

Kansas Governor Declares Kansas Agriculture Week

In recognition of the state's largest industry, Kansas Governor Sam Brownback declared March 12-19 Kansas Agriculture Week.

"From the food we feed our families, to the clothes that keep us warm and the renewable energy that helps power our state, Kansans are affected by agriculture 365 days a year," said Governor Brownback. "While agriculture remains the largest economic driver in Kansas, most of us are not closely connected to the farms and ranches that produce the food, fiber and energy. Celebrating Kansas Agriculture Week gives us an opportunity to reconnect with and learn more about today's agricultural sector and to thank the farmers and ranchers who serve our state."

One event highlighted during Kansas Agriculture Week is the Neighbor to Neighbor statewide food drive, which began Feb. 18 and will conclude on Kansas Agriculture Day, March 19. The food drive, which is jointly hosted by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Dillon's Food Stores, Harvesters – The Community Food Network, the Kansas Food Bank, the Second Harvest Community Food Bank and the Kansas agricultural community, will provide food to Kansas families in need. The groups hope to raise 50,000 meals by March 19. Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman said Kansans can make a donation to the Neighbor to Neighbor food drive at Dillon's Food Stores statewide. Visit agriculture.ks.gov/neighboroneighbor for more information.

Each day of Kansas Agriculture Week will focus on a different agricultural theme, including nutrition, food safety, animal care, education and technology, environmental stewardship, serving the world and economic growth. Secretary Rodman encouraged Kansans to follow the department on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to engage in an online conversation about these important issues.

"Social media is not a fad; social media networks are important communication tools to reach consumers around the world. For far too long, farmers and ranchers have let others tell their story for them. That is changing and today you will find tweets and Facebook posts from farmers and ranchers talking about what they do to raise safe, healthy food for your family and mine," Secretary Rodman said. "If you are interested in agriculture and want to learn more about this important sector in Kansas, join the conversation. Ask questions and learn directly from the men and women who make their living in agriculture."

In an effort to educate Kansans about agriculture, a "Dialogue on Kansas Agriculture" will take place on Kansas Agriculture Day, Tuesday, March 19 at 3:30 p.m. in the Old Supreme Court Chambers (346-S) in the Kansas State Capitol. The dialogue will bring together thought-leaders in the agricultural sector to discuss the hot topics of the day.

Panelists for the dialogue include the following:

- Jay Garetson, Kansas farmer and member of the State Board of Agriculture, Sublette, Kansas
- Doug Hofbauer, President and CEO of Frontier Farm Credit
- Brandi Buzzard, young agricultural leader and author of *Buzzard's Beat*, an agricultural advocacy blog
- Mike Apley, DVM, PhD, DACVCP, Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine
- Bob Peterson, Executive Director of the Kansas Agricultural Business Council
- Diana Floyd, RD, LD, Kansas State Department of Education Child Nutrition Consultant

The dialogue is open to the public and media are welcome to attend. Greg Akagi, agricultural broadcaster for WIBW radio, will moderate the panel, which will be streamed live on the Kansas Department of Agriculture website at agriculture.ks.gov.

"Kansas is an agricultural state, but in order to meet the diverse and growing demands from consumers in Kansas, across the United States and around the globe, farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses will have to adapt their practices and adopt new technologies to produce more using fewer resources," Secretary Rodman said. "We hope all Kansans will join in the Kansas Agriculture Week events to learn about agriculture, to recognize the constant commitment to continuous improvements made by Kansas farmers and ranchers and to serve their neighbors through the Neighbor to Neighbor food drive."