
April 1, 2016

TO: Kansas Ag Media Outlets

FROM: Kansas Farm Service Agency Executive Director Adrian Polansky

SUBJECT: A Special 2016 National Agriculture Day Message

National Agriculture Day Honors Stewards of a Healthy Planet

March 15 is National Agriculture Day – a day designated each year by the Agriculture Council of America to celebrate the accomplishments of agriculture. As past Chair of the Agriculture Council of America, I was honored to lead the National Agriculture Day celebration in 1984. As State Executive Director, I am now pleased that Kansas FSA joins the council in recognizing farmers and ranchers for their contributions to the nation's outstanding quality of life. This year's theme is ***Agriculture: Stewards of a Healthy Planet***.

Agricultural producers are the original stewards of the land. They understand the fragility of the land and are well aware that there are increasingly fewer producers and fewer acres for production. They want to sustain it and protect what they have.

According to the 2012 Agriculture Census, there are 3.2 million farmers and ranchers in the United States. These American farmers and ranchers constantly seek new and sustainable ways to operate. Through these efforts, they preserve wildlife, protect water sources and reduce soil erosion. They also use precision production practices to greatly reduce their footprint on the environment.

Last year, 912 million acres produced food and fiber. Not only are American farmers and ranchers, who represent one percent of the U.S. population, devoted to taking care of the land, but they're committed to feeding the nation and producing imports that help the country balance its trade."

Every year, farmers and ranchers face challenges such as natural disasters, downturns in markets and plant disease, which can financially cripple their operations, but they persevere. During such times, FSA provides financial relief through various conservation, disaster assistance, commodity safety-net programs and low interest-rate credit outlined in the 2014 Farm Bill.

The programs provide Kansas's 61,773 agricultural operations with the ability to rank among the top 10 states in wheat, cattle, corn, soybean, and hay production, and generate the sixth-highest value of agricultural products in the nation, with an annual market value of over \$18 billion.

I am honored to administer programs that enable our producers to manage their risks when the agriculture industry faces hardship. On behalf of the Kansas Farm Service Agency, I would like to thank American farmers and ranchers for continuing to feed our nation and the world during every circumstance.