

# Additional support for farmers

On April 29, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced additional support and resources for America's small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers. Tuesday's announcement included \$7 million in university research awards in support of small and mid-sized producers; \$8.8 million in technical assistance for small, socially-disadvantaged producers and Rural Cooperative Centers; and a marketing certification program for small and very small grass-fed beef producers. This is the second major Department of Agriculture package this year in support of small and mid-sized producers. The first package included efforts to increase access to capital, provide better risk management tools, expand marketing opportunities, and offer food safety training and educational resources specific to America's small and mid-size producers. Tuesday's announcement builds on these efforts.

"Small and mid-sized producers are a vital part of America's agricultural future, and we are dedicated to ensuring their success," said Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The programs and opportunities announced today are part of our ongoing commitment to ensure that smaller farmers and ranchers get access to the resources they need to thrive. The Department of Agriculture is continually reviewing our resources, programs and policies to make sure we are working for producers of all sizes."

More information about of Agriculture tools and resources available to small and mid-sized farmers, including information about today's announcement, is available on the of Agriculture's Small and Mid-Sized Farmer Resources webpage.

Efforts announced by the Secretary today include:

\$7 million in grant awards to 10 universities to develop programs that will assist small and medium-sized farmers grow their operations, enhance their production and become economically viable. These awards, made by Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Small and Medium-Sized Farms program, focus on developing models to assist small farmers in their decision making with respect

to management strategies, new technologies, sustainability, competitiveness and viability. These awards prioritize strategies enhancing access to markets, developing local and regional food systems, assessing the impact of economic changes to new and beginning farmers, and conducting outreach activities which can inform relevant public policy to enhance small farmers' well-being. For example, the University of Illinois received \$495,000 to research risk mitigation participation strategies for small and mid-sized producers in the advanced bio-fuel industry, while Oklahoma State University was awarded \$484,000 to research economic development opportunities for small and mid-sized farms in the local and regional food system. Clarkson University in New York received \$499,000 to study anaerobic digesters for small farms and University of Vermont was awarded \$499,662 to research how to improve the quality of labor management decisions for small and medium-sized farm operators. A full list of awardees and their projects is available on the National Institute of Food and Agriculture website.

\$8.8 million for technical assistance funding opportunities for small, socially-disadvantaged producers and Rural Cooperative Centers.

In support of rebuilding America's rural economy, the Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency is making funding available to small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as well as Rural Cooperative Centers. The Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grant program (SSDPG) will make \$3 million available to provide technical assistance to small, socially-disadvantaged agricultural producers through eligible cooperatives and cooperative development centers. Awardees will be able to conduct market research, product and/or service improvement, feasibility studies, training, and implement business plans. Applications are being accepted through June 30, 2014. More information about how to apply is on the Rural Development website.

The Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (RCDG) will make up to \$5.8 million available to Rural Cooperative

Development Centers, which in turn, provide technical assistance to individuals and entities improving the economic condition of rural areas by supporting start-up, expansion or operational improvement of rural cooperatives and other business entities. Cooperatives have often been the mechanism used by small and mid-sized producers to work together to access new markets or market value added products. Information about how to apply is on the Rural Development website. In 2013, business and cooperative funding through Rural Development helped 17,773 rural businesses, including 4,200 farmers and 4,472 small businesses. These investments created or saved over 41,600 jobs. Under the 2014 Farm Bill, the Department of Agriculture will be creating an Interagency Working Group to improve coordination of programs and services between federal agencies and national and local cooperatives through the Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program.

The Department of Agriculture Certification for Small and Very Small Producers of grass-fed beef. Administered by Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), this new verification program is tailored to meet the needs of small-scale livestock producers and the growing grass-fed beef industry. It allows small and very small-scale producers to certify that their animals meet the requirements of the grass-fed marketing claim standard, helping them differentiate themselves and communicate value to their customers. As part of Department of Agriculture-wide efforts to create more opportunities for small-scale livestock producers, Agricultural Marketing Service is targeting producers that market 49 cattle or less each year by designing a less costly application process for these producers to use the Department of Agriculture Certified Grass-Fed claim. Producers who are certified under the new program will receive certificates that allow them to market cattle to slaughter facilities as Department of Agriculture certified grass-fed, increasing their market value and creating new economic opportunities throughout the supply chain.

# Forum on alcohol and drugs



Jordan K., a former patient at Valley Hope, speaks to area fifth and sixth graders at a youth forum held last week and sponsored by the Norton County Council on Alcohol and other drugs. Two current patients and two former patients spoke to the youths about the dangers of drug and alcohol use and encouraged them to just say no. The evening started with a pizza party and after the speakers were finished the attendees were treated to the new Muppet movie. This is an annual event presented by the council and was once again, well attended.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

## HANSEN MUSEUM

The Dane G. Hansen Memorial Museum presents "Rags, Rugs and Weavers: A Living Tradition." This exhibition explores this textile tradition through the work of eight accomplished rag rug weavers. Rugs, descriptive panels, sample materials and tools, and photographs illustrate all aspects of rag rug weaving. Viewers follow the process from rag to rug and back to rag and learn how these weavers and others are keeping the tradition alive.

