KANSAS RURAL CENTER

2022 Food and Farm Conference
The Kansas Rural Center (KRC) is a non-profit organization founded in 1979. We promote the long-term health of the land and its people through research, education, and advocacy. KRC cultivates grassroots support for public policies that encourage family farming and stewardship of soil and water. KRC is committed to economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just agriculture.

OUR MISSION
To promote the long-term health of the land and its people through research, education, and advocacy that advance an economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just food and farming system.

OUR VISION
KRC believes that diversified farming systems hold the key to preserving, developing and maintaining a food and farming future that provides healthy food, a healthy environment and social structure, and meaningful livelihoods.

WHAT WE DO
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Cover art and logo by Amanda N. Design

CONTACT US
Kansas Rural Center
PO Box 314
North Newton KS 67117
866-579-5469
info@kansasruralcenter.org

Kansasruralcenter.org
Facebook.com/KansasRuralCenter
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Greetings from Tom Buller

Welcome to the 2022 Kansas Rural Center Food and Farming Conference!

We are excited to be gathering again in person for the first time since 2019. We are thrilled to welcome you all to Kansas Wesleyan University, who has graciously agreed to host us and is a new partner for KRC as we work to build resilient, sustainable, and regenerative food and farming systems across the state of Kansas.

As we reflect on a growing season that was challenged by an epic drought across much of the state of Kansas, we look for paths forward. At our conference this year we hope to highlight the importance of the changing climate on our food and farming systems and share ideas and inspirations about how we can respond. That response starts with reflecting on how we can work to build regenerative and resilient food and farming systems, building both soil health and the health of our communities. We will also consider how to support systemic change through policy advocacy as the next Farm Bill will be debated in the coming year.

Thanks for joining us and we look forward to two days of learning new things, sharing ideas and finding inspiration together in the work of building a better future.

Current Kansas Rural Center projects include:

- Beginning farmers and rancher training.
- Soil health education.
- Farm-to-school support.
- Food system infrastructure development.
- Sunflower Stories.
- Lobbying for better food and farming systems on behalf of Kansans.

Are these subjects important to you? Please consider becoming a contributor to the funding of the Kansas Rural Center and our essential work. Your generous gifts will fund scholarships, create publications and educational materials, KRC’s legislative representation, the annual conference, and the staff’s time to execute their many projects effectively and provide assistance to community members.

Follow this link to contribute to KRC: https://bit.ly/3RRgNUz
Friday, November 11

1pm Indigenous Wisdom and Our Changing Climate
This opening session features a presentation about Indigenous Wisdom and our place in the natural environment by Professor Daniel Wildcat, and a conversation facilitated by Steve Lerner on our thoughts about our changing climate.

Speakers: Dr. Daniel Wildcat, Haskell Indian Nations University and Steve Lerner Step-by-Step

3:30pm Women Landowners Learning Circle
Learn how to evaluate your farm and make crucial decisions from the combined experience of our featured guests and your fellow female and non-binary landowners and co-owners.

Speakers: Sara Basset, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Susan Mayo, Flint Hills Counterpoint, and Lucinda Stuenkel, Sunny Day Farms

3:30pm Farmer Veteran Panel
As America's veterans transition to civilian life, many of them choose agriculture for their profession. Join us to hear from farmer veterans about how they got started in agriculture, the benefits and challenges they've encountered, and how they collaborate with universities and other organizations from Kansas and beyond to make farming possible for others exiting military service.

Speakers: Dr. Angela Cottrell University of Missouri Kansas City, Ken DeVan, Service member Agricultural Vocational Education (SAVE), and Rob Ober owner and operator of Fair Plains Farm LLC

3:30pm KWU Community Resilience Hub
KWU's Community Resilience Hub (CRH) vision is to be “a place where change agents come together to engage urgent social issues through education, individual and collective action, and advocacy, working together to nurture local and global resilience”. CRH is working to form a new generation of leaders in regenerative agriculture, food security, and environmental and human resilience.

Speakers: Michelle Case, Kansas Welseyan University, Clay Gagnon, Kansas Welseyan University, David McClis, Common Ground Producers and Growers, Donna Pearson-McClis, Common Ground Producers and Growers, Sabrina Rosario, Kansas Welseyan University, and Dr. Matt Thompson, Kansas Welseyan University

3:30pm Equity is Easy When There is Diversity
We will discuss diversity, equity and inclusion in agriculture and current projects of the Kansas Black Farmers Association.

