

Action Plan

January 1, 2005 - December 31, 2009

1. Title Kansas Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops
County/District or State *Brief title of program*

2. Identify LTIOs which play a significant role in carrying out this action plan.

Healthy Sustainable Communities
 Efficient and Sustainable Cropping and Horticultural Systems
 Efficient and Sustainable Animal Production Systems

3. Core Mission Themes: *Identify, in order of importance, the primary and any secondary core mission themes this action plan supports:*

_____ Healthy Communities: Youth, Adults and Families
3 _____ Safe Food and Human Nutrition
 _____ Economic Development through Value-added Products
2 _____ Natural Resources and Environmental Management
1 _____ Competitive Agricultural Systems

4. Why is the program needed?

USDA farm topology indicates that the two largest growing types of farms are large farms and small farms. The number of medium-sized farms continues in a downward trend. In order to cope, some farmers choose to get larger, while others look for value-added opportunities and other ways to make the medium-sized farm more sustainable. Small farms are in the increase, and USDA statistics show that nearly 40% of the value of farm products in the US is still generated by small farms.

Regardless of the size of farm, agriculture is a changing industry due to technology and environmental and societal changes. To survive and succeed, producers must develop strategies that address sustainable methods in their operations, the environment, and their community. No single practice works for every farmer and rancher, so ongoing research, education, and support is required in order for producers to maintain an operation that is profitable, environmentally-friendly and an asset in their community. While this type of support is crucial for all farmers, it is especially important for the family farmer.

Senate Bill 534 of the 2000 Kansas Legislature established a "center of excellence on sustainable agriculture and alternative crops at Kansas State University." The Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) opened in January 2001. KCSAAC, a center within K-State Research and Extension, works in partnership with state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and environmental groups to emphasize research, education, outreach and marketing for sustainable agriculture and alternative food, fiber, and medicinal crops.

Some of the specific activities of the center are included in the action plans for the Food and Alternative Horticultural Crops Program and the Efficient and Sustainable Cropping Systems program.

5. Literature Review/Background:

- USDA ERS. September 2000. ERS Farm Topology for a Diverse Agricultural Sector, Agriculture Information Bulletin Number 759
- Kansas Legislature, Senate Bill 534, 2000.

6. What is the intended ultimate impact? (Long Term Outcome)

- Kansas agriculture will be more diversified in support of the three concepts of sustainability (economical profitability, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility). This will include efficient, sustainable, competitive and integrated cropping/livestock systems and sustainable and competitive horticultural cropping and marketing systems.

What are the indicators of these results?

- Changes in crop acreage caused by integrated cropping systems, rotational crops, organic production, alternative crops, integrated livestock/grazing systems and horticultural food crop production.
- Income and employment attributed to agriculture and horticulture.
- Adoption of best management practices and other environmentally sound management techniques.

7. What are the intended intermediate results? (Intermediate Outcomes)

- Producers will adopt diverse, efficient, integrated and competitive cropping and livestock systems, organic systems, and integrated grazing/livestock systems,
- Producers will develop and use value-added and marketing strategies.
- Producers will use business, whole farm, and environmental planning tools to practice a more sustainable agricultural system.
- Kansas will increase acreages of horticultural food crop production.
- Producers who raise and market into local food systems will have increased access to local and regional marketing systems.
- K-State Research and Extension faculty will involve producers, communities, organizations and agencies in interdisciplinary agriculture and local food system projects that support the concepts of sustainability.

What are the indicators of these results?

- Changes in crop acreage caused by integrated cropping systems, rotational crops, organic production, alternative crops, grazing systems and horticultural food crops.
- Changes in income and employment attributed to agriculture and horticulture.
- Increased number of producers using environmental planning tools such as the River Friendly Farms Environmental Assessment Tool.
- Increased number of producers participating in local watershed environmental improvement projects and programs such as the Clean Water Farms program.
- Expansion in number and size of local producers of horticultural food crops and increased numbers of producers operating local market facilities.
- Increased level of cooperation between K-State Research and Extension and our stakeholder partners.

