



# GREAT PLAINS

## TECHNOLOGY & MANUFACTURING CLUSTER

# AUGUST 2022 NEWSLETTER

## Member Spotlight

Farmada  
Salina, Kansas



Our member spotlight this month is Farmada from Salina, KS. The company manufactures and distributes fertilizer toolbars in various sizes. Founded in 2018 by Daniel Rauchholz, former International Division President of Great Plains Manufacturing for 18 years, the Farmada core team has over 100 years of engineering, design, manufacturing, marketing, and international experience to produce ground-breaking implements worldwide.

Internationally, Farmada has seen the impacts that supply shortages have on ag equipment manufacturers, including previous lockdowns. Therefore, the company anticipated supply chain issues early during COVID-19. They stocked up on components immediately and diversified their supply chain to lessen dependence overseas. The company's international experience has also allowed them to integrate best workforce practices from around the world. Daniel believes that a secret to Kansas' success is not for each manufacturer to have its own training system, but to employ a common apprenticeship program. A committed 2 to 3 year apprenticeship program, employing curriculum developed by both industry and academia, could help keep people in rural Kansas communities. *"When people have worked in one area for 2 to 3 years, the likelihood of them moving away is much slimmer."*



says Daniel. This effort could potentially be led by an official ag equipment manufacturing association. Toward this goal, Daniel participated as a panelist in the Ag Equipment Manufacturing Sector breakout session during the 2022 Ag Growth Summit, during which he was selected as an "Ag Hero" for supporting Ukrainian friends in agriculture fighting for their country.



Farmada believes in local sourcing, always striving to source as many parts as possible from Kansas manufacturing companies. In fact, 80% of the component parts for Farmada products are supplied by Kansas companies! *"With Kansas being a strong agricultural state from a cropping and manufacturing perspective, we believe that improved application practices of putting fertilizer in the ground in the right place, at the right time, and in the right amount will yield many positive dividends for the state,"* says Daniel.

In the next few years, Farmada will work to develop a strong dealer network in all major US corn and soybean growing states. The company is always interested in connecting with additional suppliers and dealers to assist them with this growth. To learn more, please visit [www.farmada.net](http://www.farmada.net).

## Did You Know...

...that by 2030, manufacturers will need to fill 4 million jobs? And 2.1 million of those jobs could go unfilled because not enough people are inspired to pursue a career in manufacturing? (Source: [The Manufacturing Institute](#)).

In order to turn these numbers around, manufacturers have to be willing to put out the effort to make it happen. They can participate in Manufacturing Day ([October 7, 2022](#)) events such as tours and presentations to inform youth and adults of the current and future career opportunities. Ready to get started? [Contact](#) the GPTMC for questions.



## Welcome!

The GPTMC would like to welcome 10 new community members in August! If you're new here, check out upcoming [events](#) and [programs](#), and give us a follow on social media!



## KSU Entrepreneurial Internship Update

The KSU Center for the Advancement of Entrepreneurship hosted a successful Entrepreneurship and Innovation internship for their students and businesses this summer. The program provided students an opportunity to hone their entrepreneurial skills while connecting businesses with the college's emerging talent at a fraction of the cost.

Nine businesses from a variety of industries participated in the program this summer. The interns worked on different tasks such as:

- Social Media Campaigns
- Database Management
- Website Improvement
- Market/Customer Research and more

If your business is interested in participating in the internship, visit the [Wildcat Consulting](#) Page.



## Upcoming Partner Events

- 9/8: Making Hiring Decisions
- 9/22: Industry 4.0: Behind the Scenes
- 9/27: CKMN Women in Mfg

View and sign up for more events at <https://greatplainsmnc.org/events>

## KDA Ag Growth Summit - Ag Equipment Manufacturing Breakout Session Recap

The Kansas Department of Ag, K-State TDI, Kansas Manufacturing Solutions, and GPTMC co-hosted their first in-person ag equipment manufacturing sector session at the Kansas Ag Growth Summit in Manhattan on August 18th. This event focused on building an agricultural community around innovation that allows manufacturers, farmers, and other ag-entities to work together.



### AgLaunch Presentation



Pete Nelson, President of [AgLaunch](#), kicked off the event with a presentation about how their organization has built a community around ag technologies that help farmers solve challenges. AgLaunch groups together agricultural innovators within a network of farmers and helps them with new technologies, software, or robotics that can fundamentally change agriculture, and scales them with farmers who take stock in the new innovation.

