

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Powell at 9:00 a.m. on January 26, 2011, in Room 783 in the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Rocky Fund - Excused  
Representative Michael Peterson - Excused

Committee staff present:

Jill Wolters, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Michael Wales, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dale Rodman, Acting Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture

Others attending:

See attached list.

There were no bill introduction requests.

Dale Rodman, Acting Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, addressed the committee sharing his extensive personal background in agriculture prior to his nomination by Governor Brownback to serve as the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture. Kansas agriculture is strong and a foundation of the Kansas economy, however, he feels there are many opportunities for growth in the Kansas economy, and agriculture will play a key role in that growth. He is serving as a member of Governor Brownback's Economic Team charged by the Governor to develop an economic development strategy to grow the number of Kansas jobs that provide a meaningful increase in income and opportunity for Kansas families. The Governor has committed to creating Rural Opportunity Zones. These zones would be an effort to provide rural areas with declining populations an opportunity to find the right tax and economic development resource mix to spur growth in their regions. The goal is to expand rural opportunities in Kansas and grow the agriculture sector.

Secretary Rodman stated that it is the Governor's vision to grow the role and mission of the Department of Agriculture and make it a premier state agency. His budget brings responsibility for animal health, conservation, and agricultural marketing to the Department of Agriculture. He noted that most states include these responsibilities in the missions of their departments of agriculture. It is believed greater efficiencies can be achieved, and that has never been more important than in this time of budget cuts and agency staff reductions. The Governor wants greater focus on promotion of agricultural products and for the Department of Agriculture to play a greater role in being an advocate for the agricultural industry. Copies of the Kansas Department of Agriculture's 2010 Annual Report (available from the Department) were distributed. ([Attachment 1](#))

Representative Jerry Williams suggested asking someone from the Kansas Geological Survey to speak to the committee highlighting their relationship to agriculture and natural resources.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m. The next meeting of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for January 27, 2011.