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**HISTORY WAS MADE AT THE AMERICAN ROYAL BARN RAISING**

The future home of the American Royal continues to move forward as vertical construction begins

**KANSAS CITY, KS. (November 28, 2023)** – The [American Royal](#) has been a Kansas City tradition since 1899, whose mission is to be the nation’s leader for food and agriculture education, events and engagement. In order to execute this mission, the American Royal has placed an intentional focus on developing the nation’s epicenter for food and agriculture.

Nearly 500 competitors, volunteers, board members, and supporters witnessed American Royal history on November 28 as the vertical construction process began and the first piece of steel was placed on its new facility.

“The American Royal is constructing a purpose-built complex designed to attract visitors year-round to Kansas and Wyandotte County for food and agriculture events,” explained Walt George, chair of the new building committee and secretary of the American Royal Board of Directors, during the barn raising ceremony. “It all starts today with the barn, although it sounds so simple to just call it the barn.”

The facility will span more than 390,000 square feet—the equivalent of nearly seven football fields. In addition to three arenas and a state-of-the-art learning and engagement center, the complex can house more than 1,500 horses or nearly 4,000 head of cattle.

“The agriculture industry is the lifeblood of our great state, and this new American Royal campus is going to serve as a national leader in education, events, and engagement – creating a food and agriculture innovation district that will be unlike any other in the world,” said Kansas Governor Laura Kelly. “It will also play a critical role in building up our workforce by instilling in young visitors a sense of pride about Kansas’ deep agriculture heritage, perhaps inspiring them to pursue a career here.”

Before the barn raising program, supporters enjoyed lunch, toured the future home of the American Royal, viewed updated renderings and signed a steel beam that will be used in constructing the new facility.

“The new American Royal complex will be a place where relevant conferences, collaborations and

events focused on innovations in food, fiber and fuel can happen,” said Cliff Illig, member of the American Royal Board of Directors. “Visitors of all ages and backgrounds will come together to learn, celebrate and advance an industry that impacts each and every one of us, every single day.”

Lindsey Patterson Smith, co-chair of the American Royal campaign cabinet, shared a vision for the American Royal Association from her late father, Neal Patterson, with barn raising attendees.

“I am beyond thrilled to celebrate this milestone for the American Royal,” said Patterson Smith. “My father, the late Neal Patterson, saw the opportunity the American Royal holds in creating a connection between agrarian and urban lifestyles, but knew that the organization needed to continue to evolve. The vision for the American Royal is aligned with that opportunity, and this facility is a critical tool to get there.”

The American Royal’s new development will have a significant impact on the agricultural community and the Kansas City region as the organization positions itself as the epicenter of agriculture. The facility is expected to host its first event in late 2025 or early 2026.

For more information about the American Royal and the new facility, visit <https://www.americanroyalonthetise.com/>.

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#### **About the American Royal Association**

A Kansas City tradition since 1899, the American Royal is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to be the nation’s leader for food and agriculture education, events, and engagement. The American Royal provides opportunities for nearly half a million youth and adults from around the world to engage in high-quality events and experiences, including nationally competitive livestock shows, the world’s largest barbecue competition, regional and national equine shows, youth and professional rodeos, and elementary and secondary education outreach. Support from partners, members, and volunteers help the American Royal achieve its vision of a world where food and agriculture are celebrated, and all generations are committed to its future.