

Oklahoma

Country



The Magazine of the
Oklahoma Farm Bureau
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OKLAHOMA
FARM
BUREAU
COUNTY BOARD MEMBER

Standing for agriculture

A new crop of Oklahoma legislators brings a rural perspective to the state Legislature.

Rising to the occasion


New avenues for advocacy in the 70s and 80s

A new tool for serving Oklahomans

Unveiling the new Farm Bureau insurance website

Lincoln to local

Continuing the fight for rural Oklahoma



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ON THE COVER

Oklahoma senator and former OKFB board member Roland Pederson takes a short break during this year's wheat harvest on his farm near Burlington, Oklahoma.

HIDDEN NUMBER WORTH \$50

One member family's Oklahoma Farm Bureau membership number is hidden somewhere in this issue of *Oklahoma Country* and could earn that member family \$50. To claim the cash prize, the member family must find its own hidden membership number and contact Clarissa Walton before the last day of the month, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at (405) 523-2530.

The OKFB membership number hidden somewhere in *Oklahoma Country* must match the number on the face of your individual OKFB membership card for you to claim the cash prize. The membership number that appears on your magazine's mailing label is not the hidden number, but also must match the hidden number for you to claim the cash prize.

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That's why we're here to help you protect what matters most, your todays and your tomorrows. **Contact your Farm Bureau agent to discuss what's been happening in your world.**



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PRESIDENTIALLY SPEAKING

Farm Bureau: Moving our state forward with big ideas

By Tom Buchanan
President, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

As we at Oklahoma Farm Bureau have spent the last several months combing through our history to celebrate our 75th year, I have been impressed by the long-ranging visionary leadership that has helped our organization achieve our goals and succeed through more than seven decades.

Previous generations of Farm Bureau leaders saw the beginnings of many of the realities we face in Oklahoma agriculture today. Our Farm Bureau forefathers developed grassroots policies and new programs to combat the issues they saw on the horizon.

While today we deal firsthand with extreme animal-rights and environmental activists, OKFB members in the 1980s saw the need to confront the mistruths spun by these radical out-of-state groups long before any of today's acronym-laden organizations were widely known as a threat to modern agriculture. Our Farm Bureau members and leaders recognized that the best way to counter the misinformation these groups were spreading was to provide accurate agricultural education. The action these OKFB members undertook helped lay the foundation for our Oklahoma Agriculture in the Classroom program, teaching school children science-based facts about agriculture and food and fiber production.

The extreme drought we suffered just a few years ago started many discussions about developing our state's water resources. However, this was not the first time Farm Bureau members had considered such a concept. Our policy in the 1940s included an expressed desire to study Oklahoma's water resources. Between the floods and the droughts of the 1980s, OKFB members once again turned their attention to our state's water resources, working to place our organization on the forefront of water issues in Oklahoma.


Our Farm Bureau visionaries had big ideas. Bold ideas. Ideas that were based on needs seen at a community or county level, then were adapted and translated to work on a statewide level to benefit all Oklahomans.

As we enter our grassroots policy development season this fall, I turn to our Farm Bureau members for their vision

for our state's future and what we can do to help Oklahoma agriculture grow. We know these big ideas are important, and while they sometimes seem like an unscalable mountain, farmers and ranchers are dedicated individuals who see their ideas to the end, and our history bears this out.

One of our earliest policy resolutions called for the exemption of farm inputs from state sales taxes. This was a bold, visionary step for Farm Bureau members, but a much-needed one. While progress didn't come quickly or easily

to our early Farm Bureau members, they worked step-by-step to win sales tax exemption victories, year after year. Finally, a full repeal of agricultural sales taxes came in 1978 - capping a 35-year-long effort to help our state's farmers and ranchers.

We know that our modern-day efforts to move agriculture forward won't necessarily happen overnight. But through the dedication, hard work, and visionary leadership of our grassroots members, progress is certain, and the next 75 years of OKFB are as bright as the ideas we develop and strive to achieve together. 

“Our Farm Bureau visionaries had big ideas. Bold ideas. Ideas that were based on needs seen at a community or county level, then were adapted and translated to work on a statewide level to benefit all Oklahomans.”

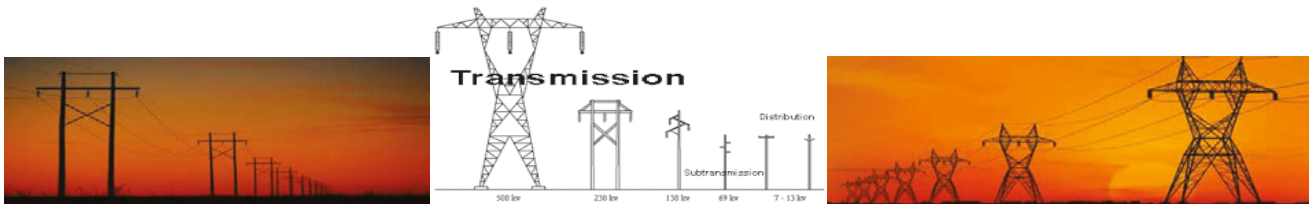
— Tom Buchanan



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EXECUTIVE OUTLOOK

Celebrating those behind the scenes

By Monica Wilke

Executive Director, Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Affiliated Companies

Each and every day, hundreds of Oklahomans work tirelessly to ensure that Oklahoma Farm Bureau is achieving the goals of our members and providing our customers with premiere products and customer service. And while we don't always have the chance to recognize their efforts, these often-unsung heroes of Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Affiliated Companies – our employees – play a crucial role in driving our organization's progress.

As we celebrate our organization's 75th year, we planned special events for both our Farm Bureau members and our staff. While we will celebrate our diamond anniversary with our members this coming November, our 75th anniversary employee gala, held in Oklahoma City on Friday, May 19, was a fantastic way to honor our organization's employees. It was an incredible event that brought together our family of employees, agents, retirees and their guests to celebrate OKFB's 75 years of service to our members.

The gala was an elegant evening, providing an opportunity for our employees to visit, enjoy a dinner and entertainment, and see the achievements won through OKFB history. I was proud to be able to take part as we honored these very deserving individuals.

It is our employees – from our first staff member in the 1940s to our most recent hires in 2017 – who have worked tirelessly to ensure our organization is the best it can be. These unsung heroes of Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Affiliated Companies don't seek recognition or awards. In the true agrarian spirit of our state, a job well done is a reward in and of itself.


However, we strive to recognize our employees and the spirit of dedication they embody. During the gala, we acknowledged employees for their years of service. Each employee honored –

whether they received their five-year service pin or their 40-year service pin – is a valued member of our staff. But to make our 75th anniversary employee gala even more special, we honored our first employee to serve 50 years at OKFB. This

sort of dedication is almost unheard of, but OKFB is the sort of organization where our employees go the extra mile – and beyond.

This commitment runs through our entire organization, and it reaches beyond the awards and recognition. OKFB employees took time in April to stand outside our home office in Oklahoma City on a Sunday morning and hand out water to runners in the annual Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon. This dedication to serve our community while

representing OKFB is a shining example of the mindset our employees bring to work each and every day.

While the gala was an amazing evening and a great opportunity to show our appreciation to our employees across the state, I deeply appreciate the daily commitments our employees make when they set foot in our offices or take to the road to represent and serve Farm Bureau around the state. It is through decades of employee efforts, alongside our members' vision, that our organization has achieved all that we can list as accomplishments today. And it is my honor to work alongside these dedicated individuals as we all tirelessly work to improve rural Oklahoma. 

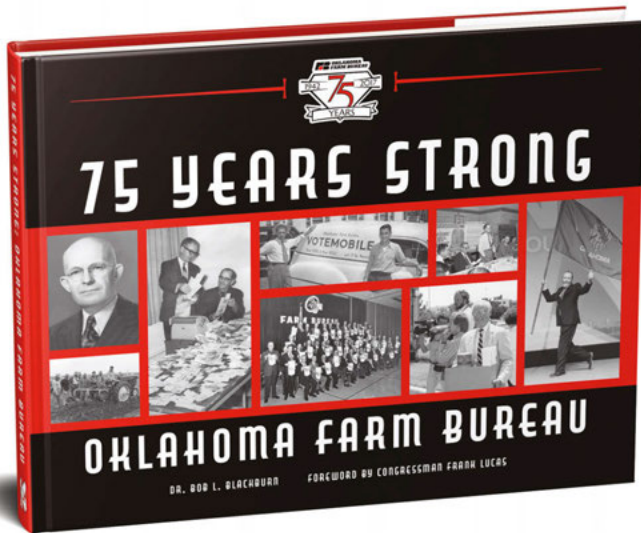
“It is our employees – from our first staff member in the 1940s to our most recent hires in 2017 – who have worked tirelessly to ensure our organization is the best it can be.”

— Monica Wilke



75 YEARS STRONG

OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU'S 75TH-ANNIVERSARY HISTORY BOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE TO ORDER



Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 75th-anniversary history book is now available for purchase through county Farm Bureau offices.

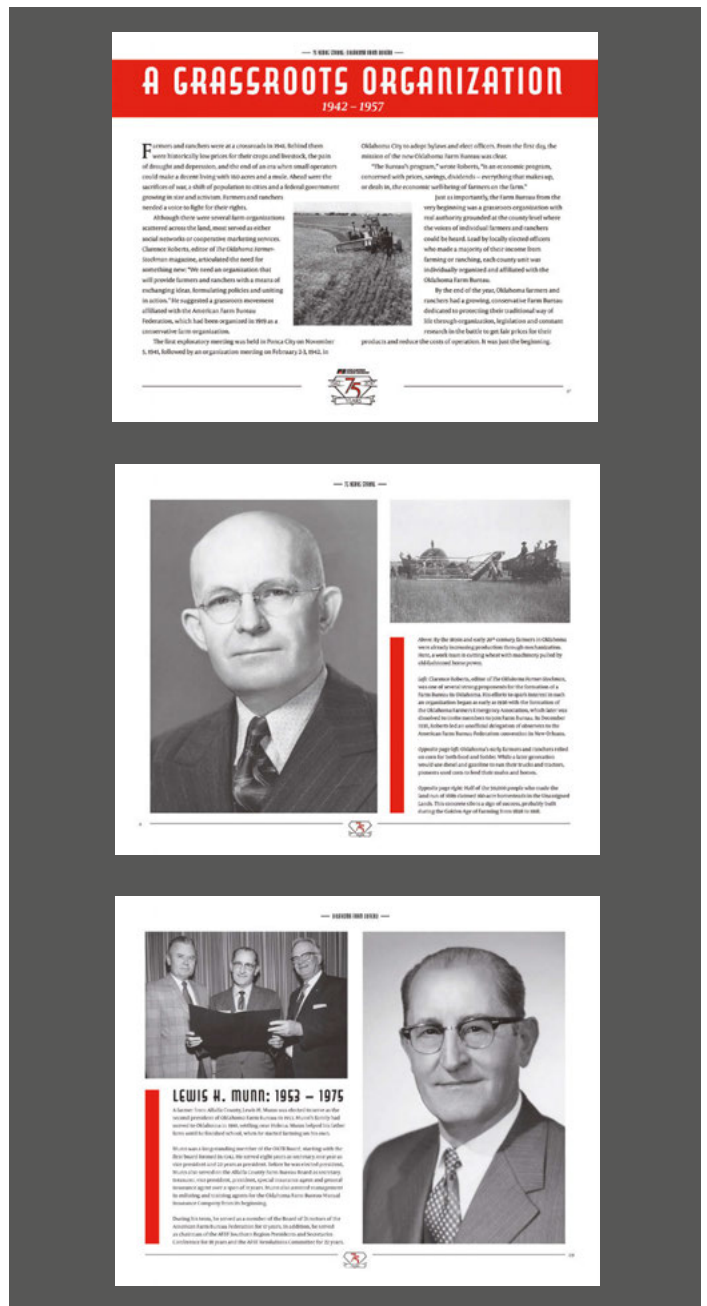
OKFB is proud to present our organization's history through photos and stories gleaned from our archives. This hardcover volume by Dr. Bob L. Blackburn spans 140 pages and includes more than 170 photos chronicling Oklahoma agriculture and Oklahoma Farm Bureau through the years.

