

## Commissioner Elections Approaching

Central Kansas wheat farmers have a unique opportunity to provide direction for one of Kansas' most important industries, through the 2014 Kansas commodity commission elections.

This winter, Kansas farmers will elect commissioners for each of the five state commodity commissions: wheat, grain sorghum, corn, soybeans and sunflowers. Growers interested in running for office must be active in producing the crop for which they wish to represent and must submit a petition for election to the Kansas Department of Agriculture. The petition must contain at least 20 signatures of eligible voters with not more than five signatures from any one county. The petition must be postmarked by Nov. 30 in order to be eligible for the 2014 election. Newly-elected commissioners will take office April 1, 2014 and serve a three-year term.

Justin Gilpin, chief executive officer of the Kansas Wheat Commission, says the state commodity commission election process is an excellent way for farmers to become actively involved in their industry.

"Commodity commissioners manage research, promotion and education programs funded by the checkoff for each commodity," Gilpin said. "The wheat industry is at an exciting point. We have seen increased interest in wheat, from both research and marketing perspectives. Participating in commission elections as a prospective commissioner or voter is an essential way to give input into Kansas agriculture, and the future direction of the wheat industry."

The Kansas Wheat Commission funds approximately \$1 million in research projects at K-State each year, and recently completed construction of a state-of-the-art research facility in Manhattan, further cementing the Commission's commitment to research.

The Kansas Wheat Commission has a stake in promotion of exports through its support of U.S. Wheat Associates, an association of state wheat commissions that maintains 17 market development offices around the world. Market development programs are particularly significant, as roughly half the wheat grown in Kansas is destined for export markets. Through critical projects such as these, Kansas Wheat Commissioners are instrumental in guiding the long-term direction of the state's wheat industry.

The 2014 election includes Districts IV, V and VI, or the central third of Kansas.

District four includes Clay, Cloud, Jewell, Mitchell, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Republic, Rooks, Smith and Washington counties.

District five includes Barton, Dickinson, Ellis, Ellsworth, Lincoln, McPherson, Marion, Rice, Rush, Russell and Saline counties.

District six includes Barber, Comanche, Edwards, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Kiowa, Pawnee, Pratt, Reno, Sedgwick, Stafford and Sumner counties.

If elected to the Kansas Wheat Commission, farmers will shape the future of the wheat industry in Kansas by setting the annual budget, policies and procedures that determine research, education and

nutrition priorities. In addition, producers learn leadership skills and gain valuable insight into the entire wheat industry.

Farmers can register to vote by Dec. 31, by filling out the Commodity Voter Registration form, available at the Kansas Department of Agriculture or the Kansas Wheat Commission. A registered voter must be a Kansas resident, be at least 18 years old before the election and be actively engaged in growing wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans or sunflowers within the preceding three years. Voters will receive a ballot by mail by Jan. 15 and have until March 1 to submit the ballot.

More information is available on the Kansas Wheat Commission Web site, at [www.kswheat.com](http://www.kswheat.com) or through the Kansas Department of Agriculture, at <https://agriculture.ks.gov/about-ksda/kansas-agriculture>