



University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

An Agricultural Law Research Project

## **States' Right-To-Farm Statutes**

**State of Kansas**

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## States' Right-to-Farm Statutes

### STATE OF KANSAS

Kan. Stat. Ann. §§ 2-3201 to 2-3205

*Statutes are current through laws enacted during the 2020 Regular and Special Sessions of the Kansas Legislature effective on or before July 1, 2020.*

#### **2-3201. Protection of farmland and agricultural activities; purpose**

It is the declared policy of this state to conserve and protect and encourage the development and improvement of farmland for the production of food and other agricultural products. The legislature finds that agricultural activities conducted on farmland in areas in which nonagricultural uses have moved into agricultural areas are often subjected to nuisance lawsuits, and that such suits encourage and even force the premature removal of the lands from agricultural uses. It is therefore the purpose of this act to provide agricultural activities conducted on farmland protection from nuisance lawsuits.

#### **2-3202. Certain agricultural activities not a nuisance**

- (a) Agricultural activities conducted on farmland, if consistent with good agricultural practices and established prior to surrounding agricultural or nonagricultural activities, are presumed to be reasonable and do not constitute a nuisance, public or private, unless the activity has a substantial adverse effect on the public health and safety.
- (b) If such agricultural activity is undertaken in conformity with federal, state, and local laws and rules and regulations, it is presumed to be good agricultural practice and not adversely affecting the public health and safety.
- (c) An owner of farmland who conducts agricultural activity protected pursuant to the provisions of this section:
  - (1) May reasonably expand the scope of such agricultural activity, including, but not limited to, increasing the acreage or number of animal units or changing agricultural activities, without losing such protection so long as such agricultural activity complies with all applicable local, state, and federal environmental codes, resolutions, laws and rules and regulations;
  - (2) may assign or transfer such protection to any successor in interest; and
  - (3) shall not be deemed to waive such protection by temporarily ceasing or decreasing the scope of such agricultural activity.

#### **2-3203. Definitions**

As used in this act:

(a) "Agricultural activity" means the growing or raising of horticultural and agricultural crops, hay, poultry and livestock, and livestock, poultry and dairy products for commercial purposes and includes activities related to the handling, storage and transportation of agricultural commodities.

(b) "Farmland" means land devoted primarily to an agricultural activity.

(c) "Person" means any individual, partnership, profit or nonprofit corporation, trust, organization or any other business entity, but does not include any governmental entity.

(d) "Agricultural chemical" means those agricultural chemicals as defined in the agricultural chemical act set forth in K.S.A. 2-2201 et seq., and amendments thereto.

#### **2-3204. Action for injunction alleging misuse of chemicals; when attorney fees and expenses assessed**

In any case in which an action for injunction is brought alleging the prior misuse of agricultural chemicals and the court finds that the defendant properly used the agricultural chemicals according to state and federal law and the label instructions and that the plaintiff sustained no damages from the use of such agricultural chemicals, the court may assess against the plaintiff reasonable attorney fees and expenses incurred by the defendant as a result of such action. In addition, the court may assess against the plaintiff additional losses and costs incurred by the defendant upon proof that such losses and costs were the result of an injunction granted as part of such action. Any assessment under this section shall be reduced (but not below zero) by an amount equal to the amount of any bond forfeited to the defendant under article 9 of chapter 60 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated. An assessment under this section shall be collected as costs in the action. This section shall be part of and supplemental to the provisions of article 32 of chapter 2 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and acts amendatory of the provisions thereof or supplemental thereto.

#### **2-3205. Exclusive compensatory damages for nuisance originating from farmland used for agricultural activity; standing**

(a) The exclusive compensatory damages that may be awarded to a claimant where the alleged nuisance originates from farmland primarily used for agricultural activity shall be as follows:

(1) If the nuisance is determined to be a permanent nuisance, compensatory damages shall be limited to the reduction in the fair market value of the claimant's property caused by such nuisance, not to exceed the fair market value of such claimant's property; and

(2) if the nuisance is determined to be a temporary nuisance, compensatory damages shall be limited to the lesser of:

(A) The diminution in fair rental value of the claimant's property caused by such nuisance;

(B) the value of the loss of the use and enjoyment of the claimant's property; or

(C) the reasonable cost to repair or mitigate any injury to the claimant caused by such nuisance.

(b) If any claimant or claimant's successor in interest brings a subsequent nuisance claim against the same defendant or defendant's successors in interest for an alleged nuisance related to the same or a substantially similar agricultural activity, such claimant and claimant's successors in interest shall be limited to the compensatory damages for a permanent nuisance as provided in subsection (a)(1). Damages from any previous final court order or judgment against the defendant or defendant's successors in interest shall be considered in any subsequent case for the purposes of determining that the total amount of damages awarded shall not exceed the fair market value of such claimant's property.

(c) If a defendant in a private nuisance case where the nuisance is alleged to originate from farmland used for agricultural activity demonstrates a good faith effort to abate a condition that is determined to constitute a nuisance, and such good faith effort is unsuccessful, such nuisance shall be deemed to be not capable of abatement and compensatory damages shall be limited as provided in subsection (a)(1). Substantial compliance with a court order regarding such farmland shall constitute a good faith effort as a matter of law.

(d) No person shall have standing to bring an action for private nuisance pursuant to this section unless such person has an ownership interest in the property alleged to be affected by the nuisance.

(e) If any provision of this section or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this section which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this section are declared to be severable.

(f) This section shall be part of and supplemental to article 32 of chapter 2 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto.