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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEW LEADERSHIP PROGRAM CREATED BY KING RANCH® INSTITUTE FOR RANCH MANAGEMENT**

Kingsville, Texas (April 8, 2014)—The King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management (KRIRM) recently began a new leadership program during the 2014 National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) convention and trade show.

The Excellence in Ag Leadership Program is a two-year course that will further develop the next generation of leaders in the ranching industry. Eighteen young professionals in the ranching industry were selected and identified as high potential leaders with assistance from NCBA. They will complete the unique, distance-education program, which is designed to help them identify, understand, and capitalize on unique strengths to develop personal, organizational, and community leadership skills.

To do so, the participants will attend three KRIRM lectureships held in Kingsville, Texas, that will focus on strategic planning, human resource management, and systems thinking; participate in leadership webinars with industry leaders; and have the opportunity to attend individual leadership development, policy, and media training workshops. All workshops and lectureships utilize top experts in the ranching industry, ultimately allowing for the participants to become greater leaders to make a positive impact on the industry.

Ryan Rhoades, KRIRM assistant professor at the helm of the new program, explained the value of leadership skills in the ranching industry.

“We will be forced to deal with some big issues and challenges,” he explained. “Developing the next generation of leaders is among the strongest leverage points for our industry.”

The program began at NCBA with a one-day workshop where participants received the results of their personal 360-leadership assessment completed by their managers, co-workers, peers, and direct reports. The assessment identified the unique leadership strengths of each participant. KRIRM management council members, NCBA President Bob McCan, NCBA Chief Executive Officer Forrest Roberts and NCBA Executive Director of Leadership Development Barb Wilkinson joined the participants and KRIRM at a reception following the day’s workshop.

Rhoades, along with the leadership of KRIRM and NCBA, looks forward to the future of this program, aware of the positive impact it will ultimately have for the industry.

“This is truly a unique opportunity to learn more about their strengths as a leader, network with industry leaders, and position themselves to be an effective future leader of our industry. We hope to build a network of future leaders that will make decisions and be the voice of our industry.”

**About KRIRM**

KRIRM, founded in 2003 to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of King Ranch, is the only master’s program in the world that offers a Master of Science in Ranch Management. The vision of KRIRM is to educate leaders who will make a positive difference in ranching, and ensure that the ranching heritage is not lost. KRIRM also provides the highest quality lectureships and symposia to ranching industry stakeholders. To learn more, visit <http://krirm.tamuk.edu>.

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