

Kansas Corn Corps Young Farmers Return from Domestic Ag Tour

As the first class of Kansas Corn's Corn Corps young farmer program progresses, applications are being accepted for the second Corn Corps class. The deadline for applications is Sept. 30. The current Kansas Corn Corps class recently returned from a domestic agriculture trip to Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. The Corn Corps class participated in two retreats last winter and has one more learning retreat scheduled before completing their program by attending the 2018 Commodity Classic in Anaheim, California, Feb. 28-Mar. 1.

"It's exciting to see what a close-knit group our first Corn Corps class has become," Kansas Corn's Director of Industry Relations Stacy Mayo-Martinez said. "The domestic agriculture trip was another way to provide learning experiences and networking opportunities for these young growers."

During the domestic agriculture trip, Corn Corps members visited a variety of farms and agriculture-related industry including a distillery; a dairy; a beef, grain and vegetable farm; a blueberry farm, a vegetable farm and a winery. The group wrapped up the tour with a dinner with Michigan's Director of Agriculture Jamie Clover Adams. Ms. Adams also served as the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture from 1999 to 2003.

"The trip gave us the opportunity to see other areas of production agriculture, from blueberries and root vegetables to large scale dairy and pork facilities," said Corn Corps member Geoff Burgess of Sterling. "While we may produce a different end-product, we all want our product to be quality and produced in a safe manner."

Dallin Willis, Garden City encouraged young farmers to consider applying for Class 2 of Kansas Corn Corps.

"Corn Corps has definitely been a valuable program. If you want your operation to be on the leading edge, this is where to meet those farmers," Willis said. "The greatest thing I've gained is that I'm meeting farmers that are on the leading side of technology and are wanting to do things better and improve their farms. You don't just throw a rock and find those farmers, this program has helped me meet them."

The Kansas Corn Corps program is focused on providing participants the opportunity to learn new techniques, strategies and information they can take back to their farms. This 16-month program provides learning and networking opportunities for young corn farmers and is sponsored by the Kansas Corn Commission and Kansas Corn Growers Association.

Kansas Corn is taking applications from farmers 45 and younger to participate in Class 2 of Kansas Corn Corps until September 30, 2017. The program has room to accept up to 15 farms into the program in each class. Participants representing up to 15 farms will be admitted into the program. Participants can be individuals or couples. For more

information, and the application, visit, kscorn.com/corncorps.

Class 1 Corn Corps members are Tanner McNinch, Ness City; Krystale Neitzel, Lawrence; Brandon Heier, Grainfield; JD Hanna, Silver Lake; Lowell Neitzel, Lawrence; Dallin Willis, Garden City; Matt and Janna Splitter, Lyons; Geoff Burgess, Sterling; Coby and Megan Baalman, Menlo, and Kelsey Pagel, Wetmore.