To reserve your copy of the book, contact your main county Farm Bureau office through August 15. Once the order period has passed, we will distribute the books to the county Farm Bureau offices, where you can pick up your copy.

The cost of the book is \$18.45 + \$1.55 tax. Because copies will be distributed through county Farm Bureau offices, there will be no charge for shipping.

We hope you are as excited as we are to celebrate OKFB's diamond anniversary through photos and stories of our organization's past.

Be sure to call your main county Farm Bureau office and order your copy today.




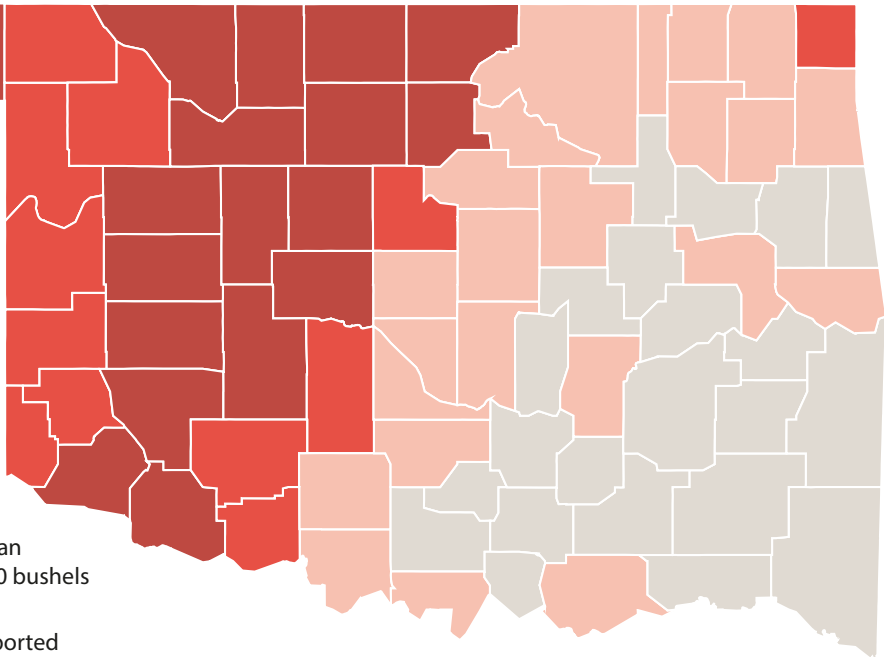
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COMMODITY CORNER

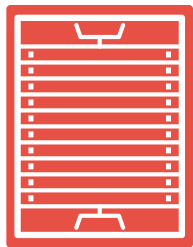
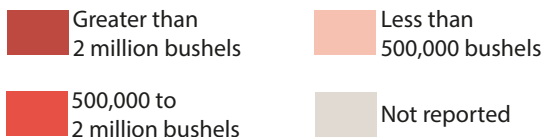
Waving wheat that sure smells sweet ...

As temperatures rise in late May through June, many Oklahoma farmers are busy harvesting the state's largest cash crop.

Oklahoma produced **136.5 MILLION BUSHEL**s of winter wheat in 2016, which would make **12.3 BILLION LOAVES** of whole-wheat bread. 




USDA NASS, 2016



ONE football field can grow enough bread to feed a family for **12 YEARS**
Source: Oklahoma Wheat Commission

Oklahoma ranked **2ND** in the nation in 2016 for bushels of winter wheat 

30-50% of Oklahoma wheat acres are grazed by stocker cattle 
Source: OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

THE TOP 4 wheat varieties in the state were all bred by Oklahoma State University:
1. GALLAGHER 2. DUSTER 3. RUBY LEE 4. ENDURANCE
AND _____

50% of wheat varieties planted in Oklahoma are **OSU-BRED**

Have you tried the Oklahoma Wheat Commission's famous **cinnamon rolls?**

If you've been to the OKFB convention, you probably have. Each year, the Oklahoma Wheat Commission hands out samples of their cinnamon rolls and whole-wheat bread made with Oklahoma wheat. They generously let us share their recipe in this issue! **Check it out on page 50.**



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Farm Bureau stands for private property rights, against property tax increases

OKFB continues its fight to protect farmers, ranchers and rural Oklahoma at the state Capitol.

The first session of the 56th Oklahoma Legislature was an eventful one to say the least; eventful because the issues the Legislature faced this session truly divided members. Facing a nearly \$900 million budget shortfall, state lawmakers were forced to make hard tax and fee increase decisions to balance the state budget.

Right or wrong, one of the main messages conveyed at the state Capitol was Oklahoma has a revenue problem rather than a spending problem. Thus, legislators searched for opportunities to increase revenue and fill the budget hole. Yet, due to State Question 640 passed by Oklahomans in 1992, all revenue-raising measures require a supermajority vote to advance. This is where Oklahomans saw a true division.

A wide variety of revenue-raising measures were considered, including the gross production tax increase, a cigarette tax increase, a fuel tax increase and the earned income tax credit, among others.

The final state budget approved by the House, Senate and Gov. Mary Fallin provided flat or slightly higher funding to 16 state agencies including agriculture, common education, public safety and corrections. The remaining state agencies' budgets were cut by 4 to 5 percent. The Legislature made it a priority to avoid cuts to what they classify as "core government services".

State lawmakers also approved a \$1.50-per-pack smoking cessation fee on cigarettes, generating \$238 million, and a 1.25 percent increase to the excise tax on new and used vehicles to add an estimated \$125 million to state coffers. This measure is currently being challenged by the Oklahoma Supreme Court with oral arguments to be heard in August.

Though Democrats heavily fought for an increase in the gross production tax on oil and gas wells, Republicans proved they have no appetite to tax the oil and gas industry. While gross production tax was not increased, incentives for the industry

Legislative bill key:

✓ = OKFB approved ⊖ = OKFB neutral ✗ = OKFB opposed

were rolled back.

Despite a tough budget year, Oklahoma agriculture effectively was unharmed by budget cuts. In fact, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry budget was increased. Maintaining funding for extension services was a priority issue for Oklahoma Farm Bureau members in the organization's 2017 policy book. Recognizing the importance of Oklahoma State Cooperative Extension services, state legislators appropriated an additional \$2 million to help fund extension.

The state budget negotiations received most of the attention during the session, but OKFB also achieved several victories on behalf of its members. Below, find a list of bills highlighting OKFB's work at the state Capitol this year. **FB**

AD VALOREM TAXES



HB 1374: Rep. Weldon Watson & Sen. David Holt

✗ Allows municipalities to increase ad valorem taxes to fund public safety districts, upon a simple majority municipal vote. All other ad valorem increases, such as school bonds, require a supermajority vote for approval. Ad valorem taxes fund items such as county government, public school infrastructure, and even certain legal judgments.

The proposed measure contains an exemption for agriculture land, but the exemption easily can be removed at a future date. Oklahoma Farm Bureau members believe the bill is bad policy for farmers, ranchers and rural Oklahoma. The bill was narrowly passed by the House and advanced through two Senate committees. Though it was stalled in the Senate, the measure remains alive to be heard during next year's legislative session.


For more information, contact:
Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Public Policy Department
(405) 530-2681




PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS




SB 477: Sen. Joe Newhouse & Rep. Charles Ortega

 Regulates obstructions to air navigation – like cell phone towers and wind turbines – that could “endanger the lives and property of military aircraft pilots, passengers and training routes.” Though intended to protect air space, the bill directly infringes on the private property rights of Oklahomans. The measure creates zones that prohibit economic development and activity. By removing the landowner from the permitting process, the bill is considered a “take” of private property. OKFB is committed to supporting the military, but found SB 477 as a bill looking for a problem. The bill was passed by the Senate in another form, but amended by the House. The measure was then tied up in the Senate, as the amended bill was not approved by a Senate conference committee.

HB 1827: Rep. John Pfeiffer & Sen. Eddie Fields

 Allows any person or entity lawfully operating and in the course of business to use public roads, highways and right-of-ways for pipe and other equipment used in the oil and natural gas production process. Under the measure, the person or entity would not need permission from the bordering landowner, but instead must only receive consent from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. HB 1827 was passed by the House, but was amended in the Senate. The bill was held up in conference committee.


SB 593: Senate Pro Tem Mike Schulz & House Speaker Charles McCall

 Specifies how oil and gas companies and mineral owners must be notified of new wind development. The bill also removes a loophole allowing property owners to register land as a private airport to prevent the development of wind turbines. OKFB policy supports the development and support of regulations concerning wind energy development that protect private property rights while still encouraging the development of wind energy. SB 593 does not inhibit private property rights, but instead takes them into consideration while encouraging development of wind energy. The measure passed the House and Senate and was signed by the governor on April 17.

EXOTIC SWINE




SB 326: Sen. Eddie Fields & Rep. John Pfeiffer

 Prohibits the importation and possession of exotic swine such as warthogs. Out-of-state individuals wanted to import exotic swine into high-fence facilities in Oklahoma. Farmers, ranchers and landowners in Oklahoma already face billions of dollars in damage every year from feral swine. The exotic swine had the same potential to carry disease, reproduce rapidly, and cause even more damage. The bill was passed through the House and Senate and was signed into Oklahoma law May 31.


OTHER



HB 1388: Rep. John Pfeiffer & Sen. Eddie Fields

 Modifies date of operation provisions in regards to determining timeliness for a nuisance action to be brought against agricultural activities on farm or ranch land; adds the term “malicious” to those frivolous nuisance suits that qualify a defendant to recovery of attorney’s fees. The bill was passed by both the House and Senate, and was signed by Gov. Mary Fallin on May 16.

HB 1373: Rep. Dell Kerbs

 Requires trailers to register with the Oklahoma Tax Commission and pay an \$11 fee within 30 days of purchase. The fee would be distributed between the Oklahoma Tax Commission and the tag agent. The bill failed to advance out of the House Transportation Committee, and therefore died.

Standing *for* agriculture

Several members of the Farm Bureau family have brought lessons learned on the farm to the steps of the state Capitol.

*by Hannah Nemecek
photos by Dustin Mielke*

Oklahoma has deep roots in farming and ranching, the backbone of the state's economy. Family farmers and ranchers across the state produce an abundance of high-quality food and fiber for the state and the world, contributing billions of dollars to the state economy. But only 33 percent of the state's population resides in rural Oklahoma, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and an even smaller percentage makes their living on the farm.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau has cultivated a strong voice for its members at 23rd and Lincoln in Oklahoma City, but protecting agriculture and rural Oklahoma has become increasingly difficult. As Oklahomans become further removed from the farm, the state Capitol needs legislators familiar with production agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

Three members of the OKFB family – Roland Pederson, Lonnie Paxton and Chris Kidd – were

elected to serve in the Oklahoma Senate last November, boosting the more than 30 Farm Bureau members already serving in the Legislature.

