

Gov. Dave Heineman recently previewed the schedule for the 2010 Governor's Ag Conference, being held Wednesday, March 3 and Thursday, March 4 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Kearney, located at 110 Second Ave.

The theme for the 22nd annual conference is "Nebraska Agriculture: Your Industry. Your Story. Your Future."

"This event is one way we work with agricultural producers to highlight new opportunities in this increasingly diverse industry," Gov. Heineman said.

"Agriculture continues to change and evolve. Continuing this annual tradition is one way to help ensure this industry remains strong and continues to grow."

Organized by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA), the pre-conference activities begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 3 with the Celebrate Nebraska Agriculture reception, featuring foods produced by Nebraska farmers and ranchers and speaker Mike Perry.

The conference begins at 9 a.m. on Thursday.

Featured speakers on topics impacting Nebraska farms and ranches include Jason Henderson of the Omaha branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, who will discuss current economic conditions and future projections. In addition, University of Nebraska President James B. Milliken will discuss the university's research and other efforts to ensure the success of the agriculture industry.

Other speakers include a panel of presenters discussing the need and opportunities for producers to tell their stories.

Panelists include Stan Garbacz, foreign trade representative for the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Cheryl Stubbendieck of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and Terry Landes with Prairieland Dairy.

NDA Director Greg Ibach, said, "The Governor's Ag Conference presents opportunities each year for Nebraska agriculturalists to hear about emerging agriculture issues and gain insight on how those issues affect them. Attendees will benefit from discussion about the economy, growing marketing opportunities and a host of other issues that impact them daily."

The conference is open to anyone with an interest in agriculture issues.

A \$75 registration fee covers participation at both the conference and the Wednesday reception.

Registration information is available online at www.agr.ne.gov, or by calling NDA toll-free at (800) 831-0550.