

**House Committee on Appropriations
Agriculture Innovation Initiative and Bonding Authority Request**

March 11, 2025

**Ethan Erickson
Vice President for Administration and Finance**

Good morning, Chairman Waymaster and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Kansas State University's request for bonding authority related to the university's Agriculture Innovation Initiative.

Kansas State University is working to realize our strategic vision of becoming the ideal standard of land-grant universities, strategically shifting our approach to teaching, research and partnerships. This initiative comprises five separate projects with a total estimated project budget of \$210 million which will:

- develop and diversify the food and agriculture economy,
- educate tomorrow's workforce,
- expand research through additional funding,
- catalyze new, stronger public-private partnerships,
- enhance existing research centers, and
- generate innovative production and business solutions.

Provided below are the specific building projects:

Animal Science Arena (\$26.6M)

- Fully enclosed 3,000 seat capacity arena for competitions, youth and collegiate ag programs, outreach and industry engagement
- Expands Animal Science hands-on teaching and recruitment efforts
- Replacement for outdated Weber Arena

Agronomy Research and Innovation Center (\$23.1M)

- Supports interdisciplinary agronomy and agricultural systems research
- Serves as public front door to Agronomy North Farm and industry partner labs

Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation (\$130.5M)

- New interdisciplinary hub that enhances collaboration across food, animal and grain sciences and includes modern labs, classrooms and pilot processing facilities
- Supports food innovation, safety and security research
- Enables relocation of Grain Science and Industry from outdated buildings

Call Hall & Weber Hall (\$30.4M)

- Modernizes Animal Sciences and Industry's teaching and research labs with upgrades to ADA accessibility, building and electrical systems
- Expands and renovates Call Hall dairy processing plant
- Renovates and modernizes abattoir and meat processing facilities

We are grateful for the incredible financial support the state has provided for this initiative. To date, the university has raised almost \$94 million and continues to seek support from donors and industry partners to close the funding gap between the stated project budget of \$210 million. The current funding breakdown is below:

Source	
Philanthropy	92,554,865
ARPA (No match)	25,000,000
ARPA - Challenge Grant (FY23 3:1 match)	25,000,000
State SGF (FY25 1:1 match)	25,000,000
Total State of Kansas Funds	75,000,000
Land Sale	8,800,000
College of Agriculture Commitment	5,157,800
University Commitment	7,600,000
University Funds	21,557,800
Total Current Funding	189,112,665
Gap	21,533,546
Total Project Cost	210,646,211

The university is moving forward with construction and contracting processes for all phases of the initiative. Although fundraising efforts will continue, it is our responsibility to ensure a backup financing mechanism is identified to fully fund the costs of the project in the event additional fundraising efforts are unsuccessful. As such, the university is requesting \$23.5 million in bonding authority. This authority will only be utilized to fill the funding gap to the project's stated budget (\$210M) or to assist with cash flow needs if donation pledge schedules exceed our construction timelines. The College of Agriculture will be responsible for servicing the debt with its existing resources.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available to answer any questions or provide further information as needed.