

For Immediate Release:

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KFAC Releases New Exploring Kansas' Natural Resources Educator Guide

MANHATTAN, Kan. – The Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) has announced the recent release of the new *Exploring Kansas' Natural Resources Educator Guide*. Written and published by the foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance the understanding of agriculture by increasing the scope and effectiveness of educational tools, the 220-page guide is designed to assist upper-elementary level teachers in educating youth about the relationship between Kansas' natural resources and agriculture.

Conserving Kansas' natural resources, including its wildlife and parks, water resources, prairies, livestock, crops and other agriculture-related industries, is vital to the wellbeing of the state. Educating Kansas' youth about the connection between their food and clothing and the state's agricultural and natural resources is invaluable when it comes to the state's future.

“Up until now, there haven't been any educator guides available to teachers, to my knowledge, about Kansas geology. In many cases, teachers will often lecture about rainforests, deserts and oceans instead of what is outside their backdoor simply because those are the resources that are most available to them,” said Cathy Musick, executive director for KFAC.

Kansas is a very diverse state with 10 distinct geographical areas, which range from hill regions to plateaus and river lowlands. This 11-unit educator guide explores every section of the state and the natural resources in those areas. Each unit outlines a different natural resource and is completed with career profiles of people whose jobs are directly related to that resource. These career profiles demonstrate to youth the wide range of agriculture-related opportunities available throughout Kansas and that agriculture and food industries extend far beyond the farm.

“The goal of the educator's guide is to challenge the attitudes of Kansans about their own state and the natural resources found here,” said Mary Anne Stoskopf, chair of the KFAC Natural Resources Working Group and member of the KFAC Education Committee. “Kansas is an incredibly diverse state [and] agricultural uses – cropland, pasture and rangeland – account for over 90 percent of the state's land area. One key to the future of our state is recognizing and understanding the complexity of agricultural and natural resource issues.”

The KFAC Natural Resources Educator Guide will include a series of 11x17-inch mini-posters for teachers to use in their classroom, Stoskopf said. The posters will be available this summer for teachers who have previously requested an educator guide. More posters will be available for schools to order this fall.

To request an *Exploring Kansas' Natural Resources Educator Guide*, or other educational materials from KFAC, interested persons can send an e-mail to at ksfac@ksu.edu, or call (785)

532-7946. Some resources are also available for download from the KFAC Web site at www.ksagclassroom.org.