



## Collaborate | Educate | Implement

This is a quarterly newsletter from Kansas Association of Conservation Districts.

Encourage others to [sign up!](#)

## DOC EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Kristin Kloft

Kristin Kloft enjoys the outdoors. She hunts, fishes, and has been known to trap occasionally. That's why it is no surprise to find her in waders in the middle of a creek working to keep Kansas water clean. One creek at a time.



Kloft is the Riparian and Wetland Program Manager for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Conservation. She studied Animal Ecology at Iowa State University. Kloft began her career with the Kansas Wildlife and Parks before joining the DOC.

"As a kid I wanted to be a veterinarian because I like animals so much, but after a few classes, I decided to change to a career with wildlife." At KWP Kloft was doing field work like wetland management, pumping the wetlands in the fall, burning, and food plots.

She made the switch to conservation in 2020. "It is still natural resource based. Now I don't work specifically with wildlife, but with the wildlife habitat," said Kloft. "It's a bigger scope. This is state-wide whereas before I was limited to a region."

[More About Kristin](#)

## The Kansas Envirothon: Natural Resource Management Competition for High School Students

In 2023, the current issue was "Adapting to a Changing Climate." The changing climate is one of the most complex issues facing the world today. It spans many disciplines and aspects of everyday life:

- science
- socioeconomics
- environment health
- politics
- agriculture
- food
- natural resources
- moral and ethical values.



Students learn about factors contributing to a changing climate, the effects of these changes on the environment and natural resources, and the unique challenges facing natural resource dependent communities. As they explore the impacts on human social and economic systems, they learn about management strategies for mitigating and adapting to a changing climate, and the roles of innovative technologies and programs in responding to local and global changes.

[More About Envirothon](#)

## Local Work Group Results

### Matt Sprick provided 2023 Local Work Group Results

"The 2023 Local Work Group (LWG) meetings have all been completed and the summary results from the LWG meetings are posted on the KACD website! Two summary LWG reports were developed that capture the resource concern comments that were shared during the LWG meetings, and provide a summarization of the primary resource concerns that were identified across the state.

590 individuals participated in 30 LWG meetings providing valuable insight and information on the state of natural resources across Kansas. The 2023 LWG summary reports have also been shared and reviewed with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) leadership and will be utilized as valued input for program development and conservation assistance implementation.

Through the 2023 LWG meetings participants continued to identify additional resource concerns, further define previously identified resource concerns, and provide insight on timely subject matters such as the challenges associated with drought conditions."

[View LWG Results](#)

## Urban Ag Study Results

In April & May, KACD, in partnership with Kansas State University (KSU), conducted small-scale and urban grower focus group meetings. During the focus groups, facilitators from KSU led growers through a series of questions that aimed to identify a wide range of challenges they face. The information gathered identified financial assistance needs, technical assistance needs and information needs.

KACD personnel also conducted similar in-person meetings with tribal producers and various representatives of the four Tribal Nations of NE Kansas. The purpose of these interactions was to identify Tribal resource needs and concerns associated with information and education, outreach, resource conservation, and technical assistance.

KACD presented this information to NRCS leadership.

Review the results for Urban Ag study.

- [Small Grower Needs Assessment](#)

- [Tribal Needs Assessment](#)

## 2023 Range Academies

KACD is working with Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition in promoting range academies for producers. Learn with your neighbors! Receive expert instruction from ranchers as well as agency and university staffs on a variety of rangeland topics.

- **The Mixed Grass Academy** is scheduled for August 8-10, 2023 at Camp Mennohah in Murdock, Kansas.
- **The Tallgrass Academy** is scheduled for August 29-31 at Camp Wood YMCA near Elmdale, KS.
- **The Shortgrass Academy** is set for September 5-7 at Camp Christy in Scott City, Kansas.

Scholarships are available for most ranchers and others. Scholarship forms must be received by the KGLC Coordinator no later than two weeks prior to the class beginning.

[Range Academy Information](#)

[Register for Range Academy](#)

[Apply for Range Academy Scholarships](#)

## Get Paid for Soil Health

KACD provides a variety of payment options for soil health improvement activities through private partnerships with ADM, USDA NRCS, NFWF, and NACD!



**Producers have two participation options:**

**OPTION 1 ADM & NFWF:** Archer-Daniels-Midland Company (ADM), USDA NRCS and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) program. In 2022, Kansas producers from forty-five counties enrolled more than 100,000 acres. Goal for 2023 is 200,000 acres.

- Cover Crops:
  - New in 2023 \$25/acre
  - New in 2018 to 2022 \$15/acre
  - All other \$10/acre
- Additional payment options for implementing regenerative practices/activities of no-till or strip-till, live roots year round, fertilizer efficiency and carbon neutrality.
- Single year contracts will continue to be available for producers.