Speaker: Dr. JohnElla Holmes, Kansas Black Farmers Association

5:30pm - 7pm Reception
Saturday, November 12

8am - 9am light breakfast

9am - 10:30am Plenary - Farm Bill and Policy
This session is a panel discussion of the prospects for the next Farm Bill which will be a major topic in Congress next year as the current Farm Bill expires in September 2023. Nick Levendofsky, executive director of the Kansas Farmers Union, Tom Buller Executive Director of the Kansas Rural Center and Connor Kippe Policy Specialist of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, will reflect on the prospects and possibilities for changes to key programs and new ideas that might be included in the next Farm Bill.

Speakers: Tom Buller, Kansas Rural Center, Connor Kippe, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition Nick Levendofsky, and Zack Pistora, Board President Kansas Rural Center

10:45am - 12:15pm Crop Insurance
Adverse weather can happen when you least expect it. But what does that mean for your small grains, your apples, your livestock? This workshop will explore what crop insurance options are available to the specialty and diversified farmer. You'll gain an understanding of different multi-peril policies, how to insure by written agreement, Micro Farm, Whole Farm Revenue Protection, and livestock coverage.

Speakers: Kate Hansen Center for Rural Affairs, and Megan Vaith, Northbourne Organic Crop Insurance

10:45am - 12:15pm Farming in a Changing Climate: Alternate Crops and Innovative Cropping Systems
As Kansas faces an uncertain climate future, what crops and growing systems could help farmers maintain economic viability while also protecting and revitalizing our state's natural resources? Join this session to hear about the good work happening with perennial Kernza, industrial hemp, and urban/rooftop farming.

Speakers: Peter Miller, CEO of Sustain-a-Grain, Allen Ratliff, Owner of Levitate 9 Farm; Kelly Rippel, Kansans for Hemp; Leah Dannar-Garcia, Owner of Firefly Farm and RISE Farms.

10:45am - 12:15pm Heritage Breed Livestock Suited for Kansas
Breed preservation and niche marketing come together when heritage breeds are introduced to the farm. We will discuss heritage breed preservation, The Livestock Conservancy, and the top choices for heritage breed livestock in the Kansas climate.

Speaker: Callene Rapp, Sedgwick County Zoo
10:45am - 12:15pm  SARE Farmers Forum is a traveling annual event giving farmers, ranchers, researchers and others the chance to share information about sustainable agriculture practices with a national audience. These presentations focus on research, demonstration, and education projects that promote profitable practices that are good for the environment and community. The projects highlighted in these presentations and the Farmers Forum are funded by grants from NCR-SARE, a USDA funded program that supports and promotes sustainable farming and ranching by offering competitive grants and educational opportunities.

**Topics Include:**

- **How to write a SARE Farmer/Rancher Grant**  
  Speaker: Kerri Ebert, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education  
- **Ancestral Mexica Farming: A Comparative Yield Analysis from the 1500s**  
  Speaker: Pantaleon Florez III, Maseualkualli Farms  
- **Cover Crop Management Options to Improve Weed Control, Crop Yield and Soil Health”**  
  Speaker: Dr. Augustine Obour, Kansas State University

12:15pm - 1pm Lunch, featuring locally produced and sourced food

1pm - 2:30pm  Introduction to Farm and Ranch Transition  
Kansas Rural Center wants to help the next generation of farmers get started. This session will cover the basics of getting started with farm and ranch transition, and will be useful for new farmers looking to acquire a farm or those farmers looking to move on from farming and transitioning their operations to the next generation. This is just an introduction intended to provide foundational skills to create a solid basis for a future farm or ranch transition plans.

Speaker: Tom Buller, Kansas Rural Center

1pm - 2:30pm  Farming in a Changing Climate: Healthy Soils for Climate Resilience  
Learn how the latest in soil health principles and practices can help make your farm more resilient to uncertain weather and extremes. Candy is a repeat conference presenter on soil health who adds new insights and information each year!

