

Local teen wants to start corn picking event

(KNZA)--A Hiawatha High School sophomore wants to start an annual corn picking event in the community in an effort to broaden educational and agri-tourism opportunities.

15-year-old Nathan Wright appeared before the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to discuss his proposal and request the use of city-owned property adjacent to the Brown County Historical Society's Ag Museum to plant corn.

Wright proposed the city lease an 8-acre parcel to the Historical Society for an annual payment of one dollar per year.

He said he took part in a corn picking event in Jewell, Kansas last fall with his uncle and would like hold to a similar event at the Ag Museum. "Machinery from the museum, as well as participating northeast Kansas-area farmers, would be used to pick, and shell, the eared corn...some people [may] go out and handpick. I'm really hoping this is the new Maple Leaf Festival, and I can kind of turn it into that, where it brings people to town."

Wright says its part of his FFA Supervised Agricultural Experience project. "I plan to work with my FFA advisor, my dad, and my uncle, in addition to the staff from the Ag-Museum, to plant, spray, and harvest the corn in the field. I would like to reach out to local farm suppliers for donations of seed, fertilizer, and chemicals, because I want this to be a community effort."

Wright said he would like to hold the corn picking event in the fall around when the Halloween Frolic is held. He said all profits from the grain production would go to the Historical Society.

Commissioners voiced support for his proposal. A lease agreement will be drawn up between the city and Historical Society for approval at their next meeting.