Our next exhibit will be "Earth and Loom: A Century of Native American Art" scheduled to open May 16 and run through July 13. This exhibition is the private collection of

Dennis and Carola Deschner of Phillipsburg.

Our May Artist of the month is Roy Jessup from Oakley. He has watercolor and pencil drawings on sale through the month of May. Come in and check out the work of this extremely talented artist.

Our water aerobics class will be starting June 3 and run through July 24. The class will meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. The class is taught by Shari Buss, and the cost is \$25 per student. Must be 18 years or older!

Our next Joy of Painting class is June 7 and 8. Saturday we will be painting "This Ole Barn" and Sunday we will paint "Looking

Glass Falls."

For more information on any of our classes or exhibits check our website at hansenmuseum.org or call the museum at 785-689-4846.

**For help with your advertising needs please give Dana a call 877-3361**

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# Photo contest deadline is set for May 30

The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) announced its third annual statewide photo to contest recently. The Kansas Department of Agriculture invites individuals to submit photos that showcase how agriculture touches their life by capturing the special moments, hard work, locally grown and breath-taking beauty of agriculture across the state.

Farm Animals and a Youth Division. Finalists from each category will be selected based on social media feedback through the Kansas Department of Agriculture Facebook and Pinterest accounts. Judging on the Kansas Department of Agriculture social media platforms will close Friday, June 13. Points will be allocated as listed below:

- Likes - 1 point each
  - Comments - 5 points each
  - Shares/Repins - 10 points each
- The top five photos from each category will advance to the final round and will be reviewed by board members and selected members of the Kansas Legislature.

Photos will be judged on creativity and composition. They may be used on the department's website, social media pages and various other market-

ing materials

Photos submitted should not be digitally manipulated or enhanced. Digitally manipulated or enhanced photos will be disqualified. Normal cropping, color correction, etc. are acceptable.

Winners in each category will receive \$100 gift cards. Second place winners will receive \$50 gift cards. Winning photos as well as select photos from the contest will be displayed throughout the new Department of Agriculture building in Manhattan, Kan. Photographers of the selected photos will be notified that their photo will be on display.

Photo entries should be sent in .jpg format to PhotoContest@kda.ks.gov. Entries must include:

- A title and brief description of each photo
- When and where the photo was taken
- Photographer's full name and age
- Photography category
- Hometown
- Email address

The contest includes five separate categories, focusing on how agriculture impacts all Kansans. The categories are

Farm, Faces, Picture Perfect Prairie, Agriculture at Work,

There is a place for every kind of photo. Descriptions of each category can be found on the photo contest web page. Alternatively, CDs containing photo files and accompanied by all of the required information may be mailed or hand-delivered to: Kansas Department of Agriculture Attn.: Communications 109 SW 9th St., 4th Floor Topeka, KS 66612.

Photos must be submitted no later than 5 p.m. CDT on Friday, May 30. Winners will be announced by Aug. 1.

In submitting photos, the photographer gives the Kansas Department of Agriculture permission to use them in any publications, social media, websites, displays and other places without payment or other consideration. Additionally, by submitting a photo that includes human subjects, the photographer is indicating they have obtained full permission from those subjects for the photograph to be used in these manners as well.

For more information about the photo contest and photo categories, please visit [www.agriculture.ks.gov/photocontest](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/photocontest).

# Kansans safely dispose of nearly six tons of medicines

Kansans safely disposed of nearly six tons of unused medicines during last weekend's National Drug Take-Back Day, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said Thursday.

Kansas law enforcement officers collected 11,687 pounds of medicines at 117 locations throughout the state during last Saturday's event, according to a report from the federal Drug

Enforcement Agency. Law enforcement agencies turn the drugs they collect over to the Agency, who safely destroys the medications.

"Kansans recognized the importance of safely removing these unused drugs from medicine cabinets, where they could be accidentally or intentionally misused," Schmidt said. The total was the most that has been

collected on a drug take-back day, surpassing the previous record of 10,193 pounds collected at last April's event. Unused prescriptions can be turned in year-round at many local law enforcement locations. Kansans should contact their local sheriff's office or police department for more information.

**WALKING TOGETHER TO FIGHT BACK**

2014

## Help us reach our goal of \$500 for the Norton County Relay For Life!

During the month of May, Nex-Tech is donating \$5 for every new Nex-Tech Phone, Internet, TV and Nex-Tech Wireless activation towards the Norton County Relay For Life.

Help us reach our goal of \$500 before the end of the month by signing up for Nex-Tech services!

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