

2-3002. Creation of Kansas corn, grain sorghum, soybean, wheat and sunflower commissions; membership; election process; terms; vacancies; districts; ex officio members; first purchasers; meetings. (a) There are hereby created five separate and distinct commissions which shall be known as the Kansas corn commission, the Kansas grain sorghum commission, the Kansas soybean commission, the Kansas wheat commission and the Kansas sunflower commission. Each commission will have members elected through an election process as provided in subsection (b) to serve three-year terms, with the exception of transition commissioners, serving from the effective date of this act until elections occur in 2002, 2003 and 2004, to represent a district or districts identified in subsection (b) with the following requirements:

(1) Any person meeting the requirements of K.S.A. 2-3003, and amendments thereto, of that commodity may seek election as a commissioner to that commodity's respective commission representing the district of such person's official residence. Only a grower of each specific commodity shall be a member of that specific commission;

(2) no commission shall have less than seven commissioners representing the nine crop reporting districts identified in subsection (h). If a commission has less than nine elected commissioners representing crop reporting districts, any commissioner representing multiple crop reporting districts may only represent commission districts equal to whole and adjoining crop reporting districts that are within the same election cycle;

(3) each commission, by majority approval of the commissions, may appoint two additional at-large commissioners for added representation for producers due to geographical, cropping pattern or other reasonable commodity-specific needs. At-large commissioners will serve a term determined by the commodity commission not to exceed three-year terms of appointment, be a Kansas resident and must meet the definition of a grower; and

(4) each commission, by majority approval of the commissions, may appoint a first purchaser as an additional at-large commissioner. Any such first purchaser will serve a term determined by the commodity commission not to exceed a three-year term of appointment and must be a Kansas resident.

(b) (1) Prior to the first election as provided by this act, each commodity commission shall notify all growers of its respective commodity of the commission election and all appropriate election procedures.

(2) Any grower of corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, wheat or sunflowers who is a resident of this state, of legal voting age and has been actively engaged in growing corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, wheat or sunflowers within the preceding three years shall become an eligible voter upon registering to vote in a commission election. Registration shall be on a single form allowing registration to any or all commission elections. Forms shall be provided by the commissions and made available at all county extension offices, county conservation district offices and through the office of the secretary. Any grower also shall become registered by signing a petition for a candidate to be placed on the election ballot, upon the filing of such petition. Candidate petition forms shall be provided by the office of the secretary. Registration by internet or other means shall also be allowed upon the approval of the secretary. No grower shall cast more than one ballot for any commission election.

(3) Any person meeting the qualifications to serve as a commissioner may appear on the election ballot for their respective commission district by submitting a petition to be placed on the ballot on or before November 30 in the year immediately preceding the election. The petition shall contain the signatures of 20 eligible voters of that commodity commission election to be a valid petition. However, no more than five petition signatures shall be used to qualify any candidate from any one county.

(4) Commission election ballots shall be mailed to eligible voters by January 15 and shall be returned to the election officer, as provided through the common election procedure required in subsection (e), on or before March 1 in the year of any election. Successful candidates in any election will have received the highest number of the votes cast. Election results will be announced as soon as the election has been determined with successful candidates taking office with terms effective April 1 in the year of the election.

(5) On and after July 1, 2002, any interested person or entity in the agriculture industry, with emphasis on growers of sunflowers, may submit names to the governor for appointment to the Kansas sunflower commission. On or after September 1, 2002, the governor shall appoint nine members to the Kansas sunflower commission from among the names submitted to the governor; if possible, to represent each of the crop reporting districts as provided in this section. The terms of the members appointed by the governor shall be the same as provided in subsection (d) and the same election provisions as provided in this section applicable to the other commissions shall apply to such appointed members, except that the members appointed to represent districts IV, V and VI shall not stand for election in 2002 but rather shall have their initial term of office to run until the election held for such districts in 2005. At such time the same election provisions of this section applicable to the other commissions shall apply to such members.

(c) Upon the effective date of this act, each commission created shall meet as soon as feasible to organize, elect officers and ratify the number of commissioners and representative districts that commission shall maintain. Commissioners currently serving these commissions immediately prior to the effective date of this act are appointed to transition terms as follows: (1) Commissioners whose terms expire in June, 2000, shall have their terms extended until April, 2002; (2) commissioners whose terms expire in June, 2001, shall have their terms extended until April, 2003; and (3) commissioners whose terms expire in June, 2003, shall have their terms extended until April, 2004.

(d) Annual elections for up to three commissioners representing districts shall begin in January and February of 2002. Commissioners elected shall take office April 1 of the year elected and serve a three-year term. Elections will occur as follows and continue on a three-year cycle thereafter: (1) In districts IV, V and VI, the initial election year shall be 2002; (2) in districts I, II and III, the initial election year shall be 2003; and (3) in districts VII, VIII and IX, the initial election year shall be 2004.

(e) The five grain commissions, as provided in this act shall maintain on file a common election procedure with the secretary of agriculture, who will serve as the final arbitrator of any dispute regarding the election procedure.

(f) Any grower who appropriately registers to vote shall be able to do so in an election for any commissioner representing that commodity and district where the grower maintains such grower's official residence.

(g) Any challenge to election results for the position of commodity commissioner representing a district shall be initially reviewed by a panel of commissioners, not standing for election that year, and representing all five grain commissions. If the challenge is not resolved before the panel of commissioners, the secretary shall serve as the final arbitrator of the challenge to the election results.

(h) Vacancies which may occur shall be filled for unexpired terms by appointment by the remaining commissioners.

(i) The dean of the college of agriculture of Kansas state university and the secretary of the Kansas department of agriculture shall be ex officio members, without the right to vote, of each such commission. Districts are the same as crop reporting districts established for Kansas by the U.S. department of agriculture national agricultural statistic service and are as follows:

(j) District I shall consist of the following counties: Cheyenne, Decatur, Graham, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman and Thomas.

District II shall consist of the following counties: Gove, Greeley, Lane, Logan, Ness, Scott, Trego, Wallace and Wichita.

District III shall consist of the following counties: Clark, Finney, Ford, Grant, Gray, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Meade, Morton, Seward, Stanton and Stevens.

District IV shall consist of the following counties: Clay, Cloud, Jewell, Mitchell, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Republic, Rooks, Smith and Washington.

District V shall consist of the following counties: Barton, Dickinson, Ellis, Ellsworth, Lincoln, McPherson, Marion, Rice, Rush, Russell and Saline.

District VI shall consist of the following counties: Barber, Comanche, Edwards, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Kiowa, Pawnee, Pratt, Reno, Sedgwick, Stafford and Sumner.

District VII shall consist of the following counties: Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie, Riley and Wyandotte.

District VIII shall consist of the following counties: Anderson, Chase, Coffey, Douglas, Franklin, Geary, Johnson, Linn, Lyon, Miami, Morris, Osage, Shawnee and Wabaunsee.

District IX shall consist of the following counties: Allen, Bourbon, Butler, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Cowley, Crawford, Elk, Greenwood, Labette, Montgomery, Neosho, Wilson and Woodson.

(k) Meetings and any records of any commission created by this act shall be open to the public to the same extent as is required by law of public boards and commissions pursuant to the open records act and the open meetings act. Records shall include contracts entered into by any commission.

History: L. 1977, ch. 4, § 2; L. 1988, ch. 10, § 1; L. 1996, ch. 209, § 14; L. 2000, ch. 116, § 2; L. 2002, ch. 93, § 2; L. 2004, ch. 101, § 191; L. 2008, ch. 94, § 1; Apr. 24.