

Insight - Kansas Farm Bureau - opinion

Sunsets and sisal twine

Greg Doering
Kansas Farm Bureau

Kansas was admitted to the United States on Jan. 29, 1861, after a tumultuous territorial existence as bloody as it was brief. Those early struggles likely informed the state's motto: "Ad Astra per Aspera" or "to the stars though difficulties."

In light of the Sunflower State's upcoming milestone, here are a few bits of random trivia gathered from mostly reputable books, websites and memories.

Its status as the nation's best state wasn't cemented until Frank Stoerber created the world's largest ball of twine in Cawker City. Certain sites on the internet qualify the claim of "world's largest" by noting it's the "largest ball of sisal twine built by a community." What those sites fail to disclose is that Stoerber had the foresight to donate the ball to the city in 1961, which promptly built a gazebo over it to prevent it from rolling away.

Stoerber's sisal sphere continues to grow with annual "twine-a-thons" each August, and it has also served as the inspiration for some other comically large attractions around the state, like the world's largest easel in Goodland. Standing 80 feet tall, it holds a 32-by-24-foot replica of a Vincent van Gogh painting of sunflowers.

Wilson is home to the world's largest hand-painted Czech Egg, which clocks in at 20 feet high and 15 feet wide. Meanwhile, the northernmost stop on the Chisholm Trail was Abilene, and appropriately, since 2022, the city boasts the world's largest belt buckle.

Kansas is also home to some notable firsts like Atchison's Amelia Earhart who was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. Independence hosted the first professional night baseball game in 1930. Today Wichita is known as the "Air Capital of the World" for airplane manufacturing, but its culinary contributions include both the first White Castle and Pizza Hut.

In agriculture, Wichita also boasts the world's largest grain terminal, capable of holding 20 million bushels across 246 silos that stretch more than 2,600 feet.

Contrary to popular belief, Kansas isn't the flattest state. Florida holds that title with its highest point 345 feet above sea level. Kansas' elevation ranges from just less than 700 feet above sea level in the southeast corner,

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PRAIRIE DOC BY GREG HEIBERGER, PhD & ASHLEY McCONNELL, MS

For the health of it. Be Selfish: Invest in education. Your own and the kids down the street.

When we asked ChatGPT if it was a good idea to invest in education it responded with the wisdom and confidence of a sentient being who believes they are on the cusp of knowing everything. It told me the reason to invest in education and yourself is primarily financial, using examples like increased lifetime earnings, career stability, etc. And yes, although these things are true and GPT was not hallucinating, it missed the mark.

Education abroad programs through universities are one of the many vetted, safe, hands on, transformative experiences educational institutions provide to students and a great way for students to invest in their learning. This past May we coled our fifth education abroad program with nearly 30 future healthcare professionals to Ghana. We spent 2 weeks in west Africa shadowing and learning, providing support as needed, developing empathy, and building communication, diagnostic, & clinical skills. This experience was transformational, for me as an educator, and for every student who is so fortunate to invest in themselves in this way.

Over the span of 2 weeks students spent half of each day shadowing in the KNUST Hospital in Kumasi, Ghana. We then engaged deeply in the community and culture each afternoon. Students visited a local elementary school, the largest market in west Africa, learned local history, and toured a slave trade castle where 30,000 slaves made their way through the door of no return each

year. We were fortunate enough to participate in a safari with close-up experiences with monkeys, baboons, elephants and more. Finally, we spent a few days learning about the history and current healthcare system in the U.K. with our boots on the ground in London. We rode big red busses and saw Big Ben, and hosted a guest lecture with a professor from Cambridge Medical School. In just 17 days, students had powerful opportunities to learn about healthcare systems in hands-on ways across the world.

These experiences built empathy, opened students' eyes to the developing world, and transformed their lives and their future work as healthcare providers. As students reflected on their experiences in the hospital, they started to see how culture influences a person's experience with healthcare and then started to see those same values reflected in our afternoon excursions. One quote from a student highlighted family and how that extends to the community: "After seeing how these patients rely on their family and how family-orientated their culture is, I was challenged to see the importance and role of family in the US."