Every new technology needs a manufacturer or technical company that can manufacture and produce the technologies. This is where ag equipment manufacturers can help! AgLaunch is interested in expanding their network into the state of Kansas and connecting with manufacturers, organizations and other entities to create economic opportunities for farmers and ag manufacturers.

### Panel Discussion

Following Pete's presentation, a panel of industry leaders shared their insights on the ag equipment manufacturing sector and how it can move forward. Panelist include:

- Jeff Tucker, K-State TDI
- Mike Bergmeier, Shield Ag
- Daniel Rauchholz, Farmada
- Pete Nelson, AgLaunch



Top Discussions:

### How can small manufacturers innovate without the fear of losing the idea to larger OEMs?

- Small manufacturers can't live in fear. A partnership with an OEM could help small companies access a network of several dealers.
- Keep the OEMs out until the product is fully developed and protected.
- Small manufacturers can see the weaknesses of OEM products and can design products around these issues to provide value and/or compliment the OEM.
- Having a niche product is key to success.

### What should companies be aware of if they are interested in collaborating with other companies?

- If you don't have the same mindset about risk, it won't be successful.
- Reputation...hardest thing to earn and quickest thing to lose.
- You can't replicate a successful partnership. You have to create an environment to make it happen. It will take time!

The GPTMC looks forward to further connecting with the companies and organizations involved with this sector session and determining ways to continue supporting ag equipment manufacturers in the region. More event details [here](#).

## Digital Manufacturing Technology Program

### KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

#### Digital Manufacturing Technology Center

The K-State Technology Development Institute (TDI) was awarded a \$2 million grant through the Economic Development Administration's Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program to deploy the KSU Digital Manufacturing Technology Program (DMTP). The purpose of the DMTP is to launch services and programs that will assist manufacturers with evaluating and implementing existing/new digital technologies to shorten supply chains, increase productivity of available labor, and increase responsiveness and agility to demand as a result of the pandemic.

The services and programs of the DMTP include:

- Digital Design and Manufacturing Technical Assistance - Assist entrepreneurs and small manufacturers seeking to utilize digital technologies to develop/prototype new products and technologies and establish/improve manufacturing operations. These technologies could include CAD/CAM, design simulation, 3D scanning, CNC machining and fabrication, additive manufacturing, robotics, IIoT connectivity, and data acquisition/analytics.
- Acquisition of New Digital Technologies - Procure new digital manufacturing technologies to demonstrate and utilize in the delivery of the above services. These include metal and large scale FDM and carbon fiber production-level Additive Manufacturing, co-bots, and IIoT demonstration technologies.
- Digital Manufacturing Assessments - In partnership with Kansas Manufacturing Solutions (KMS), the DMTP will assist manufacturers seeking to assess and roadmap their readiness in areas such as cybersecurity, digital design and manufacturing, additive manufacturing, and co-bots.
- Digital Manufacturing/IIoT Learning and Demonstration Lab - In partnership with KMS, IIoT technology providers, KSU College of Engineering, and technical college advanced manufacturing programs, DMTP will utilize its shop and AM studio as learning and demonstration labs to provide hands-on workshops and demonstrations that promote digital manufacturing and IIoT technologies.
- Launch of Informational Networking Hub - The DMTP will launch an informational networking hub which will seek to link and leverage the state's small advanced manufacturing companies, technology/service providers, digital manufacturing expertise, university engineering programs, and technical college advanced manufacturing programs.
- Support of Statewide Advanced Manufacturing Strategy Planning - Working in partnership with the Kansas Dept. of Commerce, subject matter experts, education partners, and numerous statewide resource partners, the DMTP will seek to support and assist in guiding the development of statewide and regional strategies/programs/infrastructures to support small manufacturers' growth and skilled workforce development throughout the state.

The GPTMC team is excited about the opportunities this DMTP can bring to the region and looks forward to assisting small manufacturers with implementing digital technologies. The GPTMC also wants to thank its community members and partners for the verbal and written letters of support for the proposal. Visit <https://greatplainstmc.org/digital-manufacturing> frequently to stay up-to-date with the latest details.

## What is 3D Printing? - Blog

3D printing is a unique technique that stands out in this era of digitization and new technologies. Also known as additive manufacturing, 3D printing is the process of producing parts with complex geometries by adding and building physical layers with a specific material.

Are you new to 3D printing? Want to learn about the pros and cons, and how it works? Read the rest of the blog [here](#), or contact us at [info@greatplainstmc.org](mailto:info@greatplainstmc.org) with your questions!



## Discussion Forum Topic

**Does your manufacturing company have plans to implement new data-related technologies in the near future?** Share your response and thoughts [here!](#)