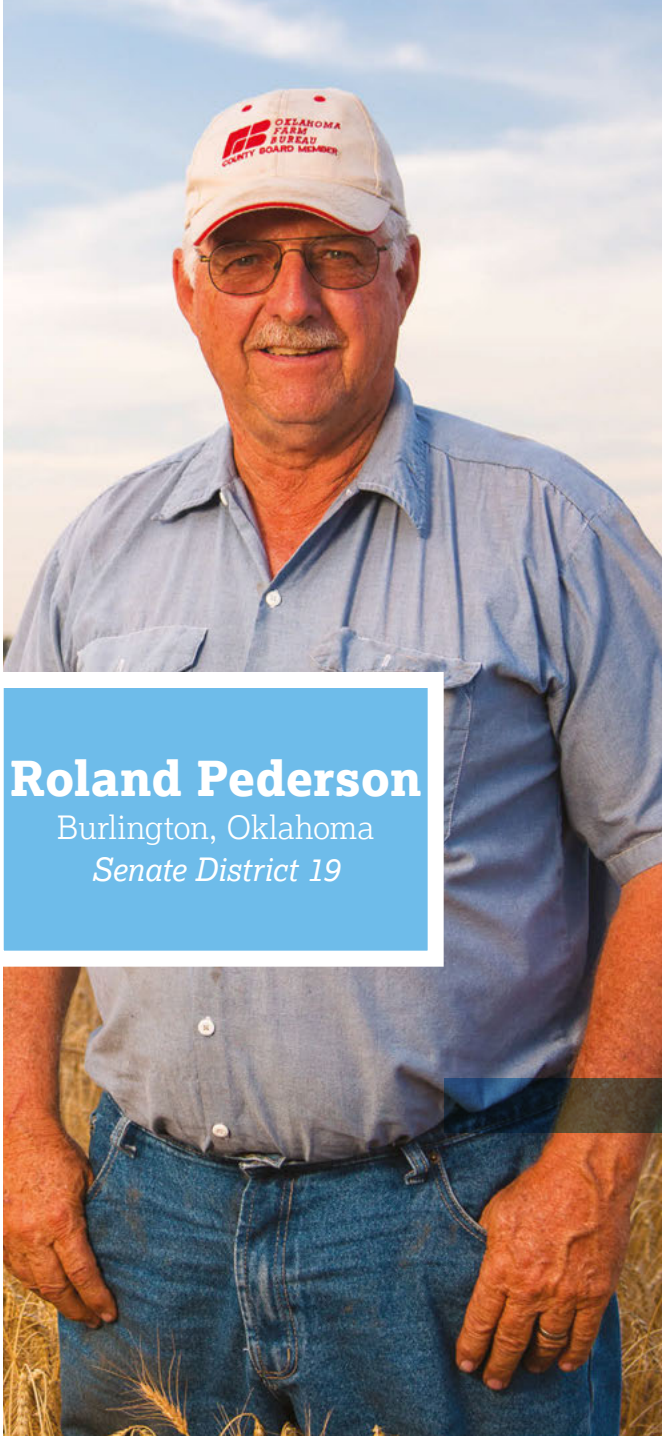
"People don't really understand what we do," said Sen. Pederson, a former OKFB state board member. "Most Oklahomans are about two to three generations away from the farm already. The gap is only going to grow."

Pederson is a second-generation farmer from Burlington, Oklahoma, who produces wheat, alfalfa, hay,

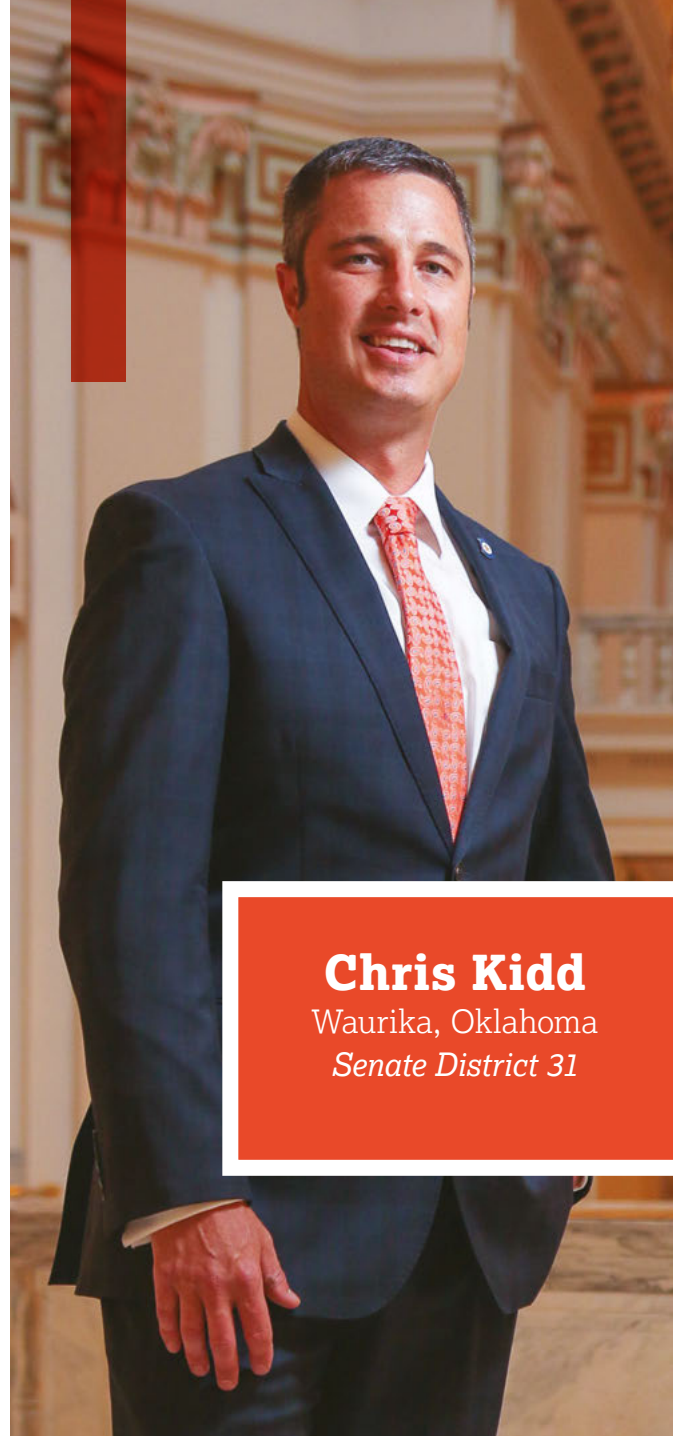


Lonnie Paxton

Tuttle, Oklahoma
Senate District 23



Roland Pederson
Burlington, Oklahoma
Senate District 19



Chris Kidd
Waurika, Oklahoma
Senate District 31

corn, soybeans and cattle on his family farm. He represents Senate District 19, which includes parts of Alfalfa, Garfield, Grant and Kay counties in northwest Oklahoma.

“I’m able to see how certain pieces of legislation would affect a farmer or rancher,” Pederson said. “A lot of legislators have had some kind of connection with rural Oklahoma, but not really somebody that has made their living from agriculture.”

As a farmer, Pederson said it’s important for legislators to

understand how legislation can impact rural Oklahoma.

“If you have legislators who really don’t have any concept for what goes on in rural parts of the state, they can very unintentionally pass legislation that hurts rural Oklahoma and they don’t even know it,” said Sen. Paxton, Grady County Farm Bureau insurance agent.

A Farm Bureau insurance agent for more than 20 years, Paxton serves the residents of Canadian, Grady and Kingfisher counties that

make up Senate District 23.

“As Oklahoma begins to grow, a lot of the growth is in urban areas,” Paxton said. “It’s not like there’s a dislike or vengeance against rural Oklahoma (within the Legislature); they just don’t understand it.”

Paxton, a third-generation family farmer, grew up on a wheat and cattle farm in Tuttle, Oklahoma. Active throughout the Tuttle community and Grady County, he saw the opportunity to serve the district following Sen. Ron Justice,



“A lot of legislators have had some kind of connection with rural Oklahoma, but not really somebody that has made their living from agriculture.”

a respected lawmaker who ardently fought for agriculture and rural Oklahoma throughout his 12-year tenure in the Legislature.

With big shoes to fill, Paxton said he hopes to uphold Justice’s legacy at the Capitol. One of his first priorities was establishing relationships with fellow legislators from across the state. He said his closest friends in the Senate are from urban areas, allowing him to convey the

concerns of rural Oklahoma.

“When there’s a piece of legislation dealing with the rural economy, we have a good enough relationship that they ask me, ‘What’s this going to do to Tuttle or Minco or some of the other communities in rural Oklahoma?’” Paxton said.

Though many legislators are from rural areas, Sen. Kidd said few realize the challenges that confront farmers and ranchers.

“Now more than ever, we need people who understand agriculture,” said Sen. Kidd, an OKFB member and employee. “A lot of legislators may live in a rural area, but they don’t know farming and ranching and the struggles we face.”

A longtime member of the OKFB family, Kidd was elected in November to serve residents of Senate District 31, which includes parts of Comanche, Cotton, Jefferson, Stephens and Tillman



Pederson rolls open a protective tarp on a grain cart during wheat harvest on his family’s farm near the northwest Oklahoma town of Burlington.



“When there’s a piece of legislation dealing with the rural economy, we have a good enough relationship that they ask me, ‘What’s this going to do to Tuttle or Minco or some of the other communities in rural Oklahoma?’”

counties. He was raised on a cattle ranch in Addington, a small town in southwestern Oklahoma.

After his first legislative session as a senator, Kidd said he realized geography divides more than political party at the Capitol.

“In Oklahoma, it’s not so much Republican versus Democrat as it is rural versus urban,” Kidd said.

The rural-urban divide became very apparent with a bill involving a property tax increase, he said.

HB 1374, which is still alive in the Legislature, allows cities and towns to increase property taxes to fund public safety, upon voter approval. Though the Senate did not advance the bill, it remains alive for next year’s session.

“I believe we will continue to see property tax increases proposed in the future,” Kidd said.

As the state repeatedly encounters budget shortfalls, he said the agricultural community also must

fight for its sales tax exemption.

Ensuring Oklahomans in rural areas have adequate access to healthcare is an ongoing challenge, Pederson said.

“People have the same health concerns across the state, whether urban or rural. But we’re remote out here,” he said. “Getting the healthcare we need is critical.”

Farm Bureau is well represented at the state Capitol, but Kidd said member involvement is vital.



Paxton visits with friend and customer Lee Coker at his office in the Grady County Farm Bureau satellite office in downtown Tuttle.



“Now more than ever, we need people who understand agriculture. A lot of legislators may live in a rural area, but they don’t know farming and ranching and the struggles we face.”

“Legislators are carrying the voice of their constituents at the state Capitol, so it’s crucial our Farm Bureau members stay engaged and make their voice heard,” Kidd said.

A relationship with state lawmakers makes all the difference, Paxton said.

“As a legislator, I want to talk to people. I want to know how a particular piece of legislation will affect Farm Bureau members,” he said. “Farm Bureau members in

rural Oklahoma need to make sure their senators and representatives know them.”

Paxton encouraged Farm Bureau members to attend a county legislative dinner or visit the state Capitol.

“I can assure you the lobbyists for a lot of groups with different views than Farm Bureau members are also up at the state Capitol every day,” he said.

Together, Farm Bureau members

have a powerful influence on policy at the state Capitol, Pederson said.

“There’s a lot of benefit in numbers,” he said. “When you can combine your voice with other people of similar beliefs, you have more of a presence as a collective group.” **FB**

Interested in getting involved? Follow OKAgPolicy on Facebook and Twitter. Text "START" to 405.400.0311 to sign up for legislative alerts.



Kidd stands outside the Oklahoma Senate chambers after completion of the first half of his first legislative session.



The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Caucus

Oklahoma Farm Bureau wants the story of rural Oklahoma and production agriculture to be heard and understood in towns and cities, as well as in rural areas of the state.

The OKFB Caucus, comprised of OKFB-member legislators, is a non-partisan group created to foster fellowship and discussion regarding agriculture and rural policy.

House Caucus Members

- Rep. Scott Biggs
- Rep. Chad Caldwell
- Rep. Dennis Casey
- Rep. Bobby Cleveland
- Rep. Jeff Coody
- Rep. John Enns
- Rep. Scott Fetgatter
- Rep. Tommy Hardin
- Rep. Chuck Hoskin
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- Rep. Johnny Tadlock
- Rep. Zach Taylor
- Rep. Steve Vaughan
- Rep. Rick West

Senate Caucus Members

- Sen. Mark Allen
- Sen. Larry Boggs
- Sen. Chris Kidd
- Sen. Kim David
- Sen. Eddie Fields
- Sen. Bryce Marlatt
- Sen. Greg McCortney
- Sen. Lonnie Paxton
- Sen. Roland Pederson
- Sen. Dewayne Pemberton
- Sen. Mike Schulz
- Sen. Joseph Silk

Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation helps distribute donations for wildfire relief

By Amanda Rosholt,
Director of Fundraising and
Public Relations for the
Oklahoma Farming and
Ranching Foundation

The dust has settled and the ashes have cleared after devastating fires swept through northwest Oklahoma and parts of Kansas, Texas and Colorado in early March. In the Oklahoma panhandle, farming and ranching families have begun to rebuild.

Farming and ranching families are often characterized by their resilience. Many of these families have been impacted by fire before, but growing crops and raising livestock is more than a career – it is a calling and a way of life. So they have picked themselves up and dared to begin again.

