

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The joint meeting with the Senate Agriculture Committee and the Senate Natural Resources Committee was called to order by Chairman Larry Powell at 8:30 a.m. on January 25, 2011, in Room 783 in the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Michael Peterson - Excused

Committee staff present:

Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Gary M. Pierzynski, Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture, and Interim Director,
K-State Research and Extension
Mercedes Taylor-Puckett, Coordinator of the Farmers Market Project, Kansas Rural Center

Others attending:

See attached list.

Senator Mark Taddiken, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, Chairman of the Senate Natural Resources Committee, joined the Chairman in welcoming Dr. Gary M. Pierzynski.

Dr. Gary M. Pierzynski, Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture, and Interim Director, K-State Research and Extension, provided an overview of K-State Research and Extension's Annual Report. He highlighted various activities and accomplishments and how K-State Research and Extension has benefited Kansas families, youth, ranchers, the military, farmers, and communities. Topics included:

- Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops; (Attachment 1)
- 100th anniversary of the Department of Grain Science and Industry;
- Biosecurity Research Institute and the future National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility;
- Kansas Military 4-H Club Partnership;
- Kansas Operation: Military Kids;
- Flint Hills Fire Management;
- Kansas PRIDE Program;
- Efforts to Slow Reservoir Sedimentation; and
- Stripe Rust Disease in Wheat.

Headquartered in Manhattan, K-State Research and Extension includes statewide county and district extension offices, research centers, and experiment fields supported by county, state, federal, and private funds. Since 1991, any two or more Kansas counties can legally work together to form an extension district in an effort to increase efficiency and effectiveness. He reported that, currently, 33 counties have formed thirteen districts. Copies of the Annual Report and further information about their programs are available from K-State Research and Extension at Kansas State University.

Following adjournment of the joint meeting, Dr. Pierzynski answered further questions from members of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

Chris Wilson, Deputy Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, requested introduction of a committee bill concerning flex accounts in regard to water allocation. Without objection, Chairman Powell stated that this request would be introduced as a committee bill.

Mercedes Taylor-Puckett, Coordinator of the Farmers Market Project, Kansas Rural Center, briefed the committee on Kansas farmers markets. She reported that Kansas has experienced a dramatic increase

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in farmers markets; in 1987, Kansas had 26 farmers markets, today that number is 101 markets statewide. Similar statistics are demonstrated nationally. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that these markets generate more than \$1.3 billion in consumer spending each year. Farmers markets are business incubators, providing growers a built-in customer base, low start-up costs, and the ability to sell smaller quantities. She noted that many farmers markets now participate in programs that target low income individuals and partner with food pantries to glean excess produce. (Attachment 2)

Paul Johnson, Kansas Rural Center, distributed copies of a brochure from the Rolling Prairie Farmers Alliance, a seasonal produce subscription service, providing a weekly seasonal vegetable subscription service to 300 households in Lawrence and Kansas City. (Attachment 3)

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m. The next meeting of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for January 26, 2011.