

Agritourism Advisory Council
Thursday, March 1, 2018
4:30 p.m. following the Land of Kansas & Farmer's Market Conference
Bluemont Hotel
1212 Bluemont Avenue
Manhattan, KS
AGENDA

Welcome & Introductions – Jay Schwinn

Per sign-in sheet there were 30 people in attendance

Sue introduced Jill Zimmerman, President of the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL) program.

Jill gave a synopsis of the program, they goal is to channel folks into rural leadership in Kansas. Individuals may apply to be a part of the program and pay a tuition to participate.. The program is now in class 14 and the members are halfway through their journey. KARL is a two year of the program and consumes about 52 days of their life with fellow class members. Class 14 just returned from a trip to Washington D.C. where they met with Kansas Congressional leaders. There is always an educational overseas trip for each class and the current class will travel to Cuba.

Taken from the KARL website:

KARL PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL) program is a two-year course offering intensive study, training and travel for leaders in Kansas agriculture and rural communities. Each class is composed of up to 30 individuals who will be either actively involved as operators of production agriculture or from agribusiness, related organizations, and rural community leadership roles. Class members are predominately between the ages of 25 and 55 and have demonstrated leadership ability.

A variety of challenges—environmental, economic and political—are unfolding and will continue to test agriculture, agribusiness and rural communities. Strong, progressive leaders, with a broad base of knowledge, will be necessary to help guide communities and industry as decisions are made. KARL empowers leaders to help ensure a bright future for Kansas.

KARL Applications can be downloaded in PDF [here.pdf](#) or as a word document [here.docx](#)

Joel Beckner, Fire Prevention Public Education, Office of the State Fire Marshal spoke to us about what is required for some places you might be converting into business type ventures regarding the Kansas Fire Regulations.

They understand a lot of agritourism businesses might be hosting guests in an existing structure. In Joel's job of Fire Prevention Public Education, he shares details on how to best meet the standards. When turning structures into something such as a wedding venue there are regulations that businesses may need to follow. There are fire safety standards in place. If you are doing something on just a one-time basis, you don't have to worry about the regulations, although you always need to keep the safety of your guests in mind. If you are hosting guests for more than one occasion you should get into contact with their office, you may direct email or call. Joel stated they will get back with you. If your occupancy is 50 people or more it is considered an assembly occupancy which is when regulations and fire codes take effect. Fire Prevention Specialists (FPS) have different counties across the state divided among them. Their job is to oversee any new buildings, but they will ask questions of change of occupancy and may ask for a "code footprint" provided by a licensed architect or engineer of your structure. The licensed architect or engineer will make sure your structure is sound and secure which is what is put on the code footprint to meet the international fire code and building code.

An FPS will work directly with you step by step to meet the international fire code standards. A lot are going to be something you may or may not already have in place.

There was a lot of discussion as to if these standards were required if the building was an agricultural structure if these fire code standards were applicable. I asked Joel for a little more clarification in a follow up email using a tool shed for an example and his response was:

If a building has a business and an assembly in the same building, the whole building would be inspected unless the business was separated by a 2 hour fire wall.

We would not be inspecting a structure like a tool shed unless it would be having an occupancy over 49.

I have attached a pdf of Joel's presentation. Please reach out to him with questions or concerns. I know everyone wants to conduct their businesses with a focus on safety for their guests, so I am sharing this information with you. Joel's telephone # is 785-296-0659.

Farmers Inspired (NAFDMA) Conference update – Jay Schwinn shared about the recent conference in Los Angeles, California held the first week of February.. On the bus tour six 54 passenger tour busses visited production vegetable and citrus farms, lots of u-pick farms followed by three days of educational workshops which included succession planning, staffing, setting up a CSA, keynote speakers and vendors booths with products for agritourism businesses.

Jay relayed Craig Underwood, the owner Underwood Family Farms, Somis, California, <https://underwoodfamilyfarms.com>, and long-time NAFDMA member shared his story as the supplier of chilies for the making of a well-known siracha sauce was suddenly told by the manufacturer they no longer needed their acreage of peppers that were ready for harvest, but he is making the best of it by working on production of their own siracha sauce. Underwood Family Farms goes to 35 farmers markets a week, and raise everything they sell, buying nothing.

While some may find the conference a bit pricey, Farmers Inspired membership, \$350.00 annually, provides educational webinars throughout the year and a closed Facebook page where members from across the US and Canada go to for information sharing and agritourism business questions. Farmers Inspired also has resources pages for agritourism businesses on their website for members. For more information visit www.FarmersInspired.com.

Kansas Tourism does offer a few educational grants annually, up to \$1000.00 to help individuals in the tourism industry defray educational expenses. These grants must be applied for in advance of participation in any workshops or conferences and are reimbursed following participation with the submission of receipts.

https://res.cloudinary.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/kansas/2018_Scholarship_App_Guidelines_fb689f0a-9338-4931-bc0a-b0dbfe34145b.pdf

Kansas Tourism Conference – Sue relayed there continues to be discussion about an Agritourism track with the Kansas Tourism Conference this fall. The conference would be in Junction City. Discussion with Linda Craghead, Assistant Secretary has been this is a busy time of the year for Kansas Agritourism businesses, maybe if the tracks for Agritourism were held on the first day of the conference (a Monday) it would be easier for some of the businesses to attend.

Kansas Farm Bureau - Nancy Brown reported KS Farm Bureau submitted a topic for discussion at the American Farm Bureau meeting, but it was not picked up as an issue at the American Farm Bureau meeting.

KS Dept of Agriculture/From the Land of Kansas – Robin Blume was present as Janelle Dobbins and Lexi Wright were occupied with the From the Land of Kansas Annual meeting. Our thanks go to the Dept of Agriculture for allowing us to host at their conference the Agritourism Advisory Council meeting. Many of the agritourism businesses in Kansas are also members of the From the Land of Kansas or participate in Farmers Markets across the state.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the 2018 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Funds for the program are awarded to the agency by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service. The funds are in turn granted to projects and organizations that promote the competitiveness of specialty crops by achieving defined performance measures.

The purpose of the specialty crop program is to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as “fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture.”

Applications are due to KDA no later than 5 p.m. on April 23. For more information, or to download the 2018 application, go to www.agriculture.ks.gov/specialtycrop.

KSU Extension –Tom Buller operates a Kansas Agritourism business in Lawrence and attended this meeting representing Extension on the Council. He stated he works with local agriculture businesses in Douglas County. We appreciate his participation on the board.

Farm Credit update – Bret Henderson reported Farm Credit is available to help agritourism businesses as much as possible. They offer fixed rates on land purchases.

Kansas Agritourism update – Because we were running short on time, I gave a brief update on the Amusement Ride Law that has been brought up in the legislature again this year to clean up some of the bill's changes from 2017. Local agritourism businesses should contact their Kansas legislative members and the Kansas Department of Labor with questions and concerns over the impact of the law put into place July 1, 2017.

Tentative Agritourism Advisory Council Meeting dates for 2018:

June 7, 2018 - KDWPT Office Topeka – I have reached out to David Hogg, Asst. Emergency Management Coordinator with KS Dept of Agriculture to speak about measures agritourism businesses can take to ensure the safety of their guests and themselves in emergency situations.

August 20, 2018 - KDWPT Office Topeka

December 6, 2018 - KDWPT Office Topeka