



# FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Spring Newsletter

The Department of Agriculture prepares students with the necessary skills and experiences for the evolving agriculture industry. Through hands-on learning and diverse academic programs, graduates find fulfilling careers, from returning to the family farm to taking a leading role in global agribusiness corporations.

### **FHSU hosts second annual Western Ag Summit**

The 2023 Ag Summit opened with Dean Dixon welcoming over sixty guests. Attendees included personnel from various agricultural-related businesses, FHSU and Affiliation schools NCK Tech and Northwest Tech, and state and national legislators.

“Ag Jobs” was the theme of this summit, hosted by Fort Hays State University. The event was established by Kansas District 110 Representative Ken Rahjes, chair of the House of Representatives Ag Committee, and Dr. Grady Dixon, Fort Hays State University dean of the Peter Werth College of Science, Technology and Mathematics to bring awareness to the critical issues facing Kansas’ farmers, ranchers, financial institutions, and ag businesses.

“Last year was our first event, and we focused on the things that most people may not know about each sector of agriculture in western Kansas,” Dixon said. “Going forward, we plan to have themes each year, and this year’s theme was ‘Ag Jobs.’ We hope to learn more about the ways that legislators, universities, and others can help prepare, recruit, and retain a strong workforce in this industry.”

Mark your calendars for the 2024 summit, which is set for Dec. 9.

### **Community Engagement**

Both the rodeo team and the Department of Ag. ambassadors have been busy hosting educational workshops. The value of Fort Hays State University’s hands-on approach truly shines through while hosting those groups during these events. Students learn about the animals and farm management practices such as branding and roping. Sharing our passion with learners of all ages is rewarding for our students, too.



## Local Food Fellow

Announcing Morgan Barba, Local Food Fellow for the FHSU Department of Agriculture. Thanks to a Kansas State fellowship obtained by Dr. Ano, in spring 2024 Ms. Barba will be assessing area consumers' interest in local food options. She will also meet with various stakeholders in the Hays community and work on creating a directory of local food producers.



## 2023 Costa Rica Field Trip

The FHSU Department of Agriculture embarked on its first-ever international field trip to Costa Rica from January 4-12. Six students, three alumni, and two faculty leaders toured local farms and ranches to learn about pineapple, coffee, chocolate, heart of palm, dairy, and cattle production. They also enjoyed experiencing the wide range of wildlife in the tropical jungle, from sloths to monkeys and iguanas. The weather and topography of Costa Rica were of great interest, as was the local culture. The hospitality of the Costa Rican people was excellent. The Department of Agriculture looks forward to planning more international trips!



## Club spotlight

Led by Dr. McDonald, the Agronomy Business Club members attended the American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Meeting in Mobile, Alabama, in January. It was a fantastic educational experience for our students, allowing them to learn more about agriculture and agricultural practices nationwide and compete in Knowledge Bowl and Crop ID competitions.



### **Upcoming events for FHSU Ag:**

Bull sale, March 26

Rodeo, April 18-20



### **Questions? We're here for you!**

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