

Department of Agricultural Economics

Dear Extension Board,

The K-State Agricultural Economics Department, along with K-State Research and Extension, recognizes the financial stress that farmers and ranchers are experiencing due to low commodity prices and high input costs. We are currently seeing one of the lowest levels of farm profitability in history, with many parallels to the 1980’s. To be proactive at assisting our farmers and ranchers through these difficult times, extension agents are being equipped to provide more advanced services, assessing farm financial information and looking at alternatives to help a farm family stay afloat.

Sandra Wick recently completed a training on FINPACK software, offered through Kansas State University’s Agricultural Economics Department. This is a nationally known farm financial software package, developed by the Center for Farm Financial Management at the University of Minnesota. Following some job shadowing by an existing Farm Analyst, Sandra will be able to work one-on-one with a farm family that is already experiencing difficulty or would just like to get ahead of their financials before problems arise.

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject, many families request an agent/farm analyst they are NOT familiar with, so this requires agents to share services across county lines. Working one-on-one with a farm family also requires extensive time on the agent’s part, that may take away from other activities they would normally be performing. Depending on the request, reimbursement for your agent’s travel and time are as follows:

1. If the request comes from the Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services (KAMS), your extension board will be paid by KAMS $25 per hour for the time your agent spent preparing and working with the family and mileage at 54 cents per mile. These are families that may have creditor or other financial pressures and qualify for grant-funded assistance to receive these services. The family would pay KAMS a fee of $100 toward the cost of the service.
2. If the farm family is requesting Farm Analyst services without qualifying as a KAMS case, a fee structure will be charged to the family to help cover your agent’s time and assistance from the K-State Agricultural Economics Farm Analyst program (see supplemental fee structure sheet if needed). A flat fee of $250, plus mileage if outside the agent’s home district or county, will be paid to the extension board with the remainder of the fee going to the Farm Analyst program.
3. If the agent would like to provide services to clients in their home county or district, they may do so freely without charging a fee. However, if professional assistance is needed from the Farm Analyst program, then the fee structure will go into effect and #2 will apply.

As a board, if you have any questions as to how these services work, please feel free to contact Robin Reid at robinreid@ksu.edu or 785-532-0964. We appreciate and commend your agent for stepping up to provide these services and assist Kansas farm families.

Sincerely,

K-State Agricultural Economics Department