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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**KRIRM Leadership Program Held During 2016 Cattle Industry Convention**

KINGSVILLE, Texas (Feb. 12, 2016)—The King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management (KRIRM) welcomed the second class of its Excellence in Ag Leadership Program on Jan. 26, 2016, at the 2016 Cattle Industry Convention and National Cattleman’s Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show in San Diego, Calif.

The Excellence in Ag Leadership Program, a two-year distance-education program designed to further develop the next generation of leaders in the ranching industry, began in 2014 with its inaugural class of 20 ranching professionals. As their two-year training came to a close, they joined the second class of 16 participants, which includes KRIRM graduate students, at a one-day workshop prior to the start of the convention. Participants of the program are selected and identified as high potential leaders with assistance from NCBA and state cattlemen’s associations.

At the one-day workshop, new participants began their training as they received results of a personal 360-leadership assessment completed by their managers, co-workers, peers, and direct reports. The assessment identified the unique leadership strengths of each participant.

To complete the distance-education program, participants will also attend three KRIRM lectureships held in Kingsville, Texas, which will focus on strategic planning, human resource management, and systems thinking; participate in leadership webinars with industry leaders; and work on challenging industry projects that create opportunity for these leaders to collaborate, learn, and use the skills learned during the training and educational sessions. 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. The program will also help participants identify, understand, and capitalize on unique strengths to develop personal, organizational, and community leadership skills.

Ryan Rhoades, KRIRM associate professor at the helm of the program, explained that developing the next generation of leaders is among the strongest leverage points for the ranching industry as complex issues and challenges will inevitably arise. Rhoades, along with the leadership of KRIRM and NCBA, looks forward to the positive impact of the program and its participants. Senior Director of Governance and Leadership Barb Wilkinson of NCBA was present at the workshop in San Diego, representing the partnership and commitment both KRIRM and NCBA have in the development of these ranching professionals.

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

**About KRIRM**

Formed in 2003, KRIRM is a ranch management master’s program at Texas A&M University-Kingsville created in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the legendary King Ranch. As the only ranch management master’s program in the world, KRIRM teaches graduate students using a multi-disciplinary, systems approach to ranch management, and provides the highest quality lectureships and symposia to stakeholders in the ranching industry. For more information about KRIRM, visit [krirm.tamuk.edu](http://krirm.tamuk.edu).

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