

Governor applauds USDA relocation announcement

Gov. Laura Kelly applauded today's announcement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to relocate major research agencies from Washington, D.C., to the Kansas City region, along with nearly 600 high-paying federal jobs.

"This is a significant win for Kansas and Missouri," Kelly said.

The USDA's Economic Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced its plan to relocate to the Kansas City region after a competitive bidding process. The USDA received 136 proposals from 35 different states.

Kansas and Missouri submitted a joint proposal to the USDA. A decision on whether to locate on the Kansas or Missouri side of the Kansas City area is expected to be made in July.

"The decision today to move the USDA agencies to the Kansas City area is proof of the value of collaboration between our two states and our congressional delegation. When we all work together, we can accomplish a lot," Kelly said. "While we'll work hard to make sure the final location is on our side of the river, we know the new location on either side will meet the needs of the USDA and benefit Kansas and Missouri."

The move will put USDA employees closer to farmers and other agricultural interests such as the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor, the single largest concentration of animal health ventures in the world. The move from Washington to a lower-cost site also would save taxpayer dollars.

Kelly praised the USDA decision.

"We offered an ideal location for the USDA operations," she said. "The new facilities will be strategically located close to a top agricultural research institution in Kansas State University. The quality of life we offer also was a strong consideration and selling point."

"The move will meet the needs of the USDA and benefit Kansas and Missouri. I thank Secretary Perdue, our team at the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas City Area Development Council for its hard in work in making this possible."

Secretary of Commerce David Toland agreed.

“We’re thrilled that USDA has selected the Kansas City region, and we’re confident that our state’s numerous advantages will put Kansas over the top when USDA makes its final selection,” Toland said. “Kansas is on the cutting edge in the bioscience and agriculture industries with a cluster of prominent industry leaders located within our state. When it comes to research, technology and innovation, Kansas is the clear choice.”

“The size, scale and diversity of agriculture in this region makes Kansas City a perfect fit for these USDA agencies,” Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam said. “In addition, the quality of life here in the heart of the country will be a perfect fit for the employees of these agencies and their families. We look forward to welcoming them.”

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture conducts research into food conservation, nutrition, and ways to enhance to the nation’s food supply. The Economic Research Service analyzes the farm economy, food safety and global trade, among other topics.

The ERS jobs pay an average of \$120,000 per year, and NIFA jobs between \$110,000 and \$190,000.

Proposals from Indiana and North Carolina were among the other finalists seeking the USDA research agencies.