

Cowtown Turned Animal Health Technology Center

Written for Gallagher 2018

At the bend in the Missouri River on grass covered flats if you listen close you might hear echoes of the past; hoofbeats, whistling, spurs jangling, the slap of leather and the high pitched zzzzzz of a lariat. Cowboys, dust covered and bone tired, riding weary cowponies barely heard over the bawling of thousands of Texas steers, “Hold’em here boys, the drives bout over.”

“The Gallagher company, born of one man’s need to solve a problem changed how livestock is managed forever.”

Kansas City sprouted from its agricultural heritage as a Cowtown. The transition to a center for animal health, education, and technology seems only natural for a town that for hundreds of years has had millions of animals pass through this gateway to the west.

The area where the Missouri and Kansas rivers converge began as a well-known gathering place for Fur Traders, Indians, Settlers and Farmers to exchange goods. The hustle and bustle (although slower paced) existed here long before Kansas City was ever thought of. Center of the country with great river access, trails in all directions and later railroads proved what the Fur Traders knew already; the location was prime. North to Chicago, east into more settled areas, south to Texas and west to new opportunities all came together at this historic crossroads.



Settlers heading west along the Santé Fe and Oregon Trail would gather here to resupply for the tough journey ahead. The Missouri and Kansas Rivers, the Union depot of the Transcontinental Railroad and of all things tick fever led to the one of the nation’s largest stockyards being developed in the West Bottoms of Kansas City.

The Kansas City stockyards were built in 1870 and consisted of 11 pens, 15 unloading chutes and a set of scales on five acres. That year alone 100,000 head of cattle went through those pens. Livestock; cattle, sheep, hogs, horses and mules, were driven to the stockyards by the thousand. Some went to local slaughter houses, other stock was rested then headed west to feed and supply the growing population of ranchers, settlers and miners.



Kansas City as we know it, began to sprout up around the stockyards. The stockyards expanded from humble beginnings to include over 207 acres. It had a handling capacity of 170,000 animals and employed over 20,000 people. Kansas City wasn't called 'Cowtown' on a whim, at its height 1 million animals a year made their way through the yards. Second only to the yards in Chicago, stock was brought into Kansas City from 35 states and shipped to 42 states as well as Canada and Mexico.

The largest building of its kind, the 9 story Livestock Exchange Building, was built in 1910 adding to the growing prestige of the city. Despite devastating floods, fire and the great depression the stockyards and the Livestock Exchange endured.

True to its agriculture roots, Kansas City would continue to support the agricultural community, paving the way to the future. In a tent on the grounds of the stockyards a new tradition was born with the first national show for the exposition and sale of purebred cattle.



The American Royal livestock show (named after the British Royal show) began in 1899 with 541 registered Herefords. Raising premium livestock was promoted by the sale of 300 Herefords, average \$344. The show quickly outgrew the tent and a permanent building was built in 1908. Although tragedy struck in the form of floods and fire which destroyed that building, the show never faltered. Horse shows were added in 1905. The Future Farmers of America organization was formed during 1928 American Royal.



The American Royal Livestock Show has influenced the history of the city and continues to do so. The current complex is home to much more than livestock expositions. Now it is a hub of activity throughout the year; rodeos, horse shows and educational programs all giving a nod to Kansas City's rich agricultural past. The most current claim to fame is "The World's Largest Barbecue Competition" with over 350 contestants competing in both an open and invitational BBQ contest. This Labor Day event has turned into a two-day festival complete with entertainment, car show and carnival rides and of course finger licking BBQ.

If you have not yet made the connection between this Livestock Show and that famous baseball team in Kansas City, you know the KC Royals, they owe their name to the American Royal. Funny that they didn't choose a bovine for a mascot, maybe they think "Sluggerr" the lion is more 'manly'.



The American Royal livestock show, rodeos, and BBQ bring 100,000 visitors to the area every year. The historic Livestock Exchange Building has been renovated and now provides space for 410 offices. The building is home to artist and designer studios, a barber shop, bank, health clubs, various business offices, brewery and restaurants and livestock association offices. The popularity of the American Royal has encouraged many Beef Cattle Breed Associations to call the Kansas City area home, including American Angus, Charolais, Hereford, Maine-Anjou, and Shorthorn.

Although the stockyards closed in 1991 after serving the area for 120 years, Kansas City's "Cowtown" legacy continues. Kansas City is home to the National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame created in 1960 to serve as an education center, museum and memorial. The center pays homage to the American farmer and farming. Focusing not only on our rural heritage, the center spotlights the science and technology shaping the agricultural landscape into what it will be in the future.



Kansas City remains the agricultural hub of the Midwest, encouraging animal health and technology companies to call the city home. Kansas City Animal Health Corridor is home to more than 300 animal health, nutrition, and technology companies. Cooperation between the business, educational, scientific and government communities encourage this growth drawing from the city's agricultural heritage creating the largest concentration of animal health companies in the world.

The KC Animal Health Corridor strives to continue on the cutting edge of innovations by connecting investors with emerging animal health companies and entrepreneurs. "We're showcasing presenters with technologies that can solve the industry's toughest issues facing pet owners, veterinarians, and the world's livestock producers," says KC Animal Health Coordinator Vice Chairman and Hill's Pet Nutrition North American President Kostas Kontopanos. (7/25/2017 News Release)



New technologies are often born out of a search for solutions and attempting to solve problems sparks imagination. The Gallagher company, born of one man's need to solve a problem changed how livestock is managed forever. Bill Gallagher Senior's problem was his horse Joe was using his vehicle as a scratching post, bending the fenders.

Bill designed a system that would emit an electric shock when the vehicle was rocked. Joe became the first horse to have a 'shocking experience'. Fences carrying electric charge to control livestock were then born from a farm shed in New Zealand in 1938.

Continually striving to meet the needs of the agriculture community worldwide, Gallagher now offers not only electric fences but also weighing and electronic identification systems, data collection, heat detection and wireless water and fence monitoring systems.

Once, one of the famous cow towns of the west, Kansas City's success has always been tied to agriculture and people that are relentless innovators.



The stockyards and Livestock Exchange Building were revolutionary, establishing the city as the agriculture hub of the Midwest. The American Royal sprouted from these agricultural roots cementing the city's tie to the agriculture community. Animal health and technology companies from around the world now call this city their North American home and Gallagher is honored to be among them.

We thank you, our customers, for your support since the very beginning 80 years ago. As we continue to be customer -inspired and redefine what is possible, we look forward to helping you solve your livestock management challenges. Agriculture is a pervasive force that has sculpted our nation's past and will influence our future, together we can make great strides in the agriculture industry for the next 80 years.

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