

GROWING KANSAS AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is Kansas' largest industry and economic driver. Sixty-six agriculture and food sectors combine to provide nearly \$64 billion in total economic contribution to the state, approximately 42 percent of the total economy. The industry employs more than 238,000 people, or nearly 13 percent of the Kansas workforce. If food retail and ethanol production are included, the economic contribution rises to over \$75 billion or 50 percent of the state's economy, and employs more than 21 percent of the workforce.

In Kansas, there are 46,137,295 acres of farmland, which accounts for 88 percent of all Kansas land. More than 21 million acres in Kansas are harvested for crops and over 16 million acres serve as pastureland for grazing animals. In addition to growing crops and raising livestock, the Kansas agricultural sector includes renewable energy production, food processing, research and education, agribusiness, technology, entrepreneurship, and many value-added enterprises. Between Columbia, Missouri, and Manhattan, Kansas, sits the single largest concentration of animal health interests in the world. Kansas farmers and ranchers make a global impact, exporting over \$3.6 billion in agricultural products. The leading Kansas agricultural exports include beef, wheat, soybeans and corn.



Clearly, the success of the Kansas economy is directly linked to the success of the agriculture industry.

To grow the Kansas economy, the agriculture industry must grow.

Strategic industry growth requires communication, coordination and collaboration. Since early 2016, hundreds of meetings have been held among agriculture industry leaders to discuss the opportunities in and the barriers to economic growth, and to identify the outcomes desired for each agricultural sector.

In August 2018, the third Governor's Summit on Agricultural Growth was held in Manhattan, Kansas, bringing together more than 400 leaders from across industry sectors under one roof to outline specific action items to achieve those outcomes.

The annual Ag Growth Summit has been hailed for its ability to bring all industry sectors together in one place with one goal — growing Kansas agriculture.

This document provides background information on each sector, identifies sector challenges and opportunities, describes desired industry outcomes by sector, and lists the action items for each outcome. All content is based on the direct input of agricultural stakeholders during the Summits and other meetings of leaders within the various agricultural sectors.

KANSAS ADVANTAGES

As the nation's agriculture industry positions itself for growth in order to meet the needs of a growing population with changing demands, Kansas is well-suited to be the home for **strategic agricultural growth**.

The Kansas **climate** is highly conducive to effective and efficient livestock production and provides for good growing seasons and harvesting conditions.

Kansas **transportation** systems, including high quality roads and rail systems, provide easy access to markets and make moving people and goods in the state simple and reasonable.

The foresight of agriculture leaders has resulted in environmental regulatory standards allowing production agriculture and **environmental preservation** to work hand-in-hand.

Kansas was four decades ahead of its peer states in passing legislation that **protects animal agriculture** and minimizes the threats of activist groups by not being a ballot initiative state.

Business-friendly tax exemptions, long-standing property tax policy, being a Right to Work state, and a business-friendly regulatory culture make Kansas **a great place to start and own a business**.

Kansas is the home to Kansas State University — the first land-grant university in the U.S. — and Fort Hays State University. These institutions, along with the other Regents universities, community colleges, technical schools and high school agricultural education programs, are all key partners in **growing the workforce** needed to serve Kansas agriculture.

The long-term availability of water in Kansas is dependent on local leadership, responsible use, management and policy development, all which have been greatly enhanced in recent years by the **innovative water policies** in the Governor's *Long-Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*.

Kansas is represented by **leaders** in state and federal government who understand and respect the importance of agriculture.

The **Strategic Growth Initiative** enables local and state governments to work together in partnership with private partners to help **local communities** that want to grow by matching them with **growth opportunities** which meet each community's resources and interests.

Kansans embody the **pioneer spirit** that brought their forefathers to an uninhabited prairie to seek their fortunes in a new land. The values of **hard work, family, faith, community, perseverance, entrepreneurship and achievement** have stood the test of time in Kansas.

Those values and that same pioneer spirit that converted Kansas from a vast sea of grassland into a major producer of our nation's food supply live on today as we proactively **pursue new and innovative opportunities to grow agriculture**.



CHALLENGES and OPPORTUNITIES

Farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses must balance a lengthy list of challenges and variables, many of which they cannot control, as they work to grow and raise food for families across the globe. When possible, those barriers to growth should be addressed.

Kansas farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses from all sectors are all interconnected and must continue to **work together** and support each other for industrywide growth to occur.

Kansas must continue to value its largest industry, and must continually pursue a greater understanding of the **importance of agriculture to the state economy**.

Kansas agriculture must work together to provide an increasingly **open and transparent food system** that meets consumer demands and expectations, highlighting where their food comes from and the story of the people who raised it.

Continued and expanded access to **international markets** and expanded global market share is critical to nearly all agriculture sectors in Kansas.

A focus on quality roads and expanded rail access accompanied by **agriculture-friendly transportation regulatory environment** is critical to growth.

Maintaining a regulatory environment at the state level designed to help agriculture rather than hinder it and pushing back on and, when possible, dismantling **over-reaching, excessive, burdensome federal regulations** targeted against agriculture is fundamental to short- and long-term expansion.

Kansas needs to be poised to work collaboratively to help craft quality legislation aimed at serving our farmers and ranchers in the **Farm Bill** and other federal policy initiatives.

Kansas must continue to build private-public partnerships to **protect and conserve the state's water supply** and be good stewards of the land, embracing environmental, economic and social sustainability.

A focus needs to be placed on **adding value** to agriculture commodities before they leave the state, enhancing support networks for **entrepreneurs** and business start-ups, and creating greater access to **venture capital**.

Kansas must maintain a **tax-friendly, open-for-business environment** that tells enterprises across the globe that Kansas is a good place to do business.

Rural broadband and mobile networks providing faster download and upload speeds are needed for businesses in rural areas to grow and do business with the rest of the world.

Public/private partnerships to address shortages in **rural housing** should be investigated.

Kansas agriculture cannot grow significantly without building an **agriculture-related skilled workforce and talent pool** through expanded high school agricultural education, programs, veterans' agriculture career programs and legal immigration tools.



While challenges exist, the opportunity for growth and the willingness of the Kansas agriculture industry to work together to address these challenges is far greater. The following pages provide sector summaries and outline the desired outcomes identified by industry stakeholders for 19 agriculture and food sectors. Working together, these outcomes can be accomplished — growing agriculture and growing Kansas.