To learn more, tune in to Prairie Doc Programming to see and hear directly from students about their life-changing experiences. We guarantee you'll leave inspired and hopeful. Then use that inspiration to invest in yourself, set a goal to read more, attend a webinar, recommit to your health and wellness goals, and if you find yourself so inclined

to invest in the education of others check out <https://www.sdstatealum-nifoundation.org>.

We want to interject one final observation. We want to assure you the kids are alright. There are many negative hot takes about the younger generation and overall they are wrong. Keep investing in these amazing youth and our future is bright – the kids are alright!

Dr. Greg Heiberger serves as the interim dean of the Van D. & Barbara B. Fishback Honors College. He previously served as associate dean of academics and student success in the College of Natural Sciences at South Dakota State University and is a tenured associate professor in the Biology & Microbiology Department. He helped to create and implement the SDSU - KNUST relationship, has led numerous study abroad experiences including 4 courses to Ghana.

Ashley is the Coordinator for Student Success with the College of Natural Sciences. She has been advising pre-medical students since 2022 and has led several study abroad programs, including 3 programs to Ghana. She also teaches First Year Seminar and Career Seminar courses, and MCAT prep every spring.

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POST ROCK EXTENSION DISTRICT

New Year, New Seed Catalogs

By Cassie Thiessen
K-State Research and Extension
Post Rock Horticulture Agent

The new year means many of us are making resolutions and starting fresh. Before we know it, the gardening season will be here, and we will have a chance to till the soil and plant seeds. But we don't have to be sad during the cold winter months because it's seed catalog season! I love opening my mailbox this time of year and flipping through colorful seed catalogs with thoughts of spring in mind. It's easy to get overwhelmed by the amount of varieties and vast selection catalogs offer. Here are some tips on what to look for and how to take the stress out of starting seeds.

The first step is to assess your garden and landscape. Bundle up and take a walk outside. See what kind of plants you have and what you would like to change or add. Note open areas and if you will need plants that are sun or shade loving. Now is also a good time to think about your garden. What worked well and what varieties do you know were not successful? It can be helpful to keep a garden journal to remember what you have planted and the pros and cons of each vegetable. It's also important to sketch your garden so you can rotate crops properly.

Once you come inside and start looking through the catalogs, it's easy to get carried away. Make sure you know what each symbol and abbreviation means. There is often information or a key at the front explaining how the catalog works. You will see descriptions such as organic seeds, full/part sun, butterfly attracting, and many more. It's important to be familiar with these symbols when you start shopping in a catalog.

When reading the descriptions of vegetable varieties, you will often come across certain terms or vocabulary that you will need to know in order to have success in the garden. Most fruits and vegetables will be labeled by the maturity date or days to harvest. This is simply the average number of days from sowing the seeds in the garden to when you can expect to harvest the produce. Remember, it's just an average range, and many factors can affect it. You may also see terms such as hybrid, heirloom or open pollinated seeds. Hybrid seeds are varieties created by cross pollination of two desired parent plants. This cross produces a plant with desirable characteristics such as color, taste, or even disease resistance. You can expect to see their names written as F1, F2, or with an X. Heirloom seeds can also be referred

to as open pollinated. They have been passed down from generation to generation. Heirloom seeds can be saved and used again and again, creating a self-sufficient garden.

The last step is to make your shopping list and order! It's always fun to try a couple of new and unique vegetables or varieties, but remember to plant what you know your family will eat. Set your garden up for success by choosing vegetables proven to perform well across Kansas. You can stop by the Extension Office for a list of K-State Recommended Vegetable Varieties. It might also be fun to talk with neighbors or community garden members about what has worked best for them and even trade favorite seeds.

This season, get your garden plans started early. Take a little extra time to really understand your seed catalogs and know exactly what you will be getting when those seeds arrive for spring. If you have any questions about ordering or starting seeds, contact your local Extension Office.

Post Rock Extension District of K-State Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith counties. Cassie may be contacted at cthiesse@ksu.edu or by calling Beloit (785-738-3597). Find us online at www.postrock.ksu.edu

Farmers & Ranchers Livestock Commission Co.

