KDA Seeks Participants for Statewide Survey
The Kansas Department of Agriculture and K-State Research and Extension are seeking specialty crop producers to participate in the Statewide Survey of Specialty Crop Production. A specialty crop is defined by the USDA as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts and dried fruits, as well as horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.

In this region, a shift has occurred in the way food is produced, distributed, prepared, and valued by the public. Consumer demand for fresh produce grown in Kansas greatly exceeds the supply that our specialty crop producers can provide. Although the development of specialty crop production is exciting for both producers and consumers of local food, it presents a number of challenges due to limited regional production history.

The purpose of this survey is to investigate the economic impact of specialty crop growers in Kansas and their effect on local food systems. Information gained from this survey will allow KDA to better promote the specialty crop industry in the state. It will also help identify and prioritize what tools can be provided to encourage the growth of the agriculture industry to meet the demand of specialty crops and to increase the competitiveness of specialty crops in Kansas.

As an incentive for completing the survey, KDA will provide metal signs to participants indicating "Specialty Crops Grown Here" which producers can post near their farms and field locations reminding those nearby that specialty crops are grown in the area.

The survey should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Those interested in participating should complete the survey available online at agriculture.ks.gov/specialtycropsurvey, or it can be mailed by request.

Deadline for completed surveys is Oct. 1, 2016. The survey is funded by USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant.

For more information on the survey, please contact Taylor Harms, KDA agribusiness development coordinator, at Taylor.Harms@ks.gov or 785-564-6700.