



** This story from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/taps-banquet-2025>

Note to editors: A photo and cutline to accompany this story is at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ksrecomm/54251405773>

Released: Jan. 7, 2024

K-State to celebrate agricultural innovation at inaugural TAPS banquet

Farmers, industry leaders and community are invited to Jan. 18 event in Dodge City

HAYS, Kan. — Kansas State University will host the first Kansas Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS) awards banquet at 5 p.m. Jan. 18 at the Boot Hill Casino and Resort in Dodge City, Kansas.

University officials are encouraging farmers, industry leaders, educators and community members to celebrate agricultural innovation and sustainable irrigation management.

The banquet will announce winners of the 2024 TAPS competition in four categories:

- Most Profitable.
- Most Profitable at or Below Q-Stable, which relates to the annual rate of pumping water.
- Highest Input Use Efficiency.
- Greatest Grain Yield.

Winners will receive cash awards for their performance in the 2024 Sprinkler Irrigated Corn Farm Management Competition.

"TAPS isn't just about making (management) decisions; it's about seeing the ripple effects of those decisions on farm profitability and sustainability," said Daran Rudnick, K-State director of sustainable irrigation. "This program opens up a space for producers to experiment with new technologies, network with peers and take lessons home that can transform their operations."

Launched by K-State in October 2023, TAPS is a real-life farm management competition empowering peer learning and hands-on experience utilizing data-driven insights. The program attracted 34 competition teams composed of 98 participants from eight states.

According to Rudnick, TAPS bridges academic research and practical application, giving participants the tools and support to enhance productivity and sustainability in a risk-free environment. Participants make decisions on crop insurance, planting date and population,

hybrid selection, irrigation, nitrogen application and grain marketing on test plots representing 2,000-acre farms.

During the Jan. 18 banquet, the TAPS team will also announce their intent to expand the program in 2025, including a new competition site in Garden City. The program helps address challenges like the declining Ogallala Aquifer by promoting sustainable water management practices, collaboration and precision agriculture technology.

The 2024 competition, hosted at the Northwest Research and Extension Center in Colby, showcased the collaborative spirit of TAPS. Farmers, scientists, and students worked side by side, making critical decisions, engaging in educational field days and utilizing cutting-edge precision irrigation technology. The competition culminated with grain marketing decisions in November.

K-State invites producers, industry professionals, educators, students and community members to attend the inaugural TAPS banquet and learn more about the 2025 competitions.

Says Rudnick: “This event is more than a celebration; it’s a call to action for those passionate about the future of farming.”

For more information or to register, visit k-state.edu/taps or contact Renee Tuttle, K-State Research and Extension irrigation associate at rstuttle@ksu.edu or 620-805-9045.

-30-

K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the wellbeing of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.ksre.ksu.edu. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Story by:

Kelsey Stremel
stremelk@ksu.edu

For more information:

Renee Tuttle
620-805-9045
rstuttle@ksu.edu