



# the Dairy Dispatch

*A publication devoted to supporting the Kansas  
Dairy Industry and Farmers*

## Legislative Update

The 2021 Legislative Session has been different.

The legislative leadership has implemented certain strategies to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 and that has impacted how the process is working. Leadership also encouraged committee chairs to focus on priorities and to avoid getting distracted. That approach has limited the number of issues that are being discussed. The Legislative Coordinating Council, made up of legislative leaders from both the House and Senate, approved the installation of technology that allows remote access to the committees and floor for the public. The technology implementation had some bumps early on, but has allowed good access to people wanting to be involved in the process. Legislators can access the committees they serve on via technology, but the rules require legislators to be in the Capitol if they want to vote during any action. Some legislators are tuning in from home during hearings and coming to the Capitol when the committee is working bills. It has helped keep the numbers of individuals in the building and the committee rooms down. It will be interesting to see what future sessions look like, given the upgrades.

### **PRIORITIES**

#### **Kansas Emergency Management Act (KEMA)**

Covid-19 has created some consternation and disagreements with how emergencies are handled. The Covid Pandemic has led to a review of how emergency situations are dealt with and how a health emergency is different from a natural disaster. The law was amended this past summer during a short special session in a way to try and make KEMA apply uniquely for a longer term disaster, like a pandemic, versus a shorter time frame situation, like a tornado. That law was set to expire early in the year, and was needed to be extended for a time. That extension was a short term extension which will expire by the end of March. At the time of this writing, committees are working on addressing the issues. Without action by the end of March, the law will expire and there will be no authority for the state to respond. I expect the legislature and the governor will find some common ground before the legislature adjourns for the year.

**Legislative Update Continued on Page 9**

Join the Department of  
Agriculture to Celebrate  
Kansas Agriculture Month



Kansas has a history deeply rooted in farming and ranching. That tradition lives strong today as agriculture remains our state's largest economic driver. Farmers and ranchers in your communities go to work each day to grow the food, fiber and energy that sustains each of us. Agribusinesses that line your main streets deliver critical support to this important sector in Kansas. The Kansas agricultural community is leading the way in a dynamic, complex and growing agriculture industry. In honor of Kansas' largest industry, agriculture, the month of March has been proclaimed Kansas Agriculture Month. In addition, Tuesday, March 23, 2021 has been declared Kansas Agriculture Day. We hope that you will join us in recognizing the hard-working men and women in agriculture and raise awareness that the crops and animals raised on farms in Kansas are feeding Kansas families and providing healthy, wholesome food to families around the world.

## News from the Executive Director

Good news for the Kansas Dairy Association! We have received contracts for the upcoming Kansas State Fair! Looks like the Fair is moving forward with plans for the 2021 event. I am sure everyone will be very ready to enjoy some get-out-of-the-house fun, family time. Livestock shows, fair food and carnival rides are just what we all need to raise our spirits! Although, we are not exactly sure how the Fair will look this year in way of Covid precautions, this sign gives me hope that our country and state are moving in the right direction. Stay safe and know that you the American Farmer are the backbone of this nation.

**Kansas State Fair  
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[www.kansasstatefair.com](http://www.kansasstatefair.com)

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# Kansas State University Welcomes Dairy Specialists to Animal Science & Industry



**Dr. Achilles Vieira-Neto**

The Department of Animal Sciences and Industry at Kansas State University is pleased to announce that Dr. Achilles Vieira-Neto has joined the faculty as an assistant professor with responsibilities in research and teaching. His specialization in dairy cattle includes nutrition, endocrinology, and physiology with emphasis in transition cows. Achilles is originally from Brazil, where he began his studies in the School of Veterinary Medicine at Santa Catarina State University in 2008. In 2012, he moved to the University of Florida for one year, where he worked with Dr. Klíbs Galvão in the College of Veterinary Medicine and studied the development and treatment of uterine diseases in dairy cows. Upon finishing his externship, he returned to Brazil and graduated in veterinary medicine in 2014. He then returned to the University of Florida where he obtained a Master of Science degree in 2016 and a Ph.D. degree in 2020 under the supervision of Dr. José Santos. His research focused on the role of acid-base status and vitamin D metabolites on mineral and energy metabolism during the transition period and their impacts on health, performance, and reproduction. Achilles is looking forward to developing an innovative and collaborative research program to better understand the physiology underlying absorption and regulation of nutrients and their metabolism during the transition period in dairy cattle, to capture the gaps in applied dairy nutrition to provide producers novel knowledge through extension programs to improve animal health, performance, and profitability, and instruct undergraduate and graduate students to develop clinical skills and critical thinking and the ability to integrate the complex concepts in dairy cattle nutrition and production medicine to improve health, sustainability, and productivity of dairy farms.

