discussed by the Legislature in the mid-1980's.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 30, 1997.





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January 29, 1997

TO: Representative Joann Flower, Chair, and Members of the House Agriculture Committee

Kansas Seed Industry Association respectfully requests the introduction of a bill which would amend the Kansas Seed Law in two ways:

- 1) Establish a requirement for those in the business of cleaning seed to register, at no fee, with the State Department of Agriculture. This would assist the Department in contacting such businesses when issues of importance to them, such as Karnal bunt in 1996, arise.
- 2) Amend the reference to the federal plant variety protection law to state, as amended, and adopted by rule and regulation by the secretary of agriculture, to reflect that the federal law was amended in 1994. The current Kansas Seed Law reference is to the federal law by its previous public law number. This amendment would strike the public law number.

We have worked with the Department and other interested organizations on these amendments and believe there is a consensus.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Wilson  
Director of Member Services

*House Agriculture Committee  
January 29, 1997  
Attachment 1*