[regenerations - Built to support farm legacies and consumer demand.](#)

**OPTION 2 Eco-Harvest:** General Mills and NACD have partnered to offer a [carbon credit program](#) (Kansas & Oklahoma). You will self-certify that you have made a practice change. A soil test in the first year will establish the baseline. A 30-minute interview after enrolling will also be required.

**Requirements:** Wheat must be in the rotation to qualify AND a 5-year commitment to implement practice change. Goal: 30,000 total acres in Kansas and Oklahoma

- Guaranteed payment of \$16/ton of carbon (using an estimate based on the practice change). \$15.20/ton to the producer after administrative fee.
- Field data recorded every year for each field enrolled in the program.
- Implement a practice change prior to that year's crops. Practice changes options:
  - Utilize cover crop for the first time
  - Switch from conventional till to reduced or no-till
  - Change the nutrient plan

[More information about GM and NACD program](#)

## Emergency Funding: Drought related

Emergency Funding available for drought related assistance - sign up through your local FSA (Farm Service Agency). Most counties still have funding available.

[More information about emergency funding](#)

## Updates from Kansas Division of Conservation (DOC)

Reminder that state cost share opens July 1, 2023. Apply at your local conservation district office. Contracts are generated by a ranking process, based on your county's resource concerns and priorities. Limited funding is available.

[FY 2024 Cost Share](#)

## NRCS UPDATES

### NRCS Delivering Climate Solutions through the Inflation Reduction Act

The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) of 2022 represents the single largest investment in climate and clean energy solutions in American history. It provides \$19.5 billion from fiscal years 2023 to 2027 for climate smart agriculture through several of the conservation programs that USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) implements. Last February, NRCS announced it was making \$850 million of those funds available in fiscal year 2023 for its oversubscribed conservation programs – the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

[NRCS Delivering Climate Solutions through the Inflation Reduction Act | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

### Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \$500 Million for Improved Regional Conservation Partnership Program to Better Support Partners, Producers as Part of Investing in America Agenda

The Biden-Harris Administration today announced the availability of \$500 million in funding to advance partner-driven solutions to conservation on agricultural land through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). RCPP leverages a voluntary approach to conservation that expands the reach of conservation efforts and climate-smart agriculture through public-private partnerships. Increased funding for fiscal year 2023 is made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, and this year's funding opportunity reflects a concerted effort to streamline and simplify the program. Program improvements will enable USDA to efficiently implement the \$4.95 billion in Inflation Reduction Act funding for the program while improving the experience for partners, agricultural producers, and employees.

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \\$500 Million for Improved Regional Conservation Partnership Program to Better Support Partners, Producers as Part of Investing in America Agenda | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

## 2023 Bottom Line Conference

The 2023 Bottom Line Conference will be held Thursday and Friday, August 24 – 25. The Conservation Districts from Kearny County, Hamilton County, Finney County, Grant County, Greeley County, Wichita County, Stanton County, and Scott County have all partnered together to bring farmers and ranchers together to learn about the benefits of soil health and water conservation in a dry climate.

The Bottom Line Conference will take a comprehensive look at techniques and systems that will improve bottom lines, soil production and profits in the drier Southwest Kansas climate. We promise a number of expert speakers that have decades of success through real-world practice and experience. There is no better time than NOW to learn all we can about soil health.



[Conference Information](#)

[Conference Registration](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

[>> July 15th: Grain Place Foundation Field Day](#)

[>> July 19th-20th: Mind Over Market Crossroads Conference](#)

[>> July 20th: Stewards of the Land: Leopold Conservation Award Winners \[VIRTUAL\]](#)

[>> July 24th: Regenerating the Soil with Cover Crops and Rotational Grazing](#)

[>> July 25th-26th: Ottawa County Conservation District 2nd Annual Summer Field Days Featuring Jay Fuhrer](#)

[>> August 14th: Kauffman Seeds Soil Health Day](#)

[>> August 15th: Wildlife Management and Soil Health Field Day](#)

[>> August 17th: Stewards of the Land: Leopold Conservation Award Winners \[VIRTUAL\]](#)

[>> August 24th-25th Bottom Line Conference](#)

Kansas Soil Health Alliance provides a list of many of the [soil health events](#). If you are hosting a soil health event, please submit it to Jennifer at Kansas Soil Health Alliance!

## Connect With Us!

Follow along with us on our Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and website for information about upcoming events, program details, available resources, news and more!



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"Providing local leadership to protect and improve Kansas Natural Resources through collaboration, education and implementation"

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Content and email marketing provided by  
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Funded through a grant with [USDA-NRCS Kansas](#).