Speaker: Candy Thomas, USDA NRCS

1pm - 2:30pm  Community Snapshots  
Community resilience is becoming more and more important in the face of global supply chain issues, climate change and declining health in the U.S. Some Kansas communities are showcasing more local and healthier eating options. The Executive Director of Prairieland Market will talk about this retailer of local, organic and healthy specialty, as a nonprofit charity preparing to triple in size and move to the newly developed business district in downtown Salina. “Simply Produce,” a program piloting in Ellsworth encourages rural grocers to carry more produce. The Kansas Specialty Crop
Growers Association (KSCGA) has a current database of 350+ growers, markets, etc. across the state, with active engagement with some 250. Included in a data base demo will be the success story of Lakin, where the Community Support Coordinator helped five (women) farmers grow the Kearny County Farmers’ Market from just four vendors to sixteen in one year.

Speakers: Jessica Kootz, K-State Research and Extension, Pete Pierson, Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association, and Vickee Spicer, Prairieland Market

1pm - 2:30pm SARE Farmers Forum is a traveling annual event giving farmers, ranchers, researchers and others the chance to share information about sustainable agriculture practices with a national audience. These presentations focus on research, demonstration, and education projects that promote profitable practices that are good for the environment and community. The projects highlighted in these presentations and the Farmers Forum are funded by grants from NCR-SARE, a USDA funded program that supports and promotes sustainable farming and ranching by offering competitive grants and educational opportunities.

Topics Include:
Increasing Climate Resilience Among Refugee & Immigrant Farmers in KC area and Beyond
Speaker: Amanda Lindahl, Cultivate KC
Grazed Cover Crops: Are We Affecting the Ability to Suppress Weeds?
Speaker: Sarah Stephens, Kansas Hemp Consortium
Increasing Industrial Hemp Acreage for Fiber and Grain with Planting Best Practices & Recommendations
Speaker: Lily Woitaszewski, Agronomy Student K-State

2:45pm - 4:15pm Beginning Farmer Services: Holistic Planning for Your Future Farm
Are you at the beginning of your farming career or still dreaming of starting your own farm? Do you seek to redefine and realign the values of your farm after farming or ranching for many years? Come join this session on Holistic Planning to hear from Julie Mettenburg about Holistic Management, and how this decision-making process can help you ensure that your farm or ranch is set up to be ecologically, socially, and economically sound and is able restore land and the livelihoods of your family and the broader community.

Speaker: Julie Mettenburg, Chief of Land Operations and Co-Found of The Provenance Co.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Farming in a Changing Climate: Solar Energy Production on the Farm
In a time of high energy prices and concerns about carbon emissions, might on-farm energy generation be right for your farm or rural property? Learn from landowners who currently utilize solar and support organizations who can help gain access to funding and cost-effective solar installations.

Speakers: Yvonne Cook, Kansas Energy Program; Amber Dunn, Permaculture Educator and Consultant; Carol Barta, Flint Hills Renewable Energy & Efficiency Cooperative.
2:45pm - 4:15pm  Selling to Schools and other Wholesale Markets
This session will provide an introduction to direct marketing farmers looking to break into wholesale markets with particular attention on how to connect and sell to schools. It will cover best practices for market identification, communication and development as well as additional resources to help farmers build wholesale success.

Speaker: Tom Buller, Kansas Rural Center

2:45pm - 4:15pm  SARE Farmers Forum is a traveling annual event giving farmers, ranchers, researchers and others the chance to share information about sustainable agriculture practices with a national audience. These presentations focus on research, demonstration, and education projects that promote profitable practices that are good for the environment and community. The projects highlighted in these presentations and the Farmers Forum are funded by grants from NCR-SARE, a USDA funded program that supports and promotes sustainable farming and ranching by offering competitive grants and educational opportunities.

Topics Include:
Using perennial groundcovers for improved soil and nutrient retention in corn/soy production
Speaker: Brandon Schlautman, The Land Institute
The Comparison of Heirloom vs. Hybrid Tomatoes (Cherokee Purple), Peppers (Anaheim), and Squash (Butternut)
Speaker: Daryline Dayzie Student Kansas State University

4:15 pm Adjournment: Return Evaluations

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Workshop Series
Are you at the beginning of your farming career or still dreaming of starting your own farm? Please come join Kansas Rural Center’s beginning farmer and rancher workshop series Thursday evenings on January 12, 19, and 26, 2023. We’ll explore establishing your purpose, assessing your readiness to start your farm business, and creating a preliminary action plan to help you reach your goals.

Registration is $15, with a $10 discount for those who registered and attended KRC’s annual Food and Farm Conference! Watch for more information and a promo code to use for your registration coming soon.

