Kansas receives additional PPE supplies, expands COVID-19 testing in Kansas

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Today, Governor Laura Kelly announced Kansas has received additional supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) to expand COVID-19 testing in Finney, Ford, Lyon and Seward counties.

“I want to thank our federal partners for their ongoing efforts to help our state response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” Kelly said. “I particularly appreciate the assistance from Senator Pat Roberts and Senator Jerry Moran.”

Kansas Department of Health and Environment is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to test and contain recent clusters of positive coronavirus cases in Kansas counties centered around food and meat processing plants.

“In order to fight this pandemic, collaboration at the state, local and federal level is paramount,” Dr. Lee Norman, KDHE Secretary, said. “Expanded testing and additional supplies from the federal level will

equip and inform our state and local health officials as they work to protect the health of Kansans."

The plants in southwest Kansas account for 25 to 30% of the country's beef processing. "Agriculture is a facet of our state's most critical infrastructure – Kansas doesn't just feed the state, we feed the world," Kelly said. "This is particularly true of our frontline workers in meatpacking plants across the state who process a significant portion of the nation's supply."

Since the start of this crisis, the Governor and members of her administration have been in communication with those plants and representatives of their employees.

The facilities have modified several production and shipping systems and have taken proactive measures including temperature and health screenings, enhanced sanitation and social distancing.

In recent weeks, Kansas has struggled to obtain the necessary supplies needed to test and treat coronavirus patients. The State received their allocation of the Strategic National Stockpile in late March. PPE received from the SNS was quickly distributed to counties throughout the state based on population.

Kansas is pleased to be able to deploy this collaborative effort between local, state and federal partners to proactively address these clusters in a strategic response to protect the nation's food supply and the health of our essential food workers.

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