

WATER: Improvements to existing programs?

- Simplified/centralized system to find the best options and get enrolled (how to start?)
- Economic analysis showing impact on the state
- Increased marketing, education, outreach
- Increased incentives for enrollment
- Policies that reflect regional water needs

WATER: New programs to help producers/businesses?

- Research and development – in Farm Bill
- Ambassador program, mentorship, network to implement conservation
- Technical training, ways to use tech for improved conservation
- Incentives for conservation, adoption of tech
- Better understanding of resources and regulations

WATER: What's needed to encourage adoption/participation?

- Boots on the ground: increased \$\$, staff
- Crops that use less water
- More focus on soil health: relationship to water use
- Carryover of state dollars to make investment more effective

WATER: Other priorities/areas of emphasis?

- More funding, more people to help (technical assistance)
- How do we know whether current programs are working? How do we measure progress?
- Statewide focus of water as a Kansas Issue, not just an Ag Issue

WORKFORCE: Which current programs would work/help?

- Kansas Works program
- Ag career promotion to youth: making ag fun and appealing!
- Remote work certification at K-State
- Proactive recruitment by businesses
- Rural opportunity zone

WORKFORCE: What new or modified programs would help?

- Transition programs (military) and apprenticeships
- Benchmarks to show skills needed to increase wages
- Secondary school programs: mentors, technical training, immersion programs, work-based learning
- Postsecondary: technical training, certification
- Housing programs for H2A
- Drug rehabilitation (opioid addiction) programs

WORKFORCE: Where will you go to increase candidate pool?

- Expand ag career information to kids with interest in science, engineering
- Promote quality of life & affordability in Kansas
- Work with education system to integrate ag info into career paths, curriculum
- More affordable, accessible child care
- Attract a global workforce with a wide range of skills

WORKFORCE: Strategies/policy changes needed?

- Simplify federal programs: too much paperwork, too many restrictions
- Strategic H2A reform: It's a labor issue, not an immigration issue.
- Help for new/first generation farmers
- Livable wages, equity between big ag & little ag
- Expand ag education to include more urban and remote options

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Chad Bontrager

Holton, Kansas

Chad has always been a strong advocate for Kansas agriculture. Chad has helped feed his community by opening up a grocery store along with other agriculture businesses, including Yoder Meats, Bowser Meat Processing, and Herman's Meats, which offer locally sourced products to the public. As a former 4-Her and state FFA officer, he continues to support young 4-H and FFA members in their start in the agriculture industry.



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Duell family

Sherman County, Kansas

Steve and Colleen Duell and their sons Aaron and Adam farm near Ruleton and are dedicated to serving their community in a multitude of ways. From helping at high school football games to serving on the county fair board, the family demonstrates how concern, involvement, dedication and perseverance can encourage growth and community pride.



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Dan Nevius

Spring Hill, Kansas

Dan has been actively involved in breakaway roping and barrel racing for years. He has helped local riders in his community to learn and train for their sport by opening up his arena to the equine community for learning and competitive opportunities. His generosity is helping develop a new community of rodeo enthusiasts.



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Ron Suppes

Dighton, Kansas

Ron is a tireless supporter of Kansas agricultural commodities and as a member of the Kansas Wheat Commission, he has traveled all over the world promoting quality wheat from our state. He also is the Chairman of the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation. Recently, he was seated as the Wheat Foods Council Chairman where he advocates for wheat in a healthy diet. Ron continues to give of his own time to promote Kansas wheat around the world.



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Honorable Mention:

AgTrax

Kristen Baum

Kopper Cutter LLC

Larry Ronnebaum

John McMahon and Rebecca Corazzin-McMahon



