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KFSa's First Annual Technology Conference Brings National Speakers, Exhibitors to Hutchinson

HUTCHINSON, Kan.— More than 100 people from agribusinesses across the state gathered at the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center in Hutchinson recently for the first annual KFSa Technology Conference.

Headquartered in Hutchinson, KFSa is one of the largest insurance agencies in Kansas and also provides risk management and corporate services for companies across the Midwest.

The event began with a look at emerging technology, such as iPod rings, flexible keyboards, and cell phones with built-in video projection systems. Hutchinson resident Randy Johnston, the vice president of K2 Enterprises who helps develop PC operating systems and travels across the world to conduct speaking engagements, updated conference attendees on tomorrow's hardware, software and techno-gadgetry.

Dietrich Kastens of Kastens Inc. Farms talked about the current use of computerized technology at his family's large-scale operation in Rawlins County, Kan. He also provided insights into the expectations of tomorrow's producers. For example, he said, the ability to communicate with vendors via e-mail will positively influence Kastens Inc. Farms' future buying decisions.

A three-member panel of IT professionals who oversee technology operations at Kansas co-ops highlighted the afternoon session. Jeff Boyd from Garden City Co-op, Matt Friesen of MKC, Moundridge, and Brad Ryan from Frontier Ag, Oakley, discussed the creation and convenience of intranets.

Other technology conference speakers included Tim Carr from Buchanan Associates, Dallas, Paul Graff of Edutech Systems, Leawood, Nick Mueting of Lindburg & Vogel, Dodge City, and Dave Stewart of Associated Marketing, PR and Advertising, Wichita.

The event drew fifteen technology companies who traveled from as far away as Alpharetta, Ga., and Fort Wayne, Ind., to attend as exhibitors.

Amy Chambers, CFO of KFSa, said she was very pleased with the outcome. "This is a new event for our customers, one that they requested we put together. Based on their strong positive responses and the feedback we received from exhibitors, we anticipate having more technology conferences in the future."

About KFSa

Formed in 1947, KFSa is composed of several businesses: agribusiness, personal and commercial insurance agencies, risk management/safety and compliance, management training and strategic planning. KFSa also owns Elliott Insurance Management in Hutchinson. More information about KFSa can be found at www.kfsa.com.