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Ag is the Bread and Butter

Sometimes it seems like Agriculture is overlooked in its overall importance to the economy. We are only 2% of the population, just a small piece of the pie, we aren't all that glamorous. All the dictionaries define "bread and butter" as something that provides you with regular income, essential or a sustaining element.

I was reading some recent statistics from the State of Kansas. These were estimated economic impact of Agriculture, Food and Food Processing.

For Jackson County, 14 sectors had a direct output of approximately \$167.4 million and supported 1340 jobs in Jackson County, Jefferson County had 17 contributing sectors for direct output of \$149.9 million and supported 1228 jobs, and Nemaha County has 21 sectors of approximately \$1 billion and supports 1931 jobs. If you add in the food and food processing sectors then the numbers expand to Jackson 1553 jobs, Jefferson 1337 and Nemaha county jobs to 2988.

Those jobs are very significant with county populations of Jackson county 13,366, Jefferson County at 18,813 and Nemaha County at 10,161. Ag jobs are 16.5% of all jobs in Jackson County, 21.1% in Jefferson County and 37.46% in Nemaha County.

More interesting yet is the top 3 sectors of each county. In Jackson County the top three are beef cattle ranching and farming, animal harvesting, oilseed farming in dollars of output, the top 3 Ag employers were for beef ranching, landscape and horticulture services and all other crop farming. Jefferson county top 3 sectors for output were: beef cattle ranching, animal harvesting and dairy cattle and milk production. For employment the top three were: beef cattle ranching, all other crop farming and landscape and horticulture services.

Nemaha county top 3 sectors for output were: dog and cat food manufacturing, other animal food manufacturing and farm machinery and equipment manufacturing. The top three for employment were: beef cattle ranching, animal production (dairy, hogs) and dog and cat food manufacturing.

All 105 counties in Kansas have this sort of data on agriculture, food and food processing contribution summaries. These values do not factor in the retail environment of food sales. Food retail is important, but in order to get a clearer picture of production agriculture and processing contributes the retail sector was left out.

The beef cattle ranching and farming, included feedlots and dual-purpose ranching and farming sector.

Agriculture is the Bread and Butter in our three counties!