For questions email Ryan at ryanr@kansasruralcenter.org
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**Carol Barta** is a founding member of the Flint Hills Renewable Energy and Efficiency Cooperative. She also serves on the board of the Kansas Permaculture Institute. She is currently chair of the Citizens’ Utility Ratepayer Board. Carol completed a Permaculture Design Certificate with the Kansas Permaculture Institute in 2011 and is a member of the KPI instructor corps, and gained a Permaculture Educator Certificate in 2014 with Midwest Permaculture in Stelle, IL.

**Sara Basset** is a Mother, NRCS District Conservationist, Family Ranch Adviser and Manager, and Land Owner. To make an impact, she draws upon her experience as a single mom of two and her 17-years of service to producers (mostly men) from Hugoton to Topeka, Kansas with the NRCS. Sara has a degree in Plant and Soil Science from Texas A&M, Kingsville. She first got her hands dirty with 8 years of working at a nursery after receiving an associate degree in Horticultural and Nursery Management.

**Tom Buller** is currently the Executive Director of the Kansas Rural Center. Tom was born and raised in Wichita, but grew up dreaming about farming, inspired by spending time on the farms of his grandparents and aunts and uncles. Tom and his family own and operate Buller Family Farm, a part of Common Harvest Farms which produces certified organic vegetables and fruit in the Lawrence area.

**Yvonne Cook** is a Certified Energy Manager (certificate #23937) through the Association of Energy Engineers. Cook has been involved in energy audits since 2013. She received her degree in Biological and Agricultural Engineering in May 2011. Cook joined K-State Engineering Extension in 2012.

**Dr. Angela Cottrell** is the Director of Research and Institute Programs for the Missouri Institute for Defense & Energy (MIDE) and Adjunct Instructor in the UMKC School of Education. Angela has over 20 years of experience in educational leadership and policy initiatives and has been engaged in Kansas City and national non-profits for over 10 years. Additionally, Angela has successfully created collaborative programs and initiatives to assist underserved populations in Kansas City including the UMKC Kangaroo Food Pantry, and has been successfully funded by the USDA, Kauffman Foundation, Aurora Foundation, and Heart of America Patriot Foundation to advance veterans initiatives. Angela is the proud daughter of a US Navy veteran.

**Daryline Dayzie** is a Master’s Student of Horticulture and Natural Resources at Kansas State University. She’s from Chinle, Arizona, and is a member of the Navajo Nation. Her interest includes sustainable food production in dry climates and food desert communities. Her M.S. research includes managing three types of mulch trials on heirloom tomatoes, squash, and peppers. In Daryline’s research, she observes the weight, yield, and growth of each trial. Daryline's longtime goal is to return to her homeland and use her learning experience to apply sustainable growing practices for community members.

**Ken DeVan** served 28 years in the U.S. Army with numerous worldwide deployments, 11 duty stations, and three combat tours in the Middle East. He is owner/operator, Oregon Trail Farm, L.L.C., a sustainable berry farm and apiary located along the original trailhead of the Oregon Trail. Ken is the current President of Farmer Veteran Coalition of Kansas, a not-for-profit veteran organization that helps
Food and Farm Presenters

cultivate a new generation of farmers and food leaders, that develop viable employment and meaningful careers through the collaboration of the farming and military communities. He is on the Board of Directors of Farmer Veteran Coalition and Board of Directors of Service member Agricultural Vocational Education (SAVE) in Manhattan Kansas. SAVE Program helps educated veteran Farmers as well as new beginning farmers and ranchers.

Amber Dunn is a permaculture educator, consultant and homesteader. She has been teaching sustainable living and permaculture design for more than 10 years and currently teaches permaculture design at the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and through the Kansas Permaculture Institute where she is also a board member. She lives in an off grid home she built north of Lawrence and is working toward a permaculture farm on her 40-acre property.

Kerri Ebert has coordinated the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) and for the Kansas Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program for K-State Research and Extension for the past 12 years. She is also the communications coordinator for the K-State Olathe Horticulture Research and Extension Center. Prior to moving to the Olathe Center she was located on main campus in Manhattan where she also coordinated the Kansas AgrAbility Project and Extension farm safety programs.

