Approved: January 30, 2001

Date

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Derek Schmidt at 8:30 a.m. on January 23, 2001 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Downey (excused)

Senator Lee (excused)

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department

Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes

Betty Bomar, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Rebecca Reed, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture

Greg A. Foley, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Frances Kastner, Kansas Food Dealers Association

Others attending: See attached list

<u>Upon motion by Senator Huelskamp, seconded by Senator Tyson, the Minutes of the January 16 and January 17 meetings were unanimously approved.</u>

Senator Morris moved, seconded by Senator Huelskamp that a Resolution be introduced which conceptually requests the Bush administration to withdraw several environmental regulations proposed by the Clinton administration, including a rule proposing to regulate farm ponds in Kansas and to permanently withdraw the proposed water-quality regulations. The voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Senator Morris moved, seconded by Senator Corbin, a bill be introduced as a Committee bill, reducing the pesticide retail fee under certain conditions to \$25.00. The voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

## <u>SB 60 - Repealing the statute requiring the statistics division of the department of agriculture to work with county appraisers to collect agriculture data from producers.</u>

Rebecca Reed, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture, testified that <u>SB 60</u> repeals the requirement that the Statistics Division of the Kansas Department of Agriculture work with county appraisers statewide to collect agricultural data from all producers within each county. The state property tax code has changed dramatically since 1978 when the provision was passed, and this method of data collection has become ineffective in accomplishing the original goal of identifying new producers. Ms. Reed stated survey forms are mailed to producers and collected by the county appraisers which returns are returned to the Agriculture Statistics Division for processing. The information is used to update the Kansas agriculture producer database and to provide county-level data for Kansas Farm Facts, an annual publication of the Agriculture Statistics Division. Of the 50,000 to 60,000 farms in Kansas approximately 16,000 responses are received by the Division. (Attachment 1)

In order to maintain the statistical information, the Statistics Division plans to expand its end-of-year mailings from about 6,000 to 7,000 to around 10,000 to 12,000. This mailing, together with the current mailings and data collection, will result in more abundant data and financial resources will be reallocated to provide for follow-up telephone calls on surveys not returned.

Ms. Reed, in response to questioning from the Committee, stated the county appraisers are in favor of the proposed legislation and will provide the Committee with a letter verifying their position.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## SB 61 - Kansas meat and poultry inspection act; defining wholesaler, distributor and public warehouseman and requiring such persons to be registered

Greg A. Foley, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, testified in favor of <u>SB 61</u>. Mr. Foley stated the inspection program and the state's small meat processors have been challenged to improve sanitation in plants to maintain the state "equal to" federal status and approval from the USDA. Recent review earned the program plaudits from federal reviewers and a laudable category II. The state's fully inspected plants developed and put into effect new Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans as of January 2000. Federal legislation is presently pending that allows interstate shipment of state-inspected meat and poultry. (<u>Attachment</u> 2)

<u>SB 61</u> amends the definitions of "Wholesaler", "Distributor", and "Public warehouseman" to clarify which entities are required to register and defines their categories. KDA anticipates an industry move toward value-added products and the proposed changes will allow the Meat and Poultry Inspection Program to address such changes. These amendments provide the inspection program authority to monitor meats that enter the food supply, and to ensure that each registrant complies with existing laws and regulations, in order to provide a wholesome product to Kansas consumers.

<u>SB 61</u> modifies the fee statute to include wholesaler, distributor, and public warehouseman. Mr. Foley stated there are currently 153 distributors, wholesalers and warehouses registered with the Secretary of Agriculture and the \$50 assessment is projected to generate \$7,650 which will defray some of the costs to inspect these facilities. The registration fee was inadvertently omitted from a previous revision of the act.

Frances Kastner, Kansas Food Dealers Association, testified in opposition to <u>SB 61</u>, stating the registration fee is another cost that must be borne by the food dealers. The food dealers are the persons bearing the increased cost for all the regulations.

A Memorandum from Tracy Streeter, Executive Director, State Conservation Commission, relating to TMDL high priority areas, was distributed to members of the Committee. (Attachment 3)

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2001.