While the pain of the devastation will be felt for years to come, spring rains, green grass and incredibly generous individuals and organizations have brought hope. Farming and ranching families will use that hope to carry them forward in their pursuit to produce food and fiber products for citizens across the country and around the world.

In the months after the fires, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation received donations from



Photo by Dustin Mielke.


individuals, businesses and Farm Bureau organizations from Oklahoma and across the country to help the farming and ranching families who lost grazing land, fencing, livestock and equipment.

The foundation worked closely with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Foundation and other foundations that received donations to

ensure the funds were distributed to those in need.

In the immediate aftermath, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation issued fuel relief checks to individuals helping transport hay to the affected areas. Following an application and review process, relief checks were issued to more than 70 farming and ranching families in Beaver, Harper and Woodward counties.

Those who gave so generously made it possible for the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation to support farming and ranching families as they continue to rebuild their herds, care for wounded livestock and replace hundreds of miles of fencing.

Agriculture has shown yet again that in times of need, beauty rises from the ashes. Oklahoma agriculture will endure. 

“Agriculture has shown yet again that in times of need, beauty rises from the ashes. Oklahoma agriculture will endure.”

– Amanda Rosholt
Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation
Director of Fundraising and Public Relations



OKFB, Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation partner with FFA to feed hungry Oklahomans

Every year, Oklahoma Farm Bureau and the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation partner with FFA chapters and Oklahoma Food Banks to help fight childhood hunger in Oklahoma. Through the Oklahoma FFA's Hunger Challenge program, FFA members across the state are encouraged to donate livestock to provide protein sticks for the Oklahoma Food Bank's Food for Kids program.

A total of 226 FFA chapters donated to the Hunger Challenge this year, providing 1,015,764 protein sticks for the backpack program.

"As the state's largest general farm

organization, feeding every Oklahoman is our responsibility," said Monica Wilke, OKFB executive director. "We're honored to partner with Oklahoma FFA chapters in working toward a hunger-free Oklahoma."

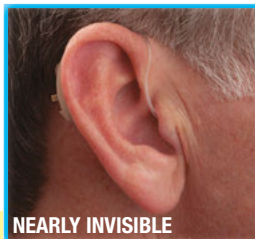
The Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs provide protein sticks for the Food for Kids program. This program supplies chronically hungry elementary school children with a backpack full of kid-friendly, non-perishable and nutritious food every Friday to sustain them over weekends and school holidays. Last year, 29,000 elementary school children received food through the program.

"No child should have to go without food," said Jeramy Rich, Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation president. "We are so thankful to the hundreds of FFA members across the state who joined us in fighting hunger in Oklahoma. Thanks to the sacrifices of these FFA students, we are working to help end hunger in Oklahoma."

To donate to Beef for Backpacks or Pork for Packs, contact the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation at (405) 202-1463 or visit the foundation's website at okfarmingandranchingfoundation.org.

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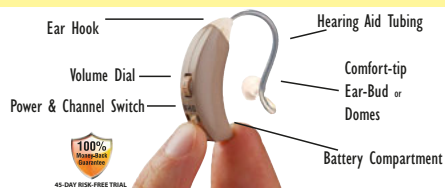
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A NEW TOOL FOR SERVING OKLAHOMANS

We are proud to introduce Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company's new website, designed to put the wide array of Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance products and services at your fingertips.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance is excited to launch a new and improved website available when you visit www.OKFarmInsurance.com.

Our Information Systems, Underwriting, Claims, Agency and Communications teams have been working diligently over the last few months to deliver a website that will ensure a top-notch user experience, allowing for efficient customer service.

The mobile-friendly site has been redesigned with engaging content to allow customers and current policy

holders to find their nearest agent and deliver an overall improved experience for site visitors.

OKFB will continue to add new features in a series of phases that will help broaden your online experience and provide the highest value in customer service whether you are shopping for new insurance products, inquiring about a claim, or accessing your security verification information.

Thank you for choosing to be with the largest domestic insurance company in Oklahoma. We are proud to be an organization of Oklahomans serving Oklahomans.

Here are a few of the site's new features:

- **Find An Agent tool** with randomized agent listings
- Enhanced **agent profiles** with the information you need to easily contact your agent
- **Informative** product & services content
- Simple, convenient **claims center**
- Access to **My Insurance portal** to make online payments and check security verification information
- **Mobile-friendly design** that is easy to read regardless of the device you use

VISIT THE NEW SITE TODAY AT
www.OKFarmInsurance.com



HOMANS



MEET OUR NEW HOMEPAGE

GET AN AUTO QUOTE

With a few simple pieces of information, you can receive an Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance quote for an auto policy faster than ever.

FIND AN AGENT

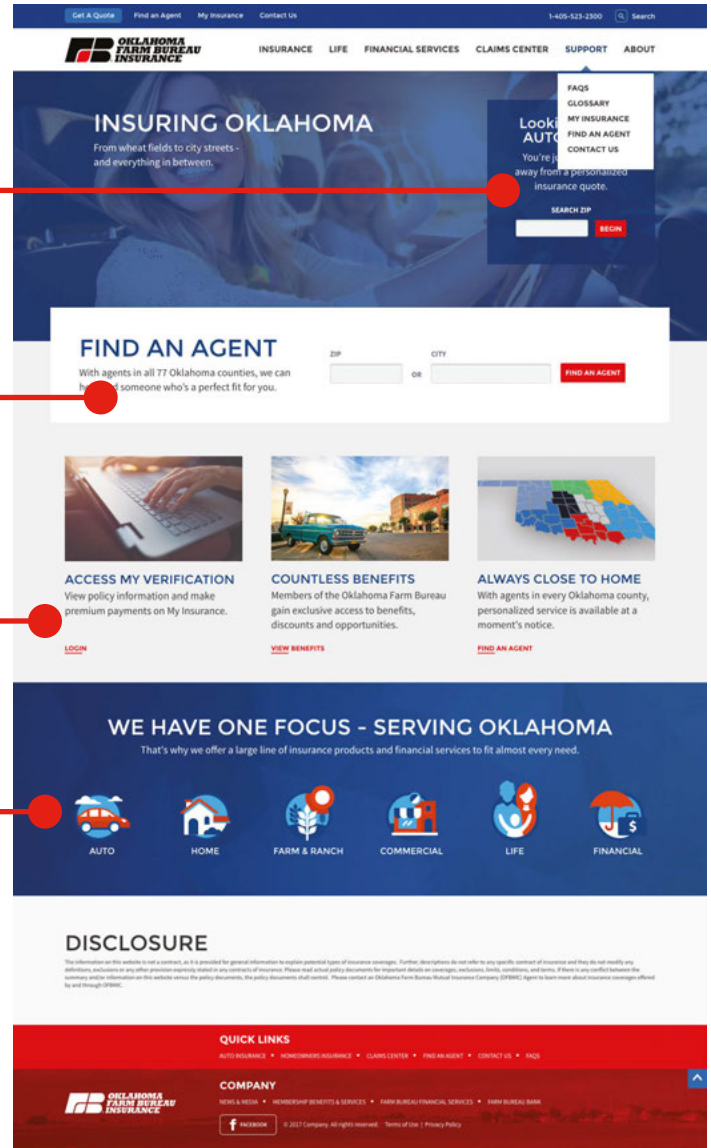
Not yet a policyholder with Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance? Simply enter your information and our website will connect you with one of our hometown-proud insurance agents.

MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT

If you need to view your coverage, pay your bill or update your information, you can log on to My Insurance and take care of these tasks and more.

VIEW OUR PRODUCTS

Check out the many lines of insurance products we offer, learn what each one covers and see how they can help manage risk.



CONSIDER THE BENEFITS



Grasshopper's Model 124V with a 48" deck is the perfect introduction to Grasshopper comfort, quality and durability. The mower combines powerful performance with a compact design ideal for tight-quarters mowing.

OKFB offers new Grasshopper mower member benefit

You work hard to keep your piece of America looking its best, so why not choose a mower made in the U.S. to take care of it?


Oklahoma Farm Bureau members can now receive a 15 percent discount on all Grasshopper makes and models as well as implements and accessories when purchased with a mower.

Made in America by hard-working people committed to craftsmanship, durability and attention to detail, Grasshopper mowers can help keep your piece of land looking its best. In addition,

these products are designed with the best features that make mowing easier, more productive and more powerful.

Sitting on the seat of a Grasshopper True ZeroTurn mower is enough to convince you because the company's engineers understand what it takes to stay alert and in control – all day if necessary – and still step off feeling energized. To take it a step further, they translate that understanding into features that make mowing easier, more productive and more powerful than imaginable.

To take advantage of this special members-only offer, simply present your OKFB membership card to your local dealer. Discounts must be redeemed at the time of purchase.

Grasshopper products are available through a worldwide network of knowledgeable, independent dealers offering sales, parts and service to turf care professionals, business and government entities, and discerning individuals. Find your local dealer on Grasshopper's website at grasshoppermower.com. 

For details on this member benefit and more, visit okfarmbureau.org/benefits.



What does your mower want to tell you?

Practicing regular maintenance will extend the life of your Grasshopper and keep it in optimal working order. Simply follow these steps recommended by Grasshopper:

Always check the engine oil

before starting the mower. Change the oil at recommended intervals using the proper grade of oil and always use OEM filters.

Check battery terminals and wiring

connections to make sure they are clean and fastened well.

Clean the mower after each mowing

using compressed air. Keep engine, mower deck and all other parts of the mower free from dirt and debris.

Check tire air pressure

before each mowing using a low-pressure tire gauge. Do not over-inflate.

Check belt tensions

and adjust as needed before each mowing. When replacements are needed, always use OEM belts.

Sharpen blades often

– at least after every eight hours of use.

Periodically check filter

between intervals in harsh or dusty operating environments.
NOTE: Do not over-service air filter. Service pre-filter more frequently. Always use OEM filters.

Protect your mower

from harsh elements by storing it in a shelter or under a cover.



Review these maintenance tips and learn more at grasshoppermower.com/maintenance-tips.

RISING TO THE OCCASION

BY CLARISSA WALTON

OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU THROUGH THE 1970^s AND 1980^s

The 1970s saw the beginning of a new era for Oklahoma Farm Bureau and its members. After several successes and challenges in the first 20 years, the organization entered a new decade with more experience and confidence. Leaders and members had harnessed the power of speaking as one voice for agriculture, and that voice would certainly be needed in the coming years.

A CHANGE IN FOCUS

“I think Farm Bureau will change. However agriculture changes, Farm Bureau will adapt to meet the needs.”
 – Eldon Merklin, OKFB vice president, 1980

OKFB leaders and members observed a gradual change in audience in their efforts to protect agriculture. In the early days of the organization, farmers and ranchers were the key audience in an effort to unite the entire spectrum of agriculture. Major efforts were designed to reach farmers and ranchers with timely information for discussion between Oklahomans in production agriculture. During the 1970s and 1980s, reaching the urban audience became much more important.

Legislative pressures to reduce funding for agriculture had begun to rise with legislators’ desires to please more urban constituents. International politics had created increased challenges in the arena of agricultural trade, leading to many people incorrectly blaming innocent farmers and ranchers for increasing food prices. With this negative view of American agriculture, the industry’s leaders were forced to defend

the need for agricultural funding and research.

As the spotlight intensified on agricultural issues, the animal rights movement began, criticizing the practices of farmers and ranchers throughout the nation with emotional arguments instead of science-based reasoning.

With the lack of agricultural ties to urban areas, OKFB recognized the need to use their newfound, united voice of farmers and ranchers to refute the lies from these groups. OKFB became a leader in agricultural media.

When issues concerning farmers and ranchers arose, media outlets turned to OKFB to speak for its members. OKFB leaders spoke with numerous local and national media to share the organization's policies along with the views of its members on a wide range of issues, such as agricultural pesticides, the cattle market, estate taxes, property rights, animal rights, education and more.

As this change in focus developed, OKFB became a better voice for agriculture, speaking to a much wider audience. The foresight of these leaders helped the organization to begin educating the public about agricultural practices and methods while sharing the personal stories of Oklahoma farmers and ranchers.

1970 | FIRST POLICY STAFFER
 OKFB hires the organization's first staff member to concentrate solely on pending legislation and pushing Farm Bureau policy forward.

