

**Testimony to the
Senate Education Committee
Kansas State University, College of Agriculture and K-State Research and Extension
March 13, 2019**

Chairwoman Baumgardner and members of the Committee, my name is Ernie Minton and I serve as the Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture and Interim Director of K-State Research and Extension. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB2168 allowing Kansas State University to sell The Pecan Experimental Field in Chetopa, Kan., as well as, a small parcel within the North Campus Corridor in Riley County.

The Pecan Experimental Field

The 80-acre property under consideration was deeded to K-State by Frank and Katherine Brewster in 1962 to provide Kansas pecan producers with science-based information focused on the sustainable production of pecans through research and Extension programs. Of the 80-acres, K-State is seeking to sell 35-acres associated with the pecan field and deed back to the Brewster family the remaining 45-acres. During fiscal years 2018 and 2019, all of the research faculty and support personnel assigned to the Pecan Experimental Field retired. In addition, financial management of experimental fields outside of the main campus in Manhattan has become increasingly challenging over the past decade. Moreover, environmental variability across Kansas has limited the adaptation of widespread pecan production throughout the state. In the absence of The Pecan Experimental Field in Chetopa, K-State will continue to consult with pecan programs in other states to ensure Kansas pecan growers and the industry continue to receive the information needed for sound and profitable pecan production.

Divesting of this land which was provided through the generous gift of the Brewster family has not been taken lightly. Prior to pursuing this request, K-State has consulted with Frank and Katherine Brewster's heirs to discuss the rationale of a closure of The Pecan Experimental Field. They have provided their support of the sale of the property. Unfortunately, we do not see any viable options to restaff the research site.

North Campus Corridor

K-State is also seeking to sell 4.473 acres located in the North Campus Corridor (NCC) adjacent to the K-State Grain Science Campus, Animal Science field units and the Agronomy Farm and Experimental Fields. Located adjacent to the Kansas State University (KSU) Foundation, the sale of this property provides a unique opportunity to bring business and industry partners to area in the fields of animal health, infectious disease, and issues related to global foods and nutrition.

The KSU Foundation, with K-State's agreement, recently finalized a commercial master plan to create space for over 5,000 industry partner jobs in the NCC. The master plan includes the 4.473 acre parcel of land under consideration in this bill. K-State has carefully weighed the benefits and tradeoffs of selling the property and is confident that the potential for enhanced partnership with research and industry partners will not only add employment opportunities, but will accelerate K-State's goal of becoming a top 50 public research university by 2025.

On behalf of the K-State College of Agriculture and K-State Research and Extension, we appreciate the opportunity to share this information and request your concurrence.