

Beginning Farmer Coalition to hold first meeting

Beginning and aspiring farmers and ranchers are invited to attend the first meeting of the Kansas Beginning Farmers Coalition (KBFC) on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 in Topeka.

"We didn't want to limit the reach or scope of the organization and its' efforts. A beginning farmer could be someone in their teens or someone who is retiring/transitioning from a different career," Nick Levendofsky, Special Projects Coordinator for KFU, said. "We look forward to working with all ages and backgrounds through KBFC."

KBFC will hold its first meeting in conjunction with Kansas Farmers Union's annual convention at the Topeka Ramada. On Friday, Nov. 30 at 2 p.m., the group will discuss the mission and definition of KBFC and hear from other beginning farmers in Kansas.

On Saturday, Dec. 1 the group will brainstorm and discuss challenges young and beginning farmers and ranchers face in Kansas. That evening, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. KBFC will host a Social Supper at Blue Planet Cafe at 110 SE 8th in Downtown Topeka for \$15 a person.

KBFC's mission is to encourage, engage, and empower beginning farmers in Kansas. The Coalition is being organized to provide education opportunities and advocate for beginning farmers and ranchers in Kansas.

"We want all beginning farmers to give us a chance to make their choice to pursue farming easier and less painful than figuring it all out by themselves," Mary Howell, KFU Membership Specialist, said. "We also want to provide support to the young or new person that could be going back to the conventional family farm. Those beginning farmers need a support network also. They sometimes need to have an outside source to talk to when Dad won't listen to ANY new ideas for the farm that has always been done in a certain way. I know...I have been there."

The group is still in the beginning stages and will use this meeting to find out what services KBFC can provide to interested farmers and ranchers.

For more information and to register for the event, visit kansasfarmersunion.org or call 620-241-6630. The registration deadline for meals is Nov. 26. For more information on the Coalition, contact Nick Levendofsky at 785-527-0941 or kfu.nick@gmail.com.