8. What are the intended short term results?

- Research and Extension, organizations, agencies, and producers use KCSAAC as an information clearinghouse for complimentary and alternative enterprises, direct marketing, value-added marketing and processing, diversified crop and livestock management techniques and environmental practices that support a more sustainable agriculture and healthy communities.
- Research and Extension, organizations, agencies, and producers knowledge of various aspects of grazing/livestock systems, organic systems, horticultural cropping systems, community based food systems and integrated cropping systems increases as a result of information gleaned from competitively funded projects.
- Extension educators knowledge of and producer use of integrated grazing/livestock systems will increase from outreach programs facilitated and organized by KCSAAC.
- Extension educators, agency partners, and nonprofit organizations will have the capacity/ support to deliver community based food system programming.

What are the indicators of these results?

- Number of requests for assistance and Web site usage.
- Diversity of outreach programs made available and the participation in such activities.
- Track grants facilitated by KCSAAC and the amount of funded projects.
- Number of integrated grazing/livestock systems outreach activities and attendance.
- Number of community based food system programs that are delivered and the projects that are funded.

9. Who is the target audience?

New and existing producers, landowners, federal/state agency personnel, nonprofit organizations, community leaders, Kansas State University staff, county/district, and area extension staff, agribusiness dealers and suppliers, crop advisors, and consultants.

10. What will you do to carry out the program?

- Work cooperatively with the Kansas NRCS, Kansas Graziers Association, Kansas Rural Center, industry partners, nonprofit organizations, and K-State Research and Extension personnel to deliver educational outputs that support the intended outcomes.
- Network, brainstorm, encourage, facilitate, edit, and review faculty, agency, and nonprofit organizations submissions of grant proposals. Network, brainstorm, encourage, promote, and facilitate producer submissions of grant proposals.

Major Program Emphases:

1. Grazing/livestock systems
2. Integrated cropping systems
3. Organic production
4. Expansion of local food systems including local production and farmers markets

General activities that support all four areas of emphasis:

- Maintenance and distribution of the Kansas Family Farmer and Rancher Resources and Services Guide
Evaluation: Number of copies distributed and stakeholder feedback.
- Development, maintenance and promotion of KCSAAC Web site <http://www.kansassustainableag.org> including a topical publications library
Evaluation: Track visitor trends and comments from Web site evaluation tool.
- New extension agent training
Evaluation: Number of new agents who utilize the center's resources and feedback.
- Notify faculty and other partners of funding opportunities related to their area of interest.
Evaluation: Number and amount of grant proposals submitted and funded.
- Coordinate Kansas SARE program, including a travel scholarship and a speaker travel reimbursement grant program.
*Evaluation: Progress made towards outcomes stated in the Kansas SARE POW.
Evaluation: Follow up six months after the training session to determine the impact the training has had on stakeholder activities.*
- Fund County/District Extension Mini-grant projects that promote local, grass roots efforts to improve the viability of the Kansas family farmer and Kansas communities.
Evaluation: Number of projects funded, activities held as a result of the mini-grants and number of non-extension cooperators that participate in the mini-grants.
- Host a grant writing workshop for county/district extension educators and a NCR SARE grant opportunity workshop for KSU faculty.
Evaluation: Track the number of grants applied for, the grant originator, the collaboration level on the grants, the number of grants funded and the amount of the grants. Baseline information has been collected since January 2001.
- Press Releases
Evaluation: Record the number of stories released, the number of stories picked up by the press, what publications print the releases and the number of requests for assistance that come into KCSAAC as a result of the release or newsletter.

11. What will be produced?

- Meetings/workshops/conferences/field days
- Written publications
- Web resources
- Grant proposals

12. What resources will be invested?

- Cooperation and time of K-State Research and Extension, state and federal agency and nonprofit organization personnel.
- Competitive grants funds, Kansas SARE Program grant funds, and state operating funds.