Total for the Week - Cattle –
Bulls - \$200 - \$211 Cows - \$168 - \$180

Strs		Hftrs	
300-400	\$620.00-630.00	300-400	\$540.00-555.00
400-500	\$545.00-557.00	400-500	\$510.00-520.00
500-600	\$505.00-515.00	500-600	\$455.00-465.00
600-700	\$459.00-470.00	600-700	\$390.00-401.00
700-800	\$385.00-\$396.00	700-800	\$350.00-360.00
800-900	\$350.00-361.00	800-900	\$315.00-324.00
900-1000	\$330.00-340.50	900-1000	\$285.00-295.00

Early Consignments for Thursday, January 29th Sale: 10 a.m.: 15 blk/red hftrs, 600-700, wean 60 days; 61 blk/red str, 825-875, all AI sired; 25 mostly blk hftrs, 750, long wean, open; 55 blk hftrs, 600-800, long wean vacc, open, Cow Camp sired; 45 blk/red s&h, 600-700, home raise, long wean 2 round vacc, open; plus many more by sale time.

Early consignments for Wean/Vacc sale, February 3: 11 str, 500-700; 10 blk s&h, 350-450, home raise, wean 90 days, Don Johnson sired; 8 s&h, 550-700, wean Oct. 6, home raise; 120 blk s&h, 650-750, 2 round vacc; 45 blk/bwf str, 700-800, home raise, wean Nov.22, spring & fall vacc, no imp.; 35 red/charX s&h; 95 red s&h, 600-700; 12 blk s&h, 500#s, wean 90 days, fall vacc, open, McCurry ang. Sired; 200 blk s&h, 650-850, 2 round vacc, Don Johnson sire; 280 blk/bwf s&h, 500-700, 80% home raise, 20% 1 iron; 107 blk s&h, 500-700, home raise, 2 round vacc; 75 blk s&h, 500-800, home raise, 2 round vacc; 50 blk ang. s&h, 650-750; 120 blk/red str, 550-650, wean 100 days, off stalks, 3 round vacc; 100 blk s&h, 450-600, home raise, long wean, 2 round vacc; 120 blk s&h, 550-700, home raise, wean 45+days, 3 round vacc (2fall); plus more by sale time.

Cow Sales

Tuesday, February 17 (11 am)

Tuesday, March 17 (11 am)

Special Weaned/Vacc Sales

Tuesday, February 3

For a complete list of cattle for all sales check out our website at: www.fandrive.com

Sales Manager, Mike Samples

Office: 785-825-0211 Cell: 785-826-7884

Salina, Kansas

Listen to our markets on KSAL, Salina at 6:45 a.m. Mon. thru Fri.

For more information or to consign cattle call sale barn or:

Fieldman Representatives:

Kenny Briscoe • Lincoln, KS • 785-658-7386

Lisa Long • Ellsworth, KS • 620-553-2351

Cody Schafer • 620-381-1050

Auctioneers:

Kyle Elwood, Brandon Hamel, and Garren Walrod

Legal Notice

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CITY OF BEVERLY, KANSAS SUMMARY OF CASH RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025					
Fund	Beginning		Receipts	Expenditures	Ending Cash 12/31/24
	Cash				
General	\$95,750.59		\$61,619.90	\$85,261.70	\$72,108.79
Special Street & Highway	\$14,935.27		\$4,004.42	\$3,726.85	\$15,212.84
Water Utility	\$38,888.01		\$52,495.21	\$32,654.16	\$58,729.06
Sewer Utility	\$26,139.09		\$21,571.54	\$10,501.61	\$37,209.02
Refuse	-\$4,526.54		\$11,135.25	\$6,608.71	\$0.00
Savings Interest	\$0.00		\$709.59	\$0.00	\$709.59
Capital Improvement - Well Project Reserve	\$34,063.47		\$2,066.00	\$7,241.01	\$28,888.46
Total	\$205,249.89		\$153,601.91	\$145,994.04	\$212,857.76
Composition of Cash:					
Wilson State Bank: Checking Account Balance as of 12/31/25			\$109,430.69		
Outstanding Deposits			\$0.00		
Outstanding Checks as of 12/31/25			-\$809.99		
Wilson State Bank Savings Account			\$8,711.50		
Certificate of Deposits			\$95,525.56		
Total			\$212,857.76		
Summary of Indebtedness: General Obligation Bonds					
Water System Revenue Bond Balance as of December 31, 2025			\$151,546.85		
Certified by: Rhonda Bell, City Clerk					



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