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NEWS RELEASE

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Management and Alternative Marketing Options Bus Tour Set for October 8

Whiting, Ks. - Thursday, October 8, 2009 the **Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC)** and the **Kansas Rural Center (KRC)** will host a "Management and Alternative Marketing Options" bus tour in north central Kansas. The tour will visit farms along a track from Bennington, just north of Salina to Glasco, featuring a variety of alternative cropping and livestock systems. Stops include a look at certified organic crop production, grazing management and alternative livestock watering systems, agritourism and alternative crops, and an ornamental grass nursery.

Anyone interested in learning more about innovative options for crop and livestock production and marketing, or alternative enterprises for the small to mid-sized farm will gain from the tour.

The tour will begin in Bennington, Kansas, with registration at 8:30 AM and the tour starting at 9:00 at Jim and Sue Keating's certified organic crop farm on the edge of Bennington. The bus will then travel to Minneapolis, Kansas for a tour of Don Koster's grazing operation including alternative water sites, grazing weaned calves, and alternative forages. On the drive to Lazy S Farm in Glasco, Dan Nagengast, Executive Director for the Kansas Rural Center, will discuss wind energy options for rural communities and the wind farm near Concordia. During lunch, Jana Beckman, Coordinator for the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops, will provide information on USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program and opportunities for farmers and ranchers. Afternoon stops include Larry and Madonna Sorrell's Lazy S Farm

featuring heritage livestock breeds including Red Waddle pork, greenhouse vegetable production, and agritourism. Grasslands Gardens near Miltonvale will be the last stop on the tour featuring an ornamental grass nursery and a dried flower business. The bus will return to Bennington around 4 PM.

Tour registration is \$15 per person and will cover travel, lunch and materials. For registration information, contact Jason Schmidt, Kansas Rural Center – 864-417-0272. Registration deadline is September 24; or KRC office at 785-873-3431. You can also find online registration information at the KRC website at www.kansasruralcenter.org.

Tour sponsors are the Kansas Rural Center, the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops, Kansas State University Research and Extension, and Cloud County Convention and Tourism. Financial support comes from the Kansas SARE Program, USDA North Central Region SARE Program, and the Kansas Rural Center. The Kansas Rural Center is a non-profit organization promoting sustainable agriculture and a sustainable food system.