Pantaleon Florez III (he|him) is a food systems worker, educator, and seed steward. His organization, Maseualkualli Farms, houses a Guanajuato/Mexica seed breeding program, perennial fruit and herb production, and the policy efforts behind Food as a Public Work. He is currently a Vital Village Networks (Boston Medical) Community Food Systems Fellow and works for Lawrence Public Schools as their experiential learning specialist who coordinates Farm 2 School and Work-Based Learning programs.

Leah Dannar-Garcia grew up two doors to the west of Firefly Farm and played there as a kid. She spent her early adult years in New York City. Later, she traveled and worked in countries around the world before returning to Wichita in 1998 and marrying the boy next door soon after.

From heirloom crops, to farmers’ markets and farm-to-table dinners, Leah loves farm life. She owns and operates Firefly Farm, Firefly Food Hub and RISE Farms. The three entities intertwine to supply fresh, organically grown produce, herbs, greens and edible flowers to restaurants, retailers and neighbors. In her free time, she enjoys music and the visual arts, hiking and kayaking in SE Kansas, and essay writing.

Kate Hansen is a policy associate with the Center for Rural Affairs. Her work focuses on policy solutions in the realms of conservation, risk management, water quality, and rural development. Over the years, she has led multiple crop insurance education efforts, including those focused on small grains and certified organic crops. She is based in central Iowa, and is originally from Indiana.
JohnElla Holmes serves as the Executive Director and President of the Kansas Black Farmers Association. Under her leadership, the organization has received numerous grants, enabling KBFA to focus its mission of education, research, and incorporation of best and regenerative farming practices for its members. She is a proud alumnus of Fort Hays State University with a master’s in communication and higher education and holds a doctoral degree from Kansas State University. Retired from K-State as an assistant professor, she continues to teach an online graduate course in multicultural advising. Residing in Historic Nicodemus, the oldest all-African American town west of the Mississippi River and a National Historic Site, JohnElla is a fifth-generation descendant of the original settlers.

Connor Kippe (he/him) grew up working in Michigan in agriculture and the food system – from picking weeds in fields, to driving the occasional tractor, working as a butcher, managing green roof installations, co-creating an educational farm, and helping advocate for and design a university food bank. He has lead advocacy work around food and energy systems’ impact on climate, and worked with harmed communities like farmworkers and residents living near CAFOs to develop equitable coalitions, campaigns, and policy. He has a B.A. from the University of Michigan in political science and environmental science, with a specialization in food policy. Connor staffs the NSAC Food System Integrity Committee, which focuses on key food safety, labeling, and livestock processing issues.

Jessica L. Kootz began working for K-State Research and Extension, Midway District in August 2018 as a Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent. Midway Extension District serves Ellsworth and Russell counties. In her capacity as FCS Agent, Jessica is passionate about promoting healthy living through mental health awareness, physical activity, healthy aging, and improved access to healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables. Jessica thrives on connection, especially within her home community of Ellsworth, Kansas. Simply Produce Ellsworth County has brought together a variety of community partners: American Legion Post 174, Ellsworth County Economic Development, Ellsworth County Medical Center, and most importantly Gene’s Heartland Foods in Ellsworth. These connections have proven invaluable to the success of the local Simply Produce program.

Steve Lerner is a psychologist, songwriter, and filmmaker born in Washington D.C now living in Lawrence, and married to psychologist and author Harriet Lerner. Recently Steve’s focus has turned to documentary films, the most recent being Strangers in Town. Steve is currently hosting Step-by-Step events around the state aimed towards decreasing climate anxiety and creating action.

Nick Levendofsky currently serves as the executive director for Kansas Farmers Union. A position he has held since June 2022. He previously served as the government relations director for Wisconsin Farmers Union from 2020-2022, director of external affairs for Rocky Mountain Farmers Union from 2018-2020, government relations associate for Wisconsin Farmers Union from 2016-2018, and
Amanda Lindahl joined the New Roots for Refugees program in 2020, supporting and teaching farmers in-training and graduates of the program. Amanda has a unique educational background including a bachelor's degree in Bakery Science and Management and a master's degree in Horticulture and Urban Food Systems, both from Kansas State University. She has worked with urban non-profit agricultural organizations for 10 years, including the Kansas City Community Gardens, The Giving Grove, and now Cultivate Kansas City.

Dr. Susan Mayo has been part of the musical landscape of Kansas for over 30 years and is active as a cellist, composer, and community arts organizer. She has turned her attention to the Flint Hills Counterpoint’s conservation project near Peabody, which is the home of Susan and Nasir Islam, who have donated the usage of their property.

