

K State Recently Announced Budget Cuts

Kansas State University recently announced budget cuts that will close the [John C. Pair Horticulture Center](#) in Haysville, Ks. near Wichita. This move will be a major setback for progress towards building local food systems and specialty crop development across the state and especially for the western half of the state. This move is not in the best interest of the future of the horticulture, specialty crop production or diversified farms in Kansas.

KRC's 2014 [Feeding Kansas](#) report along with the [2016 State Local Food and Farm Task Force](#) recommendations to the Kansas State Legislature recommended sustaining and expanding funding and positions to support specialty crop research in Kansas. Hundreds of Kansas stakeholders - farmers, processors, health and educational professionals, and others made this recommendation.

Your voice is needed to help our state leaders understand this research facility is needed by Kansans.

What's at stake

Not only is the center a major research facility for turf and ornamental plants, the Pair Center is essential in conducting research on fruit and vegetable production for the Great Plains. It provides the research space for 9 different faculty of the Horticulture Department, as well as interdisciplinary research with other departments. Research areas include:

- Woody tree and shrubs
- Perennial and annual flowers
- Fruit and vegetables
- Turf grass
- Community forestry
- Nursery crop production
- Plant heat and drought tolerance
- Water use efficiency

Among many of the recent and ongoing conservation and specialty crop research projects the following fruit and vegetable projects are in jeopardy:

- Continued work with grafted tomatoes for nematode and disease resistance
- High tunnel production of blueberries using high alkalinity water typical to our region
- Production of cantaloupe in the high tunnel system
- Sustainable water use projects through the Irrigation Innovation Consortium
- Field studies to confirm performance of sweet potato and corn heat tolerance genes
- The Pair Center is developing new varieties of plants that are adapted to the prairie climate. These varieties will generate revenue through plant patents and propagation

Immediate strategy

Please consider taking action now. The following are ways you can help.

- **Contact Kansas State University and College of Agriculture leadership** and let them know how important and valuable the John C. Pair Horticulture Center is to you, local businesses, and the state of Kansas. Ask them to reconsider the decision to close the Pair Center or at least delay the decision to allow time to develop other solutions.

K-State President Richard B. Myers (rmyers65@ksu.edu)
110 Anderson Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-6221

Provost April Mason (masona@ksu.edu)
108 Anderson Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-6224
(Until June 30th, then Interim Provost Brian Niehoff)

Interim Provost Brian Niehoff (niehoff@ksu.edu)
106 Anderson Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-4797

Associate Dean of Research Ernie Minton (eminton@ksu.edu)
112 Waters Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-6151

Associate Dean of Academic Programs Don Boggs (dboggs@ksu.edu)
117 Waters Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-6151

Associate Dean of Extension Gregg Hadley (ghadley@ksu.edu)
123 Umberger Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-5820

Horticulture & Natural Resources Department Head Candice Shoemaker
(cshoemak@ksu.edu)
2019 Throckmorton Plant Sci. Center
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506

- **Contact your Legislators** so they know about the closing and what it means for specialty crop production and diversity in Kansas agriculture. Help them understand this is what happens when they cut state budgets and revenues, and that we are tired of decisions that hurt Kansans.
- **Consider donating to help save the John C. Pair Horticulture Center.** If \$200,000 can be raised, the station could remain open for another year. This time will allow coordination with stakeholders and community leaders to develop a fundraising plan for another year and a sustainable model for future success.
 - Contact Dr. Jason Griffin (jgriffin@ksu.edu, 316-788-0492) or Dr. Cheryl Boyer (crboyer@ksu.edu, 785-532-3504) with your verbal commitment. Your donation will be noted as 'contingent upon reversal of the decision to close the John C. Pair Horticulture Center.'
- Follow the Department of Horticulture Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/kstate.hfrt) to see pictures and receive updates about the Pair Center.

Most importantly, take action NOW.

For more information about K-State Extension budget cuts and changes, which impact many other important positions and infrastructure visit <https://ksre.ksu.edu/tuesday/archive/>

Thank you.