13. Identify Core Team Members

- Bill Hargrove
- Jana Beckman

14. Collaborators:

- K-State Research and Extension faculty including state, county/district, and area personnel, graduate students and technical support staff
- Nonprofit organizations
- Producer organizations

15. Collaborating Agencies:

- State and Federal Agencies

16. Graduate Students or Support Scientists:

None

17. Project(s) anticipated for 2005Grazing/livestock Systems Activities

(Also refer to the Efficient and Sustainable Cropping Systems Action Plan)

- Fund County/District Extension Mini-grant projects that address and demonstrate producer implementation of integrated grazing/livestock systems.
Evaluation: Number of projects funded, activities held as a result of the mini-grants, number of non-extension cooperators that participate in the mini-grants.
Evaluation: Number of producers who implement new and different integrated grazing/livestock systems as a result of the local grant projects.
- Co-sponsor and facilitate outreach activities focusing on integrated grazing/livestock system.
Evaluation: Number of programs, number of participants and feedback from event surveys.
- Work with KSU faculty to develop a grazing publication that incorporates aspects of alternative forages and holistic management (multiple year project).
Evaluation: Progress made towards a publication draft.
- Facilitate the maintenance and distribution of the Kansas Grazer software.
Evaluation: Track the number of copies distributed and downloaded from the Web site.

Evaluation: Identify number of service providers using the software to assist producers.

Integrated cropping systems

(Also refer to the Efficient and Sustainable Cropping Systems Action Plan)

- Participation in Project Good Neighbor, a cooperative project of KDA and K-State Research and Extension. The desired outcome of Project Good Neighbor is to reduce the incidents associated with non-target pesticide drift.

Evaluation: Progress made towards incorporating PGN curriculum into extension programming and materials, pesticide applicator training (PAT), and pesticide environmental safety programming (PESP).

- Network and facilitate research and outreach opportunities related to integrated cropping systems.

Evaluation: Number of faculty involved in pursuing integrated cropping systems projects.

Organic production

(Also refer to the Efficient and Sustainable Cropping Systems Action Plan)

- Network and facilitate research and outreach opportunities related to organic production systems.

Evaluation: Number of faculty involved in pursuing organic production system projects.

- Co-sponsor the 2005 Organic Agriculture Conference

Evaluation: Feedback from post-event survey.

Expansion of local food systems including local production and farmers markets

(Also refer to the Food and Alternative Horticultural Crops Action Plan)

Evaluation: Change in number of farmers' markets, change in horticultural acreages and income attributed to horticultural food crop sales.

- Maintain and promote the Kansas Food Directory.

Evaluation: Survey directory members to determine the impact the directory has had on directory member sales.

Evaluation: Track Kansas Foods Directory usage.

- Facilitate training extension educators and state agency personnel regarding community based food systems programs and program opportunities. This includes the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) and the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

Evaluation: Track number of educators incorporating community based food system information into county/district and state level programming.

Evaluation: Level of funding and number of participants in the SFMNP.

Evaluation: Progress made towards Kansas participating in the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

- Farmers Market Workshop

Evaluation: Number of participants.

Evaluation: Post-event evaluation.

- Maintenance of 'Starting a Seasonal Open-Air Market in Kansas' publication.

Evaluation: Number of copies distributed and stakeholder feedback.

- Growing Growers grant project

Evaluation: Progress made towards outcomes stated in the Growing Growers project POW.

- Guided Exploration of Value-Added Enterprises grant project

Evaluation: Progress made towards outcomes stated in the Guided Exploration of Value-Added Enterprises project POW.

- Grow Your Farmers Market grant project.

Evaluation: Progress made towards outcomes stated in the Grow Your Farmers Market project POW.

- Development of "Slice of Agriculture" curriculum, and distribution to county/district extension programs and other interested stakeholders.

Evaluation: Completion of curriculum.

Evaluation: Number stakeholders who incorporate the curriculum into existing programming.