Julie Mettenburg converted her family farm – a diversified operation of multispecies livestock grazing, row cropping and hay – to Holistic Management. Julie oversees all aspects of execution of The Provenance Co. land strategy, from day-to-day operations to forging strategic relationships.

Among these long-term strategic partnerships is the Savory Institute. As founder in 2014 of one of the first Savory Institute-accredited Hubs, the Tallgrass Network, Julie subsequently has influenced more than 10,000 acres around the Midwest. In 2022, she earned the highest level of professional certification for the Savory Institute, joining only 12 individuals worldwide at the rank of Master Field Professional.

Prior to 2014, Julie served for five years as a program coordinator and Executive Director of the Kansas Rural Center, the only organization providing sustainable agriculture education and advocacy in Kansas.

Peter Miller is the CEO and Co-founder of Sustain-A-Grain, a Kansas-based company helping farmers to grow, process, and sell climate-smart perennial grains like Kernza®. Before Sustain-A-Grain, Miller led North American sales operations at FarmLead (now Combyne), connecting growers to buyers of specialty grains. Miller holds an MBA from University of Illinois and has spent the last decade working in startups that are tackling the most challenging questions in food, agriculture, and nutrition.

LTC (R) Rob Ober was born in Maryland and raised on a small dairy farm. After graduating from Mount Saint Mary’s University in 1998 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army. Rob served 21 years in the Army with 4 years as an infantry officer and 17 years as a multifunctional Logistics Officer. His deployments and service assignments include Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea and Kuwait. Retiring in 2019 he is now the owner and operator of Fair Plains Farm LLC in Alden Kansas where he lives with his wife Sarah.
Donna Pearson McClish, the founder and director of Common Ground Producers and Growers, Inc., a non-profit organization which is involved in urban farming and operating an innovative mobile farmer's market.

Pete Pierson serves as Project Manager for Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association. Peter Pierson has come to see the potential for the efficient cultivation of fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops as a means for growers of all scales contributing to local economies and communities. Peter's background includes communications around conservation and community planning campaigns. His freelance writing work has been produced for KAXE/KBXE-Northern (Minnesota) Community Radio and CBC Radio One in Canada, and featured in Natural History Institute's Real Ground, Zen Peacemakers' Journal, Minnesota Historical Society Press' Voices for the Land, and others. Peter resides in the rural/suburban interface of eastern Kansas—where specialty crop production is proving capable of competing with residential and other commercial land use.

Zack Pistora is president of the Kansas Rural Center's board of directors and longtime environmental lobbyist for the Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club. He resides near Tonganoxie, Kansas, where he has a small-scale vegetable farm.

Callene Rapp and her husband Eric have owned and operated the award-winning Rare Hare Barn since 2005, the largest heritage-breed meat-rabbit enterprise in the United States. In addition to their conservation work with rabbits, they have a large herd of heritage-breed Pineywoods cattle, and work with the critically endangered Palmer-Dunn strain. Callene has also worked with a variety of cattle breeds at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

Allen Ratliff is the Founder and CEO of Levitate 9 a family-owned and operated Hemp farm in Topeka, KS. In 2019, Levitate 9 officially started growing and producing Hemp. As a small family-owned business, the need to produce a high-quality organic product was the primary focus. Allen dedicated countless hours to research and learning the best methods to grow a fully organic crop. He studied the Korean Natural Farming process and currently uses that method on his current crops. In addition, he is enrolled in Dr. Elaine's Ingham soil food web school. As well as Bryant Mason's Cannabis Soil expert class.

Kelly Rippel has advocated for the open access of information and utilization of hemp since the 1990s when he found out his dad participated in cannabis research at America's first land grant school, Kansas State University. After co-founding Kansans for Hemp and helping in the legalization movement in 2018, he was appointed to the industrial hemp research advisory board under the Kansas Department of Agriculture and still serves in that role. Kelly represented Kansas and the United States at the World Hemp Congress in Slovenia, and is founding president of Planted Association of Kansas. He works full-time as a crop adjuster with Zurich North America / Rural Community Insurance Services in the state's eastern territory.
Brandon Schlautman is lead scientist of the perennial legume program at The Land Institute. His research team is currently breeding, domesticating, and conducting agronomic trials for two species, sainfoin as a perennial pulse crop and kura clover as a perennial cover crop. The team has recently established on-farm trials with the crops in collaboration with growers and other stakeholders in Kansas and throughout the corn belt region.

