

Research

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colleges found that nitrate levels in private wells in south-central Kansas are as much as five times higher than EPA limits for healthy drinking water, which is 10 milligrams per liter.

High nitrate levels in water can cause “blue baby syndrome” where children under six months have their blood deprived of oxygen. There are also some studies that link high nitrate levels with increased risk of some colon and kidney cancers.

Researchers say the pollution is likely due to fertilizer leaking into the groundwater. Some Larned residents believe that fresh feedlot manure is contributing to that as well, but that has not been proven.

According to the EPA, Kansas ranks second in the nation in estimated area with higher levels of nitrates in drinking water than permissible.

The EPA estimates that 5% of Kansans have private, unregulated water wells.

Kansas State University student Chase Glasscock said most of those Kansans are farmers who keep the economy going, and neglecting their needs could hurt

the state.

“If we’re not taking care of them, then we’re not taking care of ourselves,” Glasscock said when presenting his data to the public in November.

Response to Objections

KDHE said in an email that the reason the ILS feedlot was approved was because it met all the statutory and regulatory requirements. But the agency did acknowledge the elevated risk the region has due to its soil composition.

In an attempt to address the community’s concerns, KDHE provided stricter guidelines than the minimum to control pollution. That includes seepage requirements for the manure lagoon and protections for groundwater much greater than required by state law.

“We are committed to our role in protecting the environment but also acknowledge that owners of feeding facilities have rights that have been set in law. We are only able to enforce requirements that we have jurisdiction over,” KDHE spokesperson Mitchell Osterlund said.

ILS also expressed an interest to go above and beyond and adhere to more stringent standards tailored to this unique situation.

ILS sent Jon Skelton, their chief financial officer, to the meeting to calm the waters. Skelton told the attendees that a significant number of ILS shareholders live locally or near the county.


Proponents of the feedlot have been surprised by the backlash. A few spoke at the public hearing and have been trying to make the case that this feedlot will create economic opportunities.

ILS estimated it will contribute approximately \$50 million in added valuation to Pawnee County’s tax base.


It’s estimated that the feedlot will create 70 jobs and provide a strong market for nearby farmers and agribusinesses.

Pawnee County has been steadily losing population for decades. Some here are eager for new business and development.

With the permit approved, construction is planned to start later this year, with the facility operating by 2027.



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in the fields and on the roads



Global

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“At the end of the day, the U.S. and the Kansas wheat farmers want an opportunity to participate in global trade with fair trade,” Gilpin said. “We want to be able to address trade barriers that might exist around the world.”

In February, U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran and U.S. Rep. Tracey Mann introduced legislation to shift Food for Peace from USAID to the USDA.

Gilpin suggests the program could be recast to demonstrate it has made the United States both stronger and safer.

Gilpin said his personal experience in Kenya offered insight into ways international assistance programs led by major food producing countries could promote stability, particularly in third world nations.

“Humanitarian and emergency assistance aids people who have been displaced by things out of their control,” he added.

Market Report

Closing prices
on June 11, 2025

Scott Cooperative Assn.

Red Wheat.....	\$ 4.46
White Wheat	\$ 4.36
Milo	\$ 3.37
Corn.....	\$ 4.17
Soybeans	\$ 9.11

ADM Grain

Red Wheat.....	\$ 4.51
White Wheat	\$
Milo	\$ 3.47
Corn.....	\$ 4.17
Soybeans.....	\$ 9.51

Weather

H L P

June 3	65	49	.08
June 4	69	46	
June 5	73	54	.37
June 6	75	59	.32
June 7	88	52	
June 8	75	59	
June 9	85	54	

Moisture Totals

June	.88
2025 Total	7.99

Food Facts

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