1973 | TRAILER ID LAW PROPOSED
 To combat cattle rustling, OKFB members suggested livestock trailers be identified using the owner's drivers license numbers. The idea was adopted in Nov. 1973, then signed into law in April 1974, less than six months later.

1970

1971 | OFFICE ADDITION PLANNED
 OFBMIC begins another building program to add an adjoining structure approximately the same size as the one built in the 1950s.

1974

1973 | ESTATE TAX VICTORY
 Under pressure from OKFB, the Oklahoma Legislature passes a bill to raise the threshold of the estate tax.

LEGISLATIVE MILESTONES

"I don't think we'll ever solve all the problems for agriculture. Farmers have to be kept aware of some of the things that are going to happen to them down the road, and I think Farm Bureau is going to be a watchdog for us. Farm Bureau can do a more efficient job than we could do for ourselves as individuals."
– Phil Mannschreck, OKFB board member, 1980

During the 1970s and 1980s, Oklahoma Farm Bureau leaned on years of experience to achieve the organization's legislative goals. Speaking for farmers across the state, members led the charge at the Oklahoma state Capitol covering a myriad of agricultural and rural policy efforts.

One of these issues was a longtime OKFB public policy effort: sales tax exemptions. After a few successes in the 1960s, a sales tax exemption was granted to commercial applicators for fertilizer, poultry stock, seed, repair parts and agricultural chemicals in the early 1970s. After a 35-year-long effort, OKFB finally achieved a blanket exemption of farm inputs from sales taxes in 1978.

Another key issue was funding for rural roads. Living in rural areas, farmers struggled with severely degraded roads that received little to no funding for repairs from the government, unlike urban roads. In 1979, OKFB launched the "Roads Now" campaign, a coalition that was credited with securing the largest annual increase in road funding the state's history at the time of its passage. It also served as the beginning of a long-range, state-financed county bridge construction program.

Although ad valorem tax reform had a long history in OKFB resolutions, the issue became much more prominent in the 1970s and 1980s. OKFB joined with the Oklahoma Farmers Union and the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association to form a Tax Equality Committee in 1970, with the main goal of the group being a referendum on ad valorem assessments on "use value," and the removal of tax on personal property. In 1972, the committee obtained a referendum and the land use taxation passed in August of that year.

Under pressure from OKFB, the Oklahoma Legislature passed a bill in 1973 to raise the threshold of the estate tax.

Using the organization's accumulated knowledge and experience in dealing with ad valorem taxes, OKFB in



OKFB Executive Secretary Kenneth McFall (left) and OKFB President Lewis H. Munn review newspaper clippings of state and county Farm Bureau news and events.



Following the 1978 blanket exemption of agricultural inputs from state sales tax, OKFB helped spread the news of the exemptions to farmers and farm suppliers alike.

1974 | REWARD SIGN PROGRAM STARTS

OKFB offered its first reward signs to members, offering a \$500 cash reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of thieves, arsonists and vandals.



1977 | JAMES L. LOCKETT ELECTED

Lockett, an Osage County rancher was elected as the fourth president of OKFB.

1976

1975 | BILLY JARVIS ELECTED

The Seminole County farmer and rancher was elected to serve as OKFB's third president.



1978

1979 | "ROADS NOW" CAMPAIGN

OKFB kicks off the "Roads Now" campaign, securing an annual increase for Oklahoma road funding and the beginning of a long-range county bridge construction program.

1980 took the lead in arranging a conference to discuss and deal with the problems associated with implementing tax reforms.

The 1980s saw a string of legislative victories for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers, including water resources development and strengthening litter and trespass laws. In this decade, OKFB was also responsible for the passage of a bill to give farmers protection from nuisance suits filed because of normal odor, dust, or other conditions caused by their farming operations.

These two decades served as a significant challenge for the organization, battling a number of emerging legislative issues. After each success, another problem would arise. However, the 1970s and 1980s effectively showed the strength of the unified organization as OKFB continually defended the livelihoods of Oklahoma agriculturalists.

INCREASING MEMBER BENEFITS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

“A general farm organization is more apt to address problem areas that are of concern not only to agriculture but to the community, the business community, the farm and the family. There is always going to be a place for us. The more people that we can draw to our side to help fight these battles that really are everybody’s battles, the stronger agriculture will be.”
- Jim Lockett, OKFB president, 1980

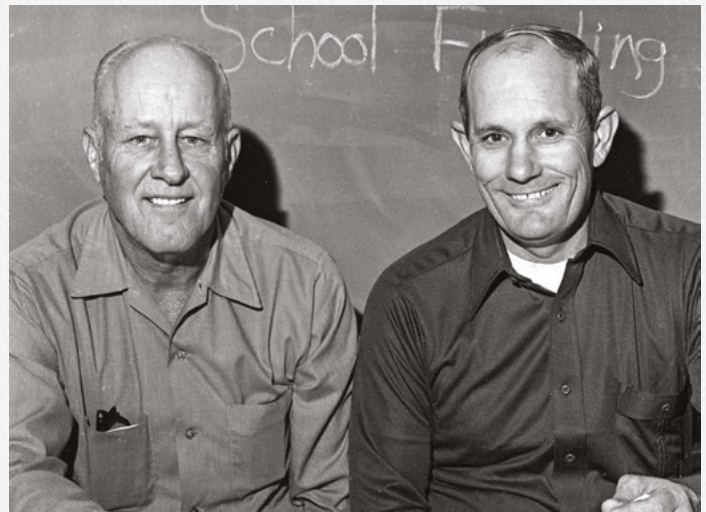
Although legislative issues became the primary goal in these two decades, OKFB continued to serve its membership with benefits and community activities.

One of the more well-known OKFB benefits got its start in 1974, when the reward sign program was formed. OKFB offered a \$500 reward for information on crimes committed on Farm Bureau members’ property where the signs were posted. Each member was given one free

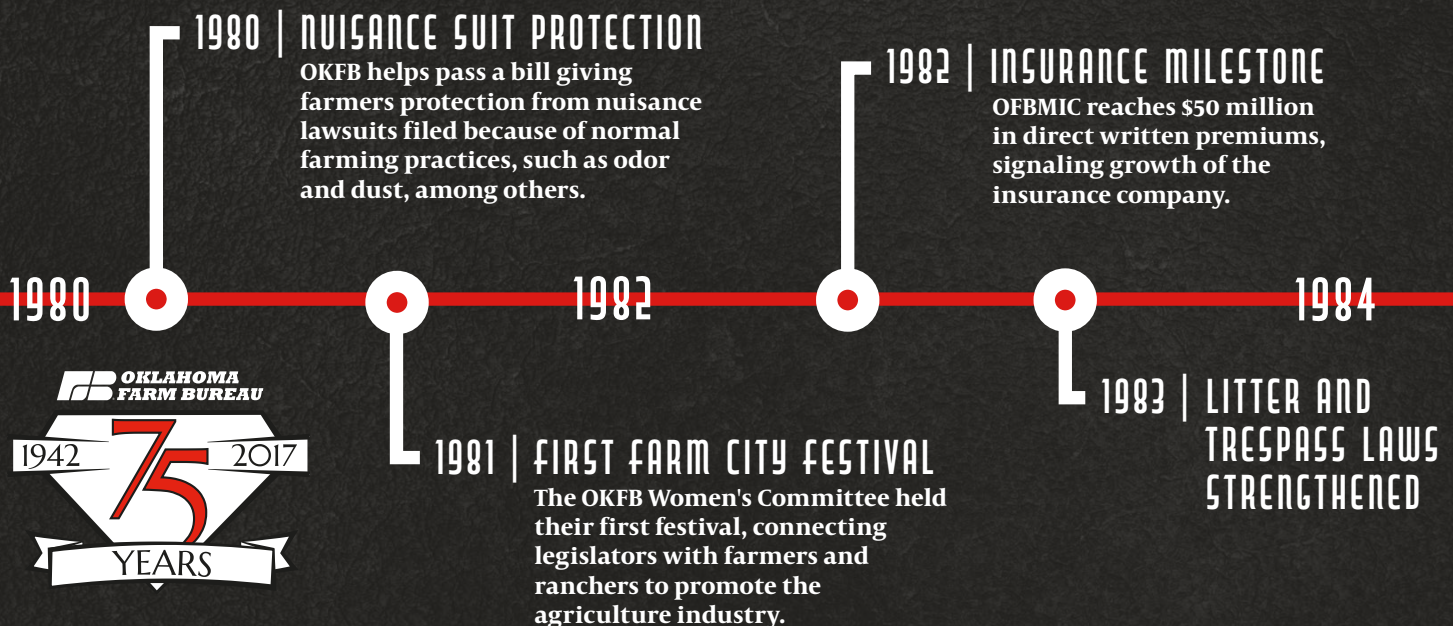
9-by-11-inch sign to mount on fences and gates. The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company purchased one engraving tool for each county Farm Bureau to be loaned without charge to members for permanently engraving the reward details on their property. The reward amount later increased to \$1,000 in 1988 and to \$5,000 in 2006.

In 1974, Oklahoma Farm Bureau kicked off the MEATCHEK program to encourage Farm Bureau members and Oklahoma consumers to purchase gift certificates redeemable for beef, pork, lamb or poultry at participating grocery stores. The program was designed as a positive approach to meat promotion to bolster the sagging livestock market. The promotion was held annually until 1992.

The beginning of a well-loved tradition also began in the 1980s with the first Farm City Festival, hosted by the OKFB Women’s Leadership Committee. Many women



This photo was taken during the 1978 resolutions meeting, where Oklahoma Farm Bureau members brought resolutions concerning issues such as rural roads and bridges, school funding, a statewide water plan and the probate code.



from across the state came to Oklahoma City with food items made from Oklahoma agricultural products to serve at a reception with legislators and state employees at the Oklahoma Capitol. The event was designed to help educate lawmakers and their staff about Oklahoma agriculture. This tradition continues to be one of the WLC's most popular activities.

First started in 1966, the OKFB Safety Services Department continued to be a popular part of the organization in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to defensive driving courses, youth safety seminars, promoting Slow Moving Vehicle signs, and more, the department began offering high-quality smoke and heat detectors for members' homes at a reasonable cost in 1975. Originally sold for almost \$90, the detectors were offered to OKFB members for \$22 at county offices along with discounted fire extinguishers, snake bite kits, first-aid kits and trouble lights.




Attentions increasingly turned to national policy efforts, and legislative visits to Washington, D.C., such as this 1982 trip, directly connected OKFB members with Oklahoma's congressional delegation and their staff.

LOOKING FORWARD

"We are reaching a stage in our knowledge within the organization to make changes more easily and more rapidly, to adjust to changing times because of our communications. We have much quicker, much better means of communicating than we had before."

- Ken Qualls, OKFB board member, 1980

When compared to the early years of the organization, OKFB was much different by the end of the 1980s. The organization had successfully navigated 20 years of significant changes in both the view of agriculture and American culture. Although these years presented a substantial amount of challenges for farming and ranching, OKFB leaders and members accumulated a wealth of knowledge that would be invaluable as the turn of the century approached. 



Telling the agriculture story through the news media connected OKFB members with consumers, such as during this 1975 KTEW-TV shoot with Eugene and Chester Conrad near Bixby focusing on agrochemicals.

1986 | FARM DEBT RESTRUCTURING PLAN

OKFB President Lockett unveils a proposal for a two-tiered debt restructuring plan for agriculture producers to Oklahoma media, playing a major role in a national effort to provide financial relief to farmers facing the threat of liquidation.

1986

1985 | FUEL TAX INTERVENTION

After the Legislature raised the gasoline tax by a dime, the OKFB works to see that \$22 million of the revenue is dedicated to rural roads.

1987 | BRUCELLOSIS BILL PASSED

OKFB helps pass a bill giving the State Board of Agriculture authority to inspect trailers carrying livestock into the state for brucellosis eradication purposes, an issue first addressed by OKFB delegates in 1946.

1988

1988 | REWARD PROGRAM INCREASE

The reward amount for OKFB's reward sign program increases from \$500 to \$1000.

It's a bird. It's a plane. It's the future.

Unmanned aerial vehicles offer agricultural producers a new type of “boots on the ground” management tool.

On a cold, but sunny October day, nearly 100 4-H students filed into the Ardmore Convention Center for their Southeast District Leadership Conference. What would be a day filled with leadership development exercises would also be a day they learned about the importance of technology in agriculture.

