

Kelly kicks-off ag growth summit

**MANHATTAN — Today, [Thursday, August 18] Governor Laura Kelly kicked off the seventh annual Kansas Governor's Summit on Agricultural Growth, a meeting of more than 400 leaders representing a variety of agricultural interests across the state of Kansas.**

**"The Kansas Ag industry is the life blood of this state, and I'm grateful for the opportunity today to celebrate their accomplishments and the critical goods and services they provide to our communities, our state, and our world," said Governor Kelly. "Given we saw record-breaking agricultural exports last year, I've never been more confident in the agriculture community's ability to lead our state toward continued success."**

**Governor Kelly touted the importance of the industry to Kansas: In 2021, agriculture contributed nearly \$70 billion to the Kansas economy and fueled nearly 240,000 jobs – 12% of Kansas' workforce. Earlier this year, she announced that Kansas exported \$5.35 billion of agricultural goods – the most in the state's history.**

**At the conference, attendees will spend their morning attending breakout sessions focused on specific agricultural sectors including traditional agricultural areas like beef, pork, corn, and wheat, as well as sectors such as specialty livestock, agricultural technology, and cotton. Since the first Ag Growth Summit in 2016, these sectors have worked to identify strategies for driving growth in their sectors.**

**"Many of the initiatives that we have seen realized in recent years were born at previous Kansas Ag Growth Summits," said Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam. "As leaders from across all sectors of agriculture engage in active discussion about how we can move this industry forward, we know that collaboration benefits the entire state of Kansas."**

**The afternoon session will include a report on the 2022 Ag Workforce Needs Assessment Survey followed by a panel discussion about how agribusinesses can better recruit and retain employees.**

**Secretary Beam will close the conference by recognizing the 2022 Kansas Ag Heroes, with a special tribute to the many individuals and organizations who stepped up to help with the wildfires that devastated many parts of the state this year.**

**For more about the 2022 Kansas Ag Growth Summit and the full Ag Growth**

**Project—including materials shared in the day's sessions and a full list of the Kansas Ag Heroes—visit [www.agriculture.ks.gov/GrowAg](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/GrowAg).**

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