

Exploring Options

Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services supports the Kansas ag community by providing confidential ag-related legal, financial and mediation resources at no cost. Contact us by calling **800-321-3276** or visit ksre.k-state.edu/kams.

**KANSAS AGRICULTURAL
MEDIATION SERVICES**

800-321-FARM

KAMS Introduces E-newsletter

Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services (KAMS) is excited to introduce its quarterly e-newsletter. The KAMS staff wants to keep in touch with those involved with Kansas agriculture by providing information related to legal, financial, mediation and succession topics. Sign up for the e-newsletter by emailing kams@k-state.edu and including "E-news" in the subject line.

KAMS has served the Kansas agricultural community as the official United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) certified agricultural mediation service since 1988. A toll-free hotline, 800-321-3276, provides confidential assistance and information from trained professionals, including an ag law attorney.

KAMS assists Kansas producers in resolving a variety of ag-related problems, including ag credit issues, farm foreclosures, USDA Farm Program and Farm Loan Program decisions, USDA Rural Housing loan issues, USDA Risk Management issues, and USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service decisions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Farm & Ranch Succession
Conferences

KSU Cattleman's Day

Mid-America Farm Expo

Succession Planning Conferences Scheduled in March

Are multiple generations working together in the farm or ranch operation? Is the next generation interested in continuing the operation? A good succession plan incorporates the ideas and values of multiple family members, leading to a firmer future and smoother transition of the farm or ranch. One-day succession conferences in Hays and Iola, Kansas, will explore topics important to creating a good succession plan, including: family dynamics, business entities, power transfer and financial and legal concerns.

Meeting dates and locations:

- March 3 – K-State Agricultural Research Center – Hays, Kansas
- March 19 – Allen Community College – Iola, Kansas

The daylong conferences begin at 9 a.m. and end at approximately 4:30 p.m. Meals and snacks are included. More information, including online registration, is available at k-state.edu/kams/succession, or by calling 800-432-8222. The cost at each location is \$60 for the first family member and \$40 per person for each additional family member. Preregistration is encouraged.

Web resources are available at k-state.edu/kams/succession.

QUICK LINKS

Kansas Agricultural
Mediation Services

Farm Analyst Program

K-State Research and
Extension

Farm Service Agency

USDA



**Kansas Agricultural
Mediation Services**
2A Edwards Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
800-321-FARM
ksre.k-state.edu/kams
kams@k-state.edu

Exploring Options with KAMS

In addition to mediation services, KAMS professionals are available to answer questions on many ag-related issues. All communication with Kansas producers is done over the phone, making it convenient for farmers and ranchers across the state. Information shared by callers is always confidential. By calling 800-321-3276, the KAMS staff helps callers explore options on many ag-related issues, including farm loan delinquency or denial, USDA Farm Program or Farm Loan Program decisions, USDA NRCS decisions, USDA Risk Management issues, USDA Rural Housing issues, ag credit concerns, appeal options, farm foreclosures and paperwork clarification.

For most calls, KAMS will visit with the producer and learn more about his or her specific situation. Then a phone appointment is made with Forrest Buhler, staff attorney. Buhler speaks with the caller at no cost and determines what options are available. In some cases it may be providing the caller with information and resources on legal or financial issues. For others, Buhler may suggest mediation and make a referral to KAMS support services.

If a caller requests mediation, paperwork is sent to all parties for an agreement to mediate. Once parties have signed and returned their paperwork to the KAMS office, a mediation is scheduled at a neutral, convenient location for all participants.

Mediation is a confidential process that promotes communication and maintaining important relationships. Participants have the opportunity to openly discuss sensitive issues and agree on mutually acceptable solutions in a neutral setting. Mediation is a time-saving, affordable alternative to appeals and litigation.

During mediation, the mediator facilitates an open discussion of the issues. Participants are encouraged to discuss options and possible solutions. Once an acceptable solution has been reached, participants sign a memorandum of understanding that details the agreements. Issues are not always resolved in a single mediation. Sometimes participants must seek out additional information to bring back to the table for further discussion.

Support Services

Low-cost financial and legal counseling services are available to Kansas producers through KAMS. Support services are designed to help participants prepare for mediation. Preparation of participants is a key element for mediation to be successful in resolving a dispute.

Farm Analyst Program. KAMS provides financial analysis through the K-State Research and Extension Farm Analyst Program. These financial analysts help producers determine profitability of the farm or ranch operation. Developing options and considering alternative plans can be essential not only for the mediation process, but also for the operation. A referral from KAMS makes this service available at little to no cost.

Farm Mediation Legal Counseling Program. KAMS has an agreement with Kansas Legal Services (KLS) to provide legal advice in preparation for mediation to all parties on a reduced fee basis, depending on level of income. KLS attorneys help parties understand the laws and regulations governing the mediation issue, as well as their rights, obligations and legal options.

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Knowledge
for Life



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