After the opening welcome, students broke into small groups for workshops. Frank Hardin, Ph.D., Noble Academy educational outreach manager, introduced himself and three other unmanned aerial vehicle specialists who discussed the importance of UAV technology in agriculture.

“This technology has the potential to be a useful tool in agriculture,” Hardin said. “We want to get students more interested in technology and how various tools can be applied to agriculture in the future.”

Afterwards, Hardin and Mike Komp, Noble Research Institute spatial technology services supervisor, led the students

out to the parking lot for some hands-on demonstrations with the UAVs, also called drones. “They are fun to operate,” Komp said. “It’s also incredible what one can do and the data it provides.”

Sky-high Possibilities

UAVs are a multidisciplinary research and operational tool. The Noble Research Institute spatial technology services team use UAVs to assist researchers with various types of research projects. UAV imagery allows researchers to acquire higher quality data more often, and it is less expensive to use than other large-scale aerial imagery technology. UAVs collect thousands of images to help researchers analyze different eco-sites and changes.

“We are taking images that were once acquired from ground level or low frequency satellites at a more effective rate,” Komp said. “This allows researchers, and ultimately producers, to make more timely decisions for less money.”

The technology can also be used for

operational resource management, such as taking inventory of equipment and forage, locating and counting cattle, and better control of prescribed burns.

“A cattle rancher could count actual hay bales by flying a UAV over the property,” said Mike Proctor, Noble Research Institute agriculture research associate. “The rancher could then look at future projections of hay needs by knowing how much was available in the beginning and how much is left over.”

In turn, being able to evaluate forage quality and availability would help the rancher better manage the cattle’s nutrition needs. “It’s important for us to provide ways for producers to be good stewards of their resources,” Proctor said.

Other metrics can be collected with UAVs such as identifying pecan trees from other vegetation. An aerial view of the tree tops allows researchers to analyze the treatment effects to develop a better disease and pest management plan.

Additional types of data can be acquired through sensors that are attached to UAVs. Different sensors capture various types of images that help researchers gather and analyze data. Currently, only a few sensors are available, but these are already showing benefit by allowing landowners to collect rainfall amounts across a property or determine water profiles in a source.

“Collecting a pond’s volume and surface area is normally a tedious procedure,” Proctor said. “But with UAVs, we can directly measure the surface area; and along with lidar data, we can estimate pond volume easily and quickly.”

Finding time to properly manage difficult-to-access properties can be a headache for land managers. With UAVs, they can remotely check on the property fences, cattle, vegetation, etc. without



Unmanned aerial vehicles have improved researchers' ability to study cotton root rot in alfalfa fields. UAVs also hold potential for other agricultural applications.



having to physically be on the property.

Another effective technique in land resource management is prescribed burning. Many landowners look past it because of the many unknowns that come with it. “It’s hard to judge what the fire is actually doing and how much smoke is being emitted from our eyesight at ground level,” Proctor said. “Flying a UAV above a prescribed burn allows us to see what is going on in the whole burn area. Aerial views let us look for any hot spots near our fire breaks after a burn, which is a huge benefit in itself.”

Putting It to the Test

The Noble Research Institute’s use of large-scale aerial imagery began in 2014 with a cotton root rot study using very-large-scale aerial imagery. The images and data collected with this technology allowed Carolyn Young, Ph.D., Noble Research Institute plant pathologist and mycologist, to begin studies of the cotton root rot disease in alfalfa fields.

When UAVs entered the research market, the Noble Research Institute acquired one to further the use in current and future research projects. The switch to UAV from VLSA data provides researchers with more data and images to analyze. In order for Young and her laboratory to help agricultural producers manage cotton root rot, they need to see the disease in an alfalfa field from a bird’s-eye view.

Cotton root rot is a soil-borne disease, meaning it is always in the soil. However, it is only active in the summer months. Different sensors on the UAVs allow Young to analyze various environmental conditions such as soil temperature and depth, and rainfall amount, to help determine the disease’s peak time.

“We have to understand all potential effects of the disease in order to get

ahead of it and work on a control method,” Young said. “We need all the pieces to fit together before we can provide a management prescription to agricultural producers.”

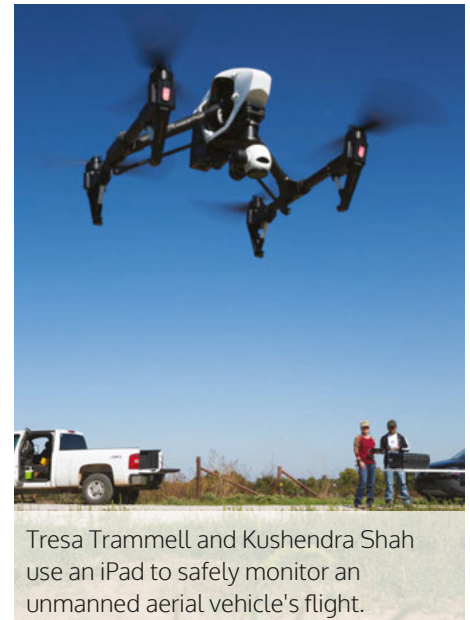
In 2015, the Noble Research Institute (known then as the Noble Foundation) brought together existing research programs that strive to answer producer questions through research related to the sustainability of agriculture production systems in the Southern Great Plains. Technology plays an integral role in improving agricultural systems.

“We have a special opportunity to incorporate UAVs into our research and operational efforts at the Noble Research Institute,” said Evan Whitley, Ph.D., researcher. “Through projects conducted on our research farms, we are able to incorporate this technology and learn ways UAVs can benefit agricultural producers.”

While new technologies can be excellent tools for agricultural producers, they can be expensive to adopt. Producers may not have the time or resources to comprehensively look into a specific new technology and how it might benefit their operation, especially since so many new technologies are constantly being developed. The Noble Research Institute has the resources and capabilities to vet these new technologies and provide this information to producers.

Continuing to Learn

Building off of the current research uses, the Noble Research Institute is working to develop and incorporate new data-rich tools, such as UAV images, to help determine stocking rates and carrying capacities, and to support grazing program development for producers in the organization’s consultation program. These tools will not take decision-making out of producers’ hands.




Tresa Trammell and Kushendra Shah use an iPad to safely monitor an unmanned aerial vehicle’s flight.

Instead, it will provide them with consistent data and information to make effective decisions quicker.

“It’s exciting to see what opportunities this technology holds for rangelands,” Komp said. “The row crop industry is already using UAVs, but rangelands are much more complex and diverse. UAVs will benefit more people and land as technology improves.”

The Noble Research Institute UAV specialists will continue learning the technology to broaden its use across the organization and research farms.

“There is a considerable wow factor to UAV technology,” Whitley said. “But we aren’t quite there yet to recommend producers go out and get one. We don’t want to look at these areas through a tunnel. It is important to look at agricultural systems on a broader level, and we want to conduct research with the awareness that one area will impact many others. But it’s clear this technology has come a long way. It’s a new type of ‘boots on the ground.’” 

OKFB members visit EPA Administrator Pruitt, Congress in Washington, D.C.

Oklahoma family farmers and ranchers experienced a new excitement in Washington, D.C., during the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Congressional Action Tour March 28 through April 2.

OKFB members for years have traveled to Washington, D.C., to fight excessive regulations from the federal government. With a change in administration, OKFB members left the nation's Capitol optimistic for the first time in years.

The trip began on a high note with a visit to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to see Oklahoma native EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

Only a few months into his tenure as administrator, Pruitt worked to rescind and review onerous regulations like the Waters of the U.S. rule and the Clean Power Plan.

"You know what's wonderful? You all are spending time at the EPA and you're still smiling," Pruitt said, speaking to

OKFB members.

Pruitt outlined for members his priorities as head of the EPA, which include improving the rulemaking process, following the law, and working alongside states and stakeholders.

"If my fellow farmers and ranchers across the country don't get excited about Scott Pruitt, I'm not sure what will excite them," said Tom Buchanan, OKFB president.

Farm Bureau members also met with Sen. Jim Inhofe and Sen. James Lankford, along with Rep. Jim Bridenstine, Rep. Tom Cole, Rep. Frank Lucas, Rep. Markwayne Mullin and Rep. Steve Russell. Each carried a message of confidence and hopefulness under the new administration.

Sen. Jim Inhofe spoke of the eight Congressional Review Acts passed to repeal many Obama-era regulations like WOTUS. A longtime advocate for infrastructure, Inhofe commended

Farm Bureau members for their commitment to water infrastructure and emphasized it as a priority for President Donald Trump.

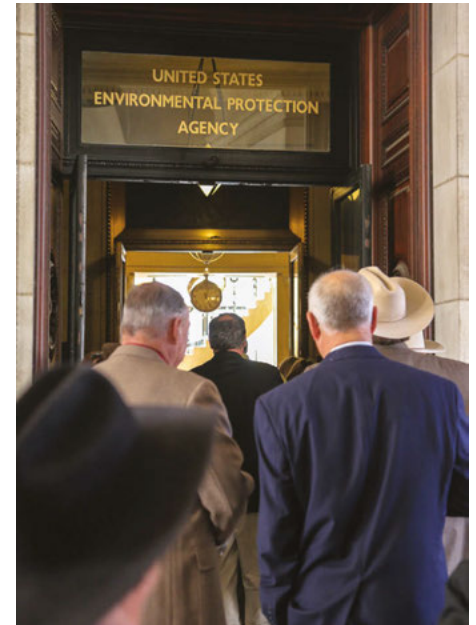
Despite a setback with repeal and replace of the Affordable Care Act, Oklahoma Congressmen reassured members that healthcare reform is still in the works. A repeal of the ACA would free up billions of dollars for other priority items like tax reform, the farm bill and infrastructure.

"Washington, D.C., is open for business," said OKFB's John Collison. "Farm Bureau members now have an incredible opportunity to work alongside the new administration in crafting policy that works for them."

OKFB members ended the trip with a two-day visit to Annapolis, Maryland, which included a tour of the U.S. Naval Academy. View more photos from the trip on the OKFB Flickr page.



OKFB members visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to see Oklahoma native EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.



Above left: Sen. Jim Inhofe shares his work alongside President Trump to repeal regulations like WOTUS and the Clean Power Plan. Above right: OKFB members make their way to the EPA in Washington, D.C., for the first visit of the Congressional Action Tour. Left: Sen. James Lankford discusses relief for Oklahoma wildfire victims, among various other issues. Below left: Rep. Frank Lucas speaks with OKFB members about upcoming issues affecting Oklahoma agriculture. Below right: Oklahoma native EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt speaks to OKFB members about his work to rescind and review onerous regulations.



OKFB commodity tour visits south-central Oklahoma

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members traveled to the heart of the Arbuckles in central Oklahoma during the OKFB Commodity Tour May 3-5.

Nearly 60 farmers and ranchers from across the state participated in the three-day tour, which focused on agriculture in south-central Oklahoma.

The tour first visited Valley View Pecans, a Shawnee-based company owned and operated by an OKFB family: John, Janice and Josh Grundmann. In addition to processing small and large batches of pecans, the company's gift shop offers a wide variety of delicious pecan treats.

Next, members visited Leroy O'Dell's farm located just south of Asher. O'Dell gave an overview of the family's history and information about their show cattle business, followed by a brisket lunch sponsored by the O'Dells. Across the road, Leroy's son Brett led members on a tour of his farm where he sells registered Angus bulls.

Next, members traveled a few minutes down the road to Big Creek Events, founded in 2015 by the Bond family. Several types of events are held at the center, including weddings, parties and more. Members had the opportunity to tour the beautiful interior of the main building as Darren Bond, the building designer, explained the purpose of the design: to inspire creativity and celebrate beauty and art.

After visiting the Artesian Hotel located in Sulphur, members browsed through unique and local shops before

visiting the Rusty Nail Winery for dinner. Wes Hilliard, former representative of Oklahoma House District 22, welcomed OKFB members as they enjoyed a steak dinner sponsored by Murray County Farm Bureau.

The second day kicked off with a tour of Oklahoma Steel and Wire, a family-owned-and-operated manufacturing facility located in Madill. Founded in 1979, the company produces a variety of wire products, including horse panels, field fence, barbed wire, poultry netting and more.