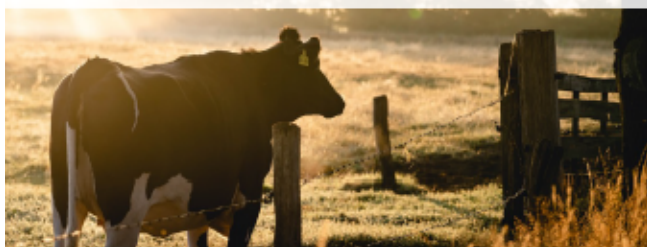
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## Kansas State Welcomes Continued from Page 3

The Department of Animal Sciences and Industry at Kansas State University is pleased to welcome Dr. Victor Gomez León as an Assistant Professor and Extension Dairy Specialist. His appointment matches his main career goal of integrating research into a collaborative extension program that meets the needs of dairy producers. With his expertise and passion for research, Victor aims to develop a program informed and driven by data obtained from studies with animal models. His program will be mostly focused on reproduction and its interaction with other areas such as health, nutrition, and management of dairy cattle. Victor is originally from Colombia, where he got his bachelor's degree in Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science. In 2012, he moved to Brazil to pursue a master's and subsequently a Ph.D. in Veterinary Medicine. In 2017, he had the unique opportunity to perform his Ph.D. research projects in collaboration with Dr. Milo Wiltbank and Dr. Oliver Ginther at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW), where he continued to work as a post-doctorate researcher until January of 2021. Victor's research has been mostly focused on basic and applied reproductive physiology. He has studied the mechanisms controlling follicle selection, pregnancy losses in recipients of IVF embryos, and luteolysis and return to ovulation in non-pregnant animals. He continues to collaborate with the group at UW to develop faster and more aggressive resynchronization programs in dairy cattle. Victor is looking forward to developing a high-quality and innovative extension/research program by integrating his expertise into the dairy team and the K-State faculty.

Dr. Victor E Gomez León, DVM, MSc, PhD  
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**Dr. Victor Gomez Leon**



An advertisement for Mies &amp; Sons Trucking, LLC. The top half features a black and white cow head logo on the left and the company name "Mies &amp; Sons" in a large, cursive font, with "TRUCKING, LLC" in a smaller, sans-serif font below it. Underneath the name is the contact information "Colwich, KS | 316-796-0186". The bottom half of the ad shows a large white tanker truck driving on a road in a rural landscape under a blue sky with light clouds. At the bottom of the image, there is a text box with the following text: "A family-owned business with over 90 trucks and 100 tankers serving dairies across the state, Mies &amp; Sons is committed to building lasting relationships with the dairy producers we serve."



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## SENATE VOTES ON CONFIRMATION OF TOM VILSACK AS SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

The Senate voted in late February to confirm the appointment of President Biden's choice of agriculture secretary, Tom Vilsack. National Milk Producers Federation President and CEO Jim Mulhern: "All of U.S. agriculture has an effective advocate in Tom Vilsack, and the nation will be well-served by his return to public service leading the U.S. Department of Agriculture." "We in the dairy community who have had the opportunity to work with him have seen first-hand his deep passion for rural America and his commitment to advancing agriculture and the communities it serves, from farmers and food-sector workers to the consumers and businesses that depend on USDA to meet their needs every day, in every way. That's especially important in light of today's pressing challenges, which include a farm economy battered by the COVID-19 pandemic; climate change, sustainability and the environment; nutrition and food insecurity; international trade policies that limit U.S. exports; labor shortages that are worsening with time; and the legacies of societal injustice that need to be addressed."

Vilsack will head the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the second time, this go around taking on the task of solving the problem of rising food insecurity due to the pandemic.

In addition to this challenge, he will have to answer questions from producers concerning the stalling of monetary assistance to farmers after the Biden administration held up \$2.3 trillion in aid.



