**This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/stories/2023/09/agriculture-landowner-conference.html**

Released: Sept. 26, 2023

**Landowner conference to help with challenges of owning land in Kansas**

Number of absentee owners rising in the state, say K-State agricultural economists

*By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service*

MANHATTAN, Kan. – In less than a decade, there has been a shift in land ownership trends in Kansas.

“There is a growing demographic of landowners in Kansas that are becoming more geographically and generationally removed from agriculture,” said Robin Reid, an agricultural economist at Kansas State University.

Reid cites data from 2015 indicating that 85% of Kansas land was owned by people living in the state. Research is ongoing, she says, but in 2022, data suggests a notable shift in land being owned by people who live outside the state’s borders.

“Some of that is due to inheritance and some of that is due to people purchasing land – especially hunting ground,” Reid said. “But we also know the No. 1 question in our county extension offices across the state is from landowners wanting to know the going rates for land leases and information on Kansas lease law.”

Reid said K-State is hosting the first-ever Kansas Landowner Conference on Nov. 10 to address challenges related to land ownership in Kansas. She notes that in addition to helping landowners build networks and learn about land management, the program includes information on:

- Agricultural land market conditions.
- Land lease management.
- Property tax regulations.

Registration is available online through Nov. 1. More information and the conference schedule is available at www.AgManager.info/Landowner.
“There is so much that we want to emphasize about having a good relationship between a landowner and their tenant,” Reid said. “Open communication and getting a lease in writing will help to streamline the process of managing a land lease and avoiding conflict.”

Ashlee Westerhold, director of the Office of Farm and Ranch Transition in K-State’s Department of Agricultural Economics, will also be presenting during the conference. She said that 2 in 3 – 66% -- Kansas farms are owned and operated by someone age 55 or older.

“So if you think about that,” she said, “in the next 15 years as landowners head towards 70 years old, they will be retiring or thinking about transferring land. We’re going to see a huge wave of ownership transfer from one generation to the next.”

In her current role, Westerhold said she works with many families who are inheriting farmland while living in Kansas City, Wichita or other large cities.

“They do not necessarily have plans to come back to the farm, but they want to keep ownership,” she said. “And it’s important to have conversations about transition and succession even though these children might not live on the farm someday. We’re helping them become better landowners once they inherit the farm.”

More information on land-related issues also is available from the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics website, AgManager.info.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Kansas Landowner Conference, https://www.agmanager.info/Landowner

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