Next, members traveled to the Noble Research Institute's Red River Farm located in Love County. After a welcome lunch, the group heard about the future of sustainable beef and systems-based beef management.

The last stop for the day was a crawfish farm owned by Sam Barrick,

an Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance agent in Love County. For dinner, Barrick sponsored a crawfish boil with shrimp and vegetables.

Friday morning began by driving through the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, located in the foothills of the Arbuckle Mountains near Sulphur. Members also had the chance to taste water from the famed Vendome Well, which produces small amounts of hydrogen sulfide gas.

The final stop of the tour was the Chickasaw Cultural Center, a state-of-the-art facility featuring exhibits and artifacts for visitors to learn about Native American culture and history. Members toured the Chikasha Poya Exhibit Center, including the inspiring Spirit Forest and interactive demonstrations. Afterward, the group was served a traditional American Indian meal.



Top: Members tour the Chikasha Poya Exhibit Center to learn about Native American culture and history. Above left: OKFB members listen as Josh Grundmann demonstrates how pecans are processed. Above right: Brett O'Dell explains the day-to-day operations of the farm to OKFB members.



Top: More than 50 OKFB members visit south-central Oklahoma during the 2017 OKFB Commodity Tour, an annual three-day event. Above left: Evan Whitley, researcher at the Noble Research Institute, speaks to OKFB members about systems-based beef management. Below left: OKFB members tour the Oklahoma Steel and Wire, learning the process of making a variety of wire products. Above right: Sam Barrick explains his interest in crawfish and an overview of how his crawfish are raised. Below right: Leroy O'Dell tells members about the history of his family and their show cattle business.



Oklahoma Farm Bureau supports agriculture youth as Oklahoma State FFA convention sponsor

Oklahoma Farm Bureau was proud to support Oklahoma's agricultural youth as a title sponsor of the Oklahoma FFA Association's 91st State FFA Convention and Career Show May 2-3 in downtown Oklahoma City.

With more than 10,000 FFA members, advisors and guests in attendance, the two-day convention featured member and chapter award presentations, leadership and career development workshops, a career show and more.

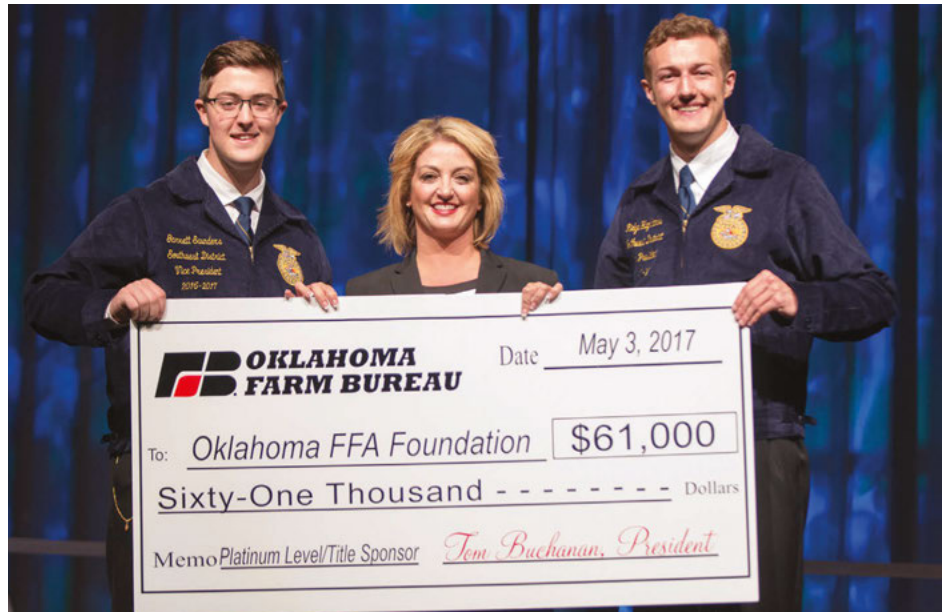
"Investing in our state's young people is one of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's most important endeavors," said Monica Wilke, OKFB executive director. "As a former member, I've both experienced and witnessed the positive impact FFA has on students."

A longtime supporter of Oklahoma FFA, OKFB believes in the organization's commitment to preparing and cultivating the state's next generation of leaders.

"Farm Bureau is always looking to recruit leaders who know how to serve," Wilke said, speaking to FFA members. "When asked to support Oklahoma FFA, our answer always will unequivocally be yes."

FFA is a national organization dedicated to youth leadership development through agricultural education. The Oklahoma FFA Association has 357 chapters with more than 27,000 high school members.

Learn more about Oklahoma FFA at www.okffa.org.



Top: OKFB Executive Director Monica Wilke presents OKFB's platinum-level title sponsorship check to Oklahoma FFA state officers. Above left: OKFB YF&R members man the Farm Bureau booth at the trade show during the convention. Above right: Kacy Holland of the Harrah FFA Chapter wins the OKFB YF&R iPad giveaway after several FFA members entered by visiting the Farm Bureau booth in the convention trade show.

Oklahoma teacher selected for educator scholarship

Zena Lewis, a teacher from Owasso Public Schools, was selected by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture as one of 11 educators to receive a \$1,500 scholarship to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference.

Sponsored by the Foundation's White-Reinhardt Fund for Education in cooperation with the American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, the scholarship is awarded to educators for their exceptional efforts to encourage agricultural literacy. Scholarship recipients were judged on past use of innovative programs to educate students

about agriculture as well as plans to implement information gained at the AITC conference in their own lesson plans and to share the information with other teacher and volunteer educators.

The NAITC Conference helps educators from across the nation learn how to incorporate real-life agricultural applications into science, social studies, language arts, math and nutrition lessons. In addition, the conference brings together a diverse group of organizations and speakers to showcase their successful programs, address how to improve agricultural education and literacy and offer educational

materials. The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry coordinates the AITC program in the state with the goal of helping students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society.

The American Farm Bureau Federation and state Farm Bureaus also support and participate in the program's efforts. The White-Reinhardt Fund for Education honors two former American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee chairwomen, Berta White and Linda Reinhardt, who were leaders in early national efforts to improve agricultural literacy of the public.

High school seniors attend Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference

Ten Oklahoma high school seniors spent three days learning about leadership, team building and agriculture at the sixth-annual Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference June 14-16 in Oklahoma City.

The ten students were:

- Cheyenne Britt of Tulsa County
- Rayli Cunningham of Harper County
- Karson Dodd of Cotton County
- Halle Hartman of Beckham County

- Anna Jeffrey of Canadian County
- Gracie Norris of Rogers County
- Alisa Northcutt of Johnston County
- Murray Powers of Stephens County
- Blake Runner of Rogers County
- Bralea White of Cotton County

Hosted by Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, the OYLA conference is designed to prepare high school students for a future career in agriculture and to advance

youth leadership.

"These high school seniors are some of Oklahoma's most promising agriculturalists," said Zac Swartz, OKFB YF&R coordinator. "We hope these students will continue to be involved in Oklahoma agriculture and Oklahoma Farm Bureau."

The group learned about working with the media, tips for success in college, the importance of legislative involvement and how to take agriculture back to their classrooms. Students also enjoyed tours at Lopez foods in Oklahoma City, where they learned how food reaches their tables, and the Oklahoma State Capitol with Sen. Chris Kidd, who shared his experience in crafting policy in the state Legislature.

"We had great activities for this year's group," Swartz said. "These tours and sessions will help students further their career goals through enhanced leadership training and education."

The students attending the conference have a wide variety of agricultural career interests and are choosing degrees spanning the agriculture spectrum, including business, pre-law, agricultural communications, marketing, pre-medicine, animal science, engineering, agricultural education, agricultural economics and pre-vet.

Participants of the conference were selected through an application process.

For more photos, find the link to the OYLA Flickr album on the OKFB website.



Above: The 2017 Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture participants were (left to right) Murray Powers, Halle Hartman, Bralea White, Gracie Norris, Alisa Northcutt, Karson Dodd, Cheyenne Britt, Rayli Cunningham, Anna Jeffrey and Blake Runner. Below left: OKFB President Tom Buchanan speaks to students about the importance of the organization and how OKFB continues to serve farmers and ranchers. Below right: OYLA attendees listen as Sen. Chris Kidd explains how policy is created in the Legislature.



OKFB names Yates, Mielke, Nemecek, Irvin to new roles

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently named several new roles within the organization.

Mark Yates was named vice president of field services and membership recruitment. In his new role, Yates will work alongside field services directors and county Farm Bureaus to develop and enhance member engagement and involvement.

“I am confident in Mark’s ability to lead field services directors as they fulfill the vital role of communicating with county Farm Bureau leaders and members,” said Monica Wilke, Oklahoma Farm Bureau executive director. “In his new position, Mark will help guarantee a bright future for our organization by working side-by-side with county Farm Bureaus to strengthen and broaden their membership.”

Yates began his OKFB career in 2016 as director of field operations for the public policy division, where he worked to educate urban communities about agriculture and Farm Bureau at various community and civic organizations.

“Farm Bureau would be nothing without its members,” Yates said. “I look forward to creating new and innovative membership initiatives as we continue to fulfill our mission of improving the lives of rural Oklahomans.”

Oklahoma Farm Bureau also recently named Dustin Mielke and Hannah Nemecek as senior directors of communications.

“As the voice of Oklahoma agriculture, communicating with members and the public is critical to the success of Farm Bureau,” said Monica Wilke, OKFB executive director. “Dustin and Hannah have done a tremendous job, and will continue to do so as they work to enhance our various communications efforts.”

Mielke was promoted to senior director of corporate communications. In his new role, Mielke will drive communications to OKFB members regarding organizational services and programs. He also will continue in his visual communications role. A member of the OKFB communications staff since 2006, Mielke most recently served as director of corporate communications.

“Sharing agriculture’s story has



Mark Yates



Dustin Mielke



Hannah Nemecek



Marcia Irvin

been a longtime passion of mine, and I’m excited to continue that work for our Farm Bureau members in a new capacity,” Mielke said. “We have so many great things happening in Oklahoma agriculture and Oklahoma Farm Bureau, and it is vitally important we share these stories to ensure our industry thrives into the future.”

Nemecek was named senior director of policy communications. In the new position, she will lead Farm Bureau messaging on state and national policy issues as she also maintains and improves the visuals of OKFB’s legislative efforts.

“Now more than ever, elected officials and the public must understand the needs of agriculture and rural Oklahoma,” Nemecek said. “I’m eager to continue providing a voice for farmers and ranchers at the state Capitol, in Washington, D.C., and beyond.”

In addition, Oklahoma Farm Bureau

recently promoted Marcia Irvin to senior director of membership and organization. In her new position, she will oversee membership programs including the Women’s Leadership Committee, Young Farmers and Ranchers, safety services and commodities programs.

“Farm Bureau’s various programs provide an outlet for our members to help us in our mission of improving the lives of rural Oklahomans,” Irvin said. “I’m excited about this new opportunity as our organization moves forward.”

Irvin began her career with OKFB in 1977, and has served the organization in a variety of capacities.

“Marcia has served Farm Bureau faithfully for more than 40 years,” Wilke said. “I know she will continue to improve our membership programs and offerings.”

Irvin grew up in Spencer, Oklahoma, and earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Central Oklahoma.

2017 Young Farmers & Ranchers Golf Tournament raises funds for legal foundation

More than \$10,000 was raised for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Legal Foundation during the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Golf Tournament on Friday, May 12 at the Silverhorn Golf Club in Oklahoma City.

More than 70 golfers making up approximately 20 teams played in the annual scramble-style tournament.

“We had a lot of fun at this year’s golf tournament, and we’re thankful for everyone’s contributions to the legal foundation,” said Travis Schnaithman, YF&R chairman. “We hope our donations will help the foundation continue to defend Oklahoma’s farmers and ranchers in future legal issues.”

The winning team included golfers Trevor Barnes, Roy Blevins and Nevada Cole hitting a 57 on the course.