Vickee Spicer earned a BS in Business Administration, with a concentration in Accountancy and a minor in Economics, from California State University, Sacramento. She spent 10 years in the cable television industry as the Marketing Director and Assistant Manager of two cable systems in the San Francisco Bay Area and then on the Central Coast. Upon moving to Salina, Vickee worked first as Director of New Business Development, and later as the Director of Account Service and Marketing for MarketAide Services. In 2021, Vickee once again found an exciting challenge, steering the new course for Prairieland Market as the Executive Director - now guiding fundraising, marketing, and the expansion of the local, organic, healthy specialty market as a non-profit charity preparing to triple in size and move to the newly developed business district on Santa Fe Avenue in downtown Salina.

Sarah Stephens’ entrepreneurial heart leads the way at Kansas Hemp Consortium. When the opportunity to first grow hemp arose in Kansas, Sarah submitted a successful research proposal and was one of the first licensees in the state. Assembling an experienced team, learning from available research, and committing to industrial hemp in Kansas, she formed KHC to promote the crop through education and outreach. Conducting in field research with hemp producers across the state, Sarah was first awarded a SARE Farmer Rancher grant for the 2021 season. Earlier in her career, while earning a Master of Public Affairs degree from Wichita State University’s Hugo Wall School, Sarah founded Safe Riders, Inc. The service drove intoxicated individuals home in their own vehicle.

Lucinda Stuenkel and her farm have long been known for conservation practices. The farm has been awarded the Model of Innovation Award for Water + Energy Progress from the Climate + Energy Group, and the Grassland Management Award in two counties, during the drought, by Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS). They have also completed Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
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Megan Vaith of Northbourne Organic Crop Insurance, LLC created her service to specifically address organic crop insurance needs and advise organic farmers on how to mitigate their risk in order to set their farm up for generational success.

Daniel Wildcat, Ph.D., is a professor at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas, and an accomplished scholar who writes on Indigenous knowledge, technology, environment, and education. He is also director of the Haskell Environmental Research Studies Center, which he founded with colleagues from the Center for Hazardous Substance Research at Kansas State University. Wildcat helped design a four-part video series entitled All Things Are Connected: The Circle of Life (1997), which dealt with the land, air, water, biological, and policy issues facing Native nations. A Yuchi member of the Muscogee Nation of Oklahoma, Wildcat recently formed the American Indian and Alaska Native Climate Change Working Group, a tribal-college-centered network of individuals and organizations working on climate change issues. In 2008, he helped organize the Planning for Seven Generations climate change conference sponsored by the National Center for Atmospheric Research. He is the author, most recently, of Red Alert! Saving the Planet with Indigenous Knowledge (2009).

Candy J. Thomas got her start in 1994 working for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Missouri as a Soil Conservationist and later holding the titles of Resource Conservationist and District Conservationist. In 2010 She worked as a national trainer for NRCS until 2013 when she transferred to KS as the state agronomist and in 2015 became the regional soil health specialist for KS and NE stationed in Salina. She also served as the library content manager for the NRCS Science and Training library which houses over 1000 webinars. Candy J. Thomas is the Regional Soil Health Specialist in Salina, KS and covers the states: IA, KS, OK and NE.

Dr. Matthew R. Thompson was appointed by the Kansas Wesleyan University Board of Trustees as the 19th President of the university in January 2013 and officially began his presidency of Kansas Wesleyan on April 15, 2013.

As president, Thompson has championed academic excellence and encourages innovation in scholarship and teaching. He has launched initiatives to build interdisciplinary strength around global challenges, expanded opportunities for experiential learning, and stimulated the introduction and expansion of the Wesleyan Experience, Wesleyan Journey, and Wesleyan Heritage programs.

Lily Woitaszewski is currently pursuing her M.Sc. degree in Agronomy with a focus on weed science at Kansas State University. She originates from Wood River, NE where she was raised on a cow/calf and grain operation.
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Kansas Farmers Union

Northbourne ORGANIC CROP INSURANCE LLC

BLACK FARMERS ASSOCIATION

Center for Rural Affairs

Prairie Market

KANSANS FOR HEMP