

The Farm Bill and Kansas



The federal Farm Bill provides over \$187 million annually in conservation dollars through cost-share assistance, rental payments, easement payments, and technical assistance provided in Kansas. That funding helps Kansas farmers and ranchers be better stewards of the state's land, water, soils, and wildlife, and it provides conservation and economic benefits throughout Kansas.

Keith Weller, USDA ARS

Working Lands – in 2018, the Conservation Stewardship Program committed over \$46 million in payments to Kansas farmers and ranchers, covering over 490,000 acres of farm and ranch land. CSP contracts helped farmers plant cover crops, improve their nutrient management systems, and install wildlife-friendly fencing and other practices. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program provided \$50 million in 2018 for contracts that included over 307,000 acres of farm and ranch land in Kansas. EQIP funds help farmers and ranchers improve their grazing systems, put in place nutrient management plans, install livestock waste facilities, and adopt other conservation practices.



Farm Bill conservation programs help farmers improve their grazing systems.

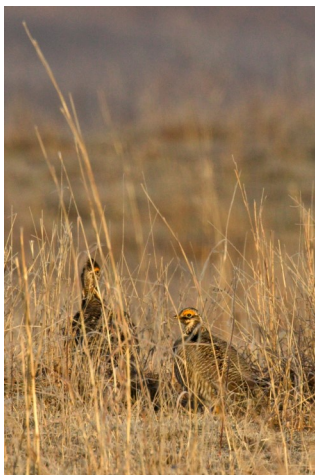
Conservation Reserve Program – Over 13,600 Kansas farms have Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts, covering over 1.9 million acres of land. The contracts provide \$86 million in annual rental payments to farmers. 82% of those acres are CRP General contracts totaling 1.6 million acres; often highly erodible cropland that has been planted to grassland vegetation. 321,000 acres are Continuous CRP enrollments, including over 204,000 acres of State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) contracts, nearly 23,000 acres of CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) and about 25,000 acres of CRP Grasslands. In western Kansas, CRP fields provide critical habitat that helps lesser prairie chickens survive.

Wetland and Grassland Easements – in 2018 the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program provided \$4.7 million that helped fund conservation easements in Kansas. From 2014 to 2018, \$21 million in ACEP funds helped provide conservation easements on 8,506 acres in Kansas, including easements that protect wetlands and native prairie from development.

Focused Conservation – the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) has helped target USDA conservation dollars where they will do the most good and will leverage state and private funds. In Kansas, RCPP projects meet local conservation needs, including managing riparian woodlands, advanced irrigation management, providing pheasant habitat, protecting native prairie, and improving water quality. Funds allocated through those RCPP initiatives is included in the numbers

Jeff Vanuga, NRCS

Lesser prairie chickens are one of many species that benefit from CRP fields.



Stephen Ausmus, USDA ARS

shown above for ACEP, CSP, and EQIP.

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education — the SARE program funds on-farm research, driven by farmers, to identify, test, and provide educational outreach on farming and ranching methods that reduce the use of off-farm inputs, improve productivity, and address conservation issues. In Kansas, SARE funds helped start a grass-fed beef cooperative that today includes 100 farmer-members selling to 30 stores, just one of 155 SARE grant-funded projects. Kansas projects have helped farmers evaluate cover crop options, control invasive species, explore a range of alternative crops, and develop value-added farm products.



Farm Bill programs help farmers test and adopt cover crop options.