Kansas Farm Bureau pledges $5 million to K-State ag infrastructure plan

Linton says partnership helps to leverage ideas, advance student education

**K-State Research and Extension news service**

MANHATTAN – Kansas Farm Bureau has announced a pledge for the largest donation in its history to support a plan to build and renovate agricultural infrastructure at Kansas State University.

KFB officials announced they will provide $5 million over five years to support the K-State College of Agriculture’s Innovation Centers for grain, food, animal and agronomy research, a project totaling $125 million to improve several facilities on the north end of its Manhattan campus.

The $5 million pledge from Kansas Farm Bureau was recognized on Ag Day during the K-State football game Oct. 1 against Texas Tech.

“We’ve known for a long time the facilities at the country’s first operational land grant institution needed updating,” said KFB President Rich Felts in a release from KFB. “We’re excited to come alongside Pres. (Richard) Linton, K-State and others to make an investment in our industry, our state and future K-State students to ensure K-State is a global leader in agriculture.”

K-State’s Linton called the university’s infrastructure initiative “visionary,” saying it will be built specifically to support interdisciplinary science teams from across the College of Agriculture and other colleges.

“We see this (improved) infrastructure being an incubator for a strong public-private partnership where industry can work hand-in-hand with K-State researchers to leverage ideas and funding to move forward and develop students of tomorrow,” Linton said.

The partnership, he added, will “create markets and jobs that are important to stakeholders. This is the vision of a next-generation land grant university.”
Ernie Minton, dean of the K-State College of Agriculture, called this “an exciting time at K-State and the College of Agriculture.”

“We want to thank Kansas Farm Bureau for this investment in the future of agricultural teaching and research at K-State,” Minton said. “This gift is proof of the strong, long-standing relationship between the university and the agricultural industry, which is the lifeblood of Kansas. We are excited for the opportunities our innovation centers will bring to our students, faculty and the producers who drive this state’s robust agricultural economy.”

K-State officials unveiled a strategic plan in early September to improve or build facilities near the current Weber Hall, and the property known as the North Farm that contains many of the university’s agronomy and livestock facilities.

“Kansas Farm Bureau’s investment in new facilities and technology at K-State demonstrates the importance of university-industry partnerships to advance agriculture for a changing world,” Linton said. “Feeding a growing population in a changing environment requires innovative thinking and cross-discipline collaboration. Kansas Farm Bureau’s gift will empower K-State researchers and students working with industry leaders to find the necessary solutions to this grand challenge.”

More information on K-State’s agricultural infrastructure project is available online from the KSU Foundation.

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Kansas Farm Bureau, https://www.kfb.org/Kansas-Farm-Bureau
KSU Foundation (agricultural infrastructure), https://ksufoundation.org

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