

Kansas Corn Corps Young Farmer Class

The Kansas Corn Corps Class 2 domestic trip gave participants the opportunity to experience production agriculture and affiliated industry in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The purpose of the trip is to help these young farmers experience and learn about various agricultural industry businesses outside of Kansas and to expand their knowledge about how to effectively communicate with consumers while learning how to think outside the box.

Young farmers are encouraged to apply for Kansas Corn Corps Class 3 by the Sept. 30 deadline at kscorn.com. The Corn Corps young farmer program is set up into three sessions along with a domestic trip during the summer. Within these sections, the objective is to learn how you fit into your farm and progress as an individual, how your farm fits into the industry, and what opportunities and hurdles we face in the industry along with how we progress as the corn industry.

Corn Corps Class 2 toured and talked with many different agricultural companies and farms on their domestic trip. The first stop was in Chicago where they toured Lakeview Energy and talked with CEO and Director Jim Galvin. The next stop was at Fair Oaks Farms in Indiana where they learned about ways to advocate for agriculture while touring their dairy and swine operation.

"We have learned how to effectively say the right things to consumers and Fair Oak Farms is a great example of how to do that, they did a really good job," said Hayden Guetterman, Bucyrus.

The second day involved a visit to Farm Journal and the Ag Day TV set in South Bend Indiana, Journeyman Distillery in Three Oaks Michigan, then to Victory Farms in Hudsonville, Michigan where they learned about production hurdles of other markets and the importance of media and why it is important to tell their story.

The final day started out at Carbon Green Bio-Energy ethanol plant where they learned about the plant's approach on expanding retail sales of higher ethanol blends throughout Michigan. They visited Brookside Farms which they learned about blueberry farming from a third-generation farmer and the marketer who markets produce for their cooperative member. The last stop of the trip was at Fenn Valley Winery and Vineyards in Fennville, Michigan where they learned about the history of the farm and why the western part of Michigan is an ideal grape growing region.

Throughout the tour, these young farmers were able to get a better understanding of how they fit into the larger production picture while gaining knowledge on how to effectively have a conversation with consumers which are two very important take away.

"Networking and learning has opened my eyes to see all of the opportunities in agriculture, and to actually be able to see it firsthand has helped to sink in that knowledge

even further," said Garrett Kennedy, Gypsum.

Applications for Kansas Corn Corps Class 3 are being accepted until September 30, 2018. Kansas Corn Corps is a program of Kansas Corn Commission and Kansas Corn Growers Association. Applicants can be between 21- 45 and can be either individuals or couples and need to be a KCGA member. Apply online at www.kscorn.com.

Kansas Corn Corps Class 2 members are: David and Alicia Allen, Smith Cattle Company, Sharon Springs; Ben Bellar, Bellar Farm Inc., Howard; Hayden Guetterman, Guetterman Brothers Family Farms, Bucyrus; Garrett and Arissa Kennedy, Knopf Farms/Tri-Valley Seed & Services, Gypsum; Sarah Ellison, Marquette; Kyler Millershashki, MK Farms, Lakin; Ryan Niehues, Niehues Farm, Goff; Chris Ostmeyer, Ostmeyer Family Farms, Park City.