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# *Personally Penned*

*By Dr. Aaron Schaffer*



## The Saga Continues

Well, the election came and went; the new year came and went; inauguration came and went; and much to everyone's chagrin, COVID came and stayed. In the last article I wrote for "the Dairy Dispatch," I drew on some of the biosecurity lessons we have learned from COVID and promised to continue to discussion in the next issue. Well, here we are again, so grab a bowl of popcorn and a Pepsi and let's discuss vaccination. I mean, after all it is only fitting that we discuss this topic in a dairy newsletter as the term vaccination originates from the Latin word for cow – "vaca". When you look into the history of vaccination, I think it is fascinating the Chinese were employing the practice of inoculation as early as 1000 AD – centuries before bacteria were even discovered. However, the practice of vaccination did not become successful until a man by the name of Edward Jenner began to use cowpox material to create immunity to the smallpox virus towards the end of the 18th century. Since then, the science of vaccination has progressed and allowed for the successful control and even eradication of diseases. Thus, when we start thinking about disease control, vaccination is definitely one tool that we want to have in our toolbox to help us improve the health and wellbeing of our livestock. And yet like any tool, it is a tool that should be understood and used appropriately, as it is hard to screw in a standard screw with a stripped off Phillips screwdriver. In general vaccines can be lumped into two different, broad categories - modified live vaccines (MLV) and killed vaccines. MLV's contain a small quantity of virus or bacteria that has been altered so that it can multiply in the animal and cause an infection, but not clinical signs of a disease. MLV's require reconstitution with diluent prior to use and should be used within two hours of mixing. If we do not use them up in this amount of time, the vaccine efficacy and usefulness of this tool will start to decrease. Killed vaccines contain virus particles, bacteria, or other pathogens that have been grown in culture and destroyed. They do not replicate within the animal but are still able to elicit an immune response. Killed vaccines do not require mixing. So, what vaccines should you use on your operation and when should you give them? I'll go with the good, old academic answer here – "it depends." But, really it does, so I think this is a discussion that you should have with your herd veterinarian. The disease pressures and management of each operation are going to be different, so when you use which tool is going to also vary. Nonetheless, as vaccines are not innocuous, I will say that I think we tend to over-vaccinate. My in-laws recently received the Shingles vaccine, and they said it was pretty miserable. If we listen to our cows, they will tell us the same thing about some of the vaccines we use; it is not uncommon to see a drop in milk production following vaccination. Thus, it is important to time the administration of some vaccines to limit the impact on production.

## **The Saga Continued from page 7**

Yet, some vaccines need to be given at certain stages of production to provide the most protection against certain diseases. Moreover, other vaccines may provide protection against diseases that are not even a concern to your operation. These are risks and rewards that you need to discuss with your veterinarian as you work together to develop a protocol for your operation. Once we have that protocol in place, there are a few things that we need to do so that we don't break a good tool. First, vaccines need to be stored according to the manufacturer's recommendations. This almost always means out of direct sunlight and at 35°-46°F. I don't think their recommendation ever includes storing (or transporting) on the dash of the pick-up, even in the frigid temperatures that we have recently had. When we mix vaccines (whether reconstituting a MLV or resuspending a killed vaccine), it is important to gently roll or swirl the vaccine, not to shake as shaking can damage the vaccine, decreasing the efficacy and increasing the likelihood of an adverse event. When we administer vaccines, we need to change needles often. Unless you are sterilely prepping cows prior to vaccination, needles become contaminated with bacteria as soon as an injection is given. In addition, they also become burred as soon as they are used. These burs tend to hold bacteria. The more injections that are given with a needle, the more burred and contaminated they become. Then, when the vaccine is injected into the animal, some of the contamination on the needle is also injected. As a result, instead of focusing solely on mounting an immune response to the vaccine, the immune system also has to devote some of its energy to fighting off a local infection. This can decrease the efficacy of the vaccine and lead to more injection site lesions. I recommend changing needles every six to eight head, and at an absolute minimum, every time you refill a syringe. Refilling a syringe with a dirty needle contaminates the bottle of vaccine and inoculates every animal vaccinated after that with whatever bacteria was on our dirty needle prior to entry into the bottle. When we are done vaccinating we need to make sure that we clean up our syringes appropriately. I like to rinse them out with distilled water and then draw up and discard a syringe full of nearly boiling distilled water three to four times. Soap is safe to use on the outside of the syringes, but should never be used to clean the inside as soapy residue can damage the vaccine. In addition, it is recommended that rubber washers should be replaced rather than lubricated, as lubricants can also damage vaccines. Lastly, store the syringes in a clean, dry place. I like to put mine inside a Ziplock baggie and place them in the freezer or refrigerator. Is your popcorn and Pepsi gone yet? Well then, that is probably enough on vaccines for now. How about COVID? Is it gone yet? Hmm, yeah, at this point I think it is probably safe to say that it is here for a while, so we had probably better learn to deal with it. However, I don't think that will be an issue for you all, as you all are part of the livestock industry and that is what you do – you learn to adapt and deal with challenges. Until next time, keep up the hard work!



