

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 13, 2011

**For more information contact:**

Ashley Mueller, Program Assistant  
Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom  
(785) 532-7946 (voice)  
*ksfac@ksu.edu*

**Soybean growing contest open to Kansas students**

MANHATTAN, Kan. – This spring, K-State Department of Agronomy and Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) will partner to host “Willie and the Beanstalk,” a soybean growing contest for Kansas students. The challenge involves trying to grow the largest soybean plant in a 40-day time frame.

The Kanas Soybean Commission sponsors the contest, which is open to high school, middle school, elementary school, 4-H, and/or FFA teams interested in the scientific principles surrounding plant growth. There are two age divisions for the contest: a K-8th grade division and a 9-12th grade division.

Beginning on a common seeding day of Mar. 7, contestants will grow a soybean plant for 40 days and document their activities. On April 16, students and their team adviser (teacher or sponsor) must bring their entry to the K-State Manhattan campus for judging. The judging will take place in Throckmorton Hall, home of the Dept. of Agronomy, and it will be held in conjunction with K-State’s 2011 Open House activities.

The soybean plants will be evaluated based upon the following criteria: cultural practices documentation, plant height, plant mass, leaf area and leaf greenness. Plants within each division will be ranked based on the criteria, and prizes will be awarded for the top entries in each judging category. All entrants will receive a t-shirt.

The contest can easily be incorporated in the classroom as a strong experiential learning activity. KFAC has developed lesson plans that focus on plant growth and development for the contest. The lesson plans are available at *www.ksagclassroom.org*.

Registration for the contest opens Feb. 1. For registration information and contest rules, visit *http://beanstalk.agronomy.ksu.edu* or email *beanstalk@k-state.edu*.