## **Legislative Update continued from page 1**

### **TAXES**

Tax legislation is a perennial topic of conversation. This session there are discussions about property taxes, income taxes and sales taxes.

#### Property Tax

The legislature is considering ways to slow down the increase in property taxes from local units of government. A bill seeks to establish a notice and public hearing requirements for any taxing subdivision seeking to collect property taxes in excess of the revenue-neutral rate, prohibit valuation increases resulting solely from normal maintenance of existing structures, and expand the allowed acceptance of partial payments or payment plans for property taxes. The bill would repeal the current tax-lid.

#### Income Taxes

The Senate approved an income tax bill that was broad and would have had a positive impact for most tax-payers. The original version of the bill would have amended income tax law relative to fraudulent unemployment benefits, itemized deductions, business income related to 2017 and 2020 federal legislation, and the business expensing deduction. The Senate, during debate on the bill, added several amendments that significantly altered the fiscal impact of the bill. It is not clear at the time of this writing what will happen on income taxes, but many expect something to pass the legislature and go to the Governor.

#### Sales Taxes

Various proposals to deal with online sales, some of which don't collect sales taxes, have been proposed. Several of the proposals would require marketplace facilitators to start collecting Kansas retail sales, compensating use, and transient guest tax taxes on sales to Kansas customers. The bill defines a "marketplace facilitator" as a person or their affiliate that contracts with marketplace sellers to facilitate sales through a physical or electronic marketplace. The bill would amend the definition of "retailer doing business in this state" in the Kansas Compensating Tax Act by establishing minimum threshold of \$100,000 before a business is defined as a retailer doing business in this state, requiring the business to start collecting and remitting retail sales and compensating use taxes on sales to Kansas. I expect this issue to remain around, since it sets mainstream businesses against internet based business.

### **The Rest of the Session**

This session has been and will continue to be interesting while dealing with restrictions due to Covid-19. By the time you are reading this, the legislative session will be in its second half with most of the issue priorities well defined. We will see what surprises emerge, since there is always an unexpected issue come up.

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**9 Kansas Dairy**

# New Videos Tell the Dairy Community's Sustainability Story

By Ron Grusenmeyer

Farmer Relations Manager Midwest Dairy Consumers today are more inquisitive about their food purchases than ever before. They expect their food to not only taste great but be made with care for the land and animals. Midwest Dairy has recently developed five new videos to help tell dairy's story in a fun and "edutaining" way. The main video tells the entire sustainability story in about 90 seconds, focusing on how dairy is good for your body, community and planet. The others are about 60 seconds each and dive deeper into topics around how dairy farmers care for their animals, are local and contribute to their communities, are working to reduce their carbon footprint and providing nutrition to keep families happy and healthy. The entire video series is located on Midwest Dairy's website as a resource for farmers and our partners to share and learn more dairy sustainability. You are encouraged to share these videos on your digital channels, including Facebook and Instagram. The videos are also available to others in your community to use in schools, libraries or children's museums. Please reach out to farmer relations manager Ron Grusenmeyer at [rgrusenmeyer@midwestdairy.com](mailto:rgrusenmeyer@midwestdairy.com) or (816) 873-0351 if you need the videos in a different format or have another idea for their use.

## Support Ag in the Classroom Activities



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*Thank You!*

*Kansas Dairy*

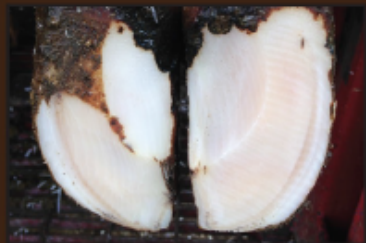
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### **Upcoming dates**

Dairy Days June 2nd Seneca

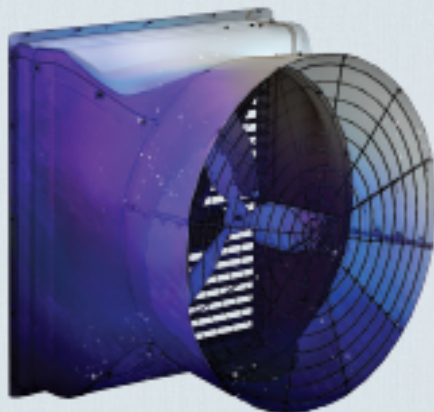
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