A tiebreaker was held to separate the second- and third-place teams, both of which turned in a score of 58. Winning the tiebreaker for second place was the Alfalfa County Farm Bureau team, which included golfers Terry Ryel, Damon Hawkins, Eric Smith and Chad Kisling. Third place was awarded to the Texas



The OKFB Young Farmers & Ranchers committee presents LeeAnna McNally with a \$10,000 check to the OKFB Legal Foundation as attendees stand in the background.

County Farm Bureau team with Cory Winters, Zach Homer, Brian Hough and Chad Blackmore.

The OKFB Legal Foundation was created in 2001 by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Board of Directors for the purpose of entering the legal arena to protect private property rights and production agriculture. The foundation strives to serve farmers and ranchers through

engaging in public interest litigation, researching legal issues affecting family farmers and rural Oklahomans, and educating farmers and ranchers and the public about issues important to agriculture. For more information about the legal foundation, visit www.ofblegalfoundation.org.

To see additional photos from the event, visit flickr.com/okfarmbureau.

Oklahoma County Farm Bureau celebrates new office

Oklahoma County Farm Bureau hosted an open house and ribbon cutting to celebrate their new location in Edmond on March 29.

In an effort to better serve their members, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau recently moved to a new office located at 2924 Astoria Way, Suite 100, Edmond, OK 73034. The office location is on Coltrane between 15th Street and 2nd Street, just west of Highway 35. Directions may not appear in any maps yet.

Although their office phone number will remain (405) 525-2607, they have a new fax number: (405) 340-5028.

Members and non-members were invited to attend the open house and enjoy refreshments and drinks.

Right: Oklahoma County Farm Bureau celebrates its new office location with a ribbon cutting held March 29.

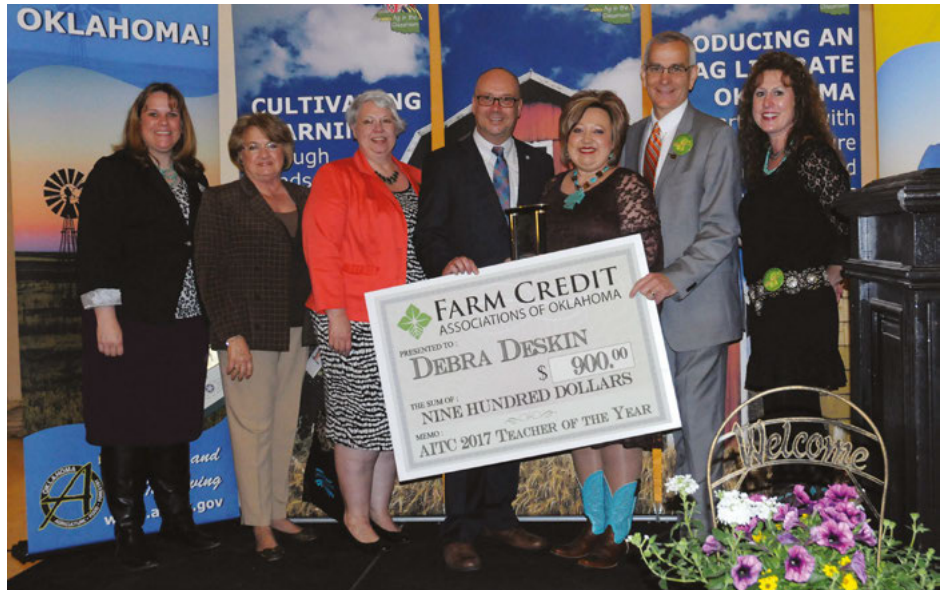


Farm Bureau women award AITC teacher of the year with gift card for school supplies

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee presented Debra Deskin, Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom's 2017 teacher of the year, with a gift card to help purchase school supplies during Ag Day at the Capitol Wednesday, March 29 in Oklahoma City.

Deskin, a second-grade teacher at Orvis Risner Elementary in Edmond with more than 13 years of teaching experience, brings agriculture into the classroom using lessons from the AITC curriculum. In the past, she has presented at two national AITC conferences and four state AITC conferences. In addition, she was selected as an Oklahoma AITC Teacher of the Year finalist three times in the past.

The Ag Day at the Capitol event recognized the Teacher of the Year along with winners of the 2017 AITC "Agriculture Puts the Puzzle Together" contest. The OKFB WLC donated gift cards to the other winners to be used to purchase school supplies.



Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Chair Kitty Beavers (second from left) joins other supporters in congratulating Debra Deskin, Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom's 2017 Teacher of the Year (third from right) during the Ag Day celebration at the Oklahoma State Capitol. Photo courtesy of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry.

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Oklahoma Farm Bureau supports ag youth at 2017 Oklahoma Youth Expo Sale of Champions

Oklahoma Farm Bureau purchased premiums on livestock as the organization supported Oklahoma's agriculture youth during the 2017 Oklahoma Youth Expo Sale of Champions Friday, March 17 in Oklahoma City.

Before the start of the 2017 sale, OKFB received the 2016 OYE volume buyer award for purchasing the most premiums at the 2016 sale with 34 animals.

This year, OKFB partnered with fellow agricultural and rural organizations and individuals in purchasing the premiums for 27 animals.

"We are proud to be supporters of such a great opportunity for Oklahoma's rural youth," said Tom Buchanan, OKFB president. "We understand the skills learned through showing livestock, such as responsibility, record keeping and time management, is integral for the future success of these young agriculturalists."

OKFB also purchased the chalice for the grand champion steer, shown by Tommy Glover of Elgin 4-H.

During the Sale of Champions, a special auction raised \$60,000 in an effort to help with wildfire relief efforts. The steer was donated by the family of state Sen. Eddie Fields.

The 2017 OYE premium sale raised \$1.15 million for students across the state who showed their livestock at the annual expo. The Grand Champion Steer topped the sale with \$75,000.

Right: OKFB purchases the chalice for the grand champion steer, shown by Tommy Glover of Elgin 4-H. Below: OKFB receives the 2016 Volume Buyer Award at the Oklahoma Youth Expo.



2017 YF&R scholarship winners announced

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers selected nine Oklahoma high school students to receive \$1,000 scholarships to study agriculture at an institution of higher education in Oklahoma.

"Agriculture plays such an important role in Oklahoma, and our Young Farmers & Ranchers committee is honored to help Oklahoma students continue their passion for agriculture," said Travis Schnaithman, OKFB YF&R Chairman. "We hope this scholarship will help develop the next generation of agriculturalists who will go on to create the future of our industry."

The nine students receiving 2017 YF&R

scholarships are:

- Anna Blasdel, OKFB district one
- Luke Muller, OKFB district two
- Macy Griffin, OKFB district three
- McKenna Laminack, OKFB district four
- Rhiannon Wyma, OKFB district five
- Grant Hubbard, OKFB district six
- Brooklan Taylor Light, OKFB district seven
- Shyann McWhirter, OKFB district eight
- Kohl Murray, OKFB district nine

The nine students receiving scholarships have a wide variety of agricultural career interests and are choosing degrees spanning the agriculture spectrum, including plant and soil science, agricultural economics,

parks and recreation management, agricultural communications, agribusiness, agricultural law, agricultural education, and plant biotechnology.

Students plan to study at a variety of Oklahoma higher-education institutions, including Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Northeastern A&M College and Connors State College.

The OKFB YF&R committee awards \$1,000 scholarships each year to graduating high school seniors who plan to study agriculture at an Oklahoma institution of higher learning. The scholarship program is open to voting members of Oklahoma Farm Bureau.

OKFB Young Farmers & Ranchers host legislative day

Young agricultural leaders from across the state attended this year's Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers' Legislative Day, held April 9-10, as a way to personally meet with members of the state Legislature and learn more about the issues being discussed at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

To kickoff the event, attendees met on Sunday at Top Golf to perfect their golf swings while visiting with state legislators and other YF&R members.

After meeting at the OKFB home office for a short legislative briefing on Tuesday morning, YF&R members visited the Capitol to sit in on the Senate General Government Committee meeting as it heard HB 1347, a bill that would give municipalities the ability to increase ad valorem taxes to fund public safety.

The group also heard from Sen. Bryce Marlatt over lunch, and ended the day by visiting their legislators.



Top right: Justin Maxey, YF&R District 6 committee member from Delaware County, takes a swing at Top Golf. Above left: Attendees visit the state Capitol to urge a no vote on HB 1374 during the Senate General Government Committee meeting. Above right: Sen. Bryce Marlatt speaks to the group about the importance of calling and visiting legislators about agricultural issues.

OKFB WLC provide lunch for legislators during 2017 Farm City Festival

Legislators at the state Capitol received a steak and baked potato lunch last week, courtesy of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee during the Farm City Festival.

Each year, the WLC state committee members provide legislators with a delicious lunch to help educate state legislators about agriculture.

"We want our legislators to remember where their food and fiber comes from and the importance of agriculture," said Kitty Beavers, OKFB WLC chairman from Stephens County. 00254202 "Agriculture provides everything from food, clothing, shelter, medicine and so much more. We want them to stay aware of that; the only way to do that is to keep in contact with them."

County WLC members helped donate money to provide the meals, which was hand-delivered by the state WLC.



OKFB WLC members deliver steak and baked potato lunches at the state Capitol for the annual Farm City Festival. Pictured left to right are Brenda Nobles, Rep. Dennis Casey, Margaret Ann Kinder, Mary Sloan and Rep. Earl Sears.

"Farm City Festival is our way of showing our legislators we're here, we're present, and we appreciate them,"

Beavers said. "When we contact them on a bill or issue, they're more receptive to us if they know us and see what we do."

Oklahoma Farm Bureau praises Sonny Perdue confirmation as Secretary of Agriculture

Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Tom Buchanan issued the following statement following the U.S. Senate's 87-11 vote to confirm former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.



"Oklahoma Farm Bureau today congratulates Sonny Perdue on his vital new role as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Now more than ever, farmers and ranchers need a powerful voice for agriculture in Washington, D.C. As a farmer and agribusinessman, Perdue understands firsthand the needs and challenges facing agriculture and rural America. We have faith Perdue will work hard on behalf of farmers, ranchers and consumers across the country.

"We also commend Sen. Jim Inhofe and Sen. James Lankford for their support of Perdue and American farmers and ranchers."



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www.ALittleFartherWest.com

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September 30 -

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580-768-5559 for more information
www.GeneAutryOKMuseum.org

Payne County Farm Bureau donates to wildfire relief

Payne County Farm Bureau board member and Perkins-Tryon High School FFA advisor Brad Chapman and his FFA students joined other county board members and the Railroad Yard, Inc., to donate to northwest Oklahoma wildfire relief.

The county Farm Bureau purchased \$1,000 worth of pipe, which the FFA class welded into H braces on April 6 to help rebuild destroyed fences. The Railroad Yard, Inc., helped with delivery to northwest Oklahoma.

An estimated 1.4 million acres of land was burned during the wildfires in early March, devastating farmers and ranchers throughout northwest Oklahoma, Texas



Members of the Perkins-Tryon FFA Chapter weld H braces in an effort to help rebuild miles of fences destroyed in wildfires in northwest Oklahoma. *Courtesy photo.*

and Kansas. Since then, donations and volunteers poured in from all corners of the state and nation.

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Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation helps bring new conservation award program to Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, the Noble Research Institute, and ITC Holdings Corp., in partnership with the Sand County Foundation, are bringing the Leopold Conservation Award® program to Oklahoma.

"Governor Mary Fallin is pleased that our agriculture community has come together to bring the Leopold Conservation Award to Oklahoma," said Jim Reese, Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture. "Farmers and ranchers in our state have long been leaders in conservation. From our early beginnings with the Dust Bowl to today, each generation has strived to leave the land better than they found it. Through this award, we will recognize an exceptional family and thank them for their contributions to a better Oklahoma."

The Leopold Conservation Award recognizes agricultural landowners actively committed to a land ethic and

investing in private land conservation. It celebrates extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by private landowners, inspires other landowners by example, and provides a platform by which agricultural community leaders are acknowledged as conservation ambassadors to those outside of the agricultural industry.

This program brings together agriculture, government, environmental organizations, industry and academia to advance private lands conservation.

The common bond of all organizations and entities involved is a strong commitment to conservation stewardship on private lands, which is the most prominent land ownership model in Oklahoma. More than 90 percent of Oklahoma lands are privately owned.

"We are pleased to partner with these great organizations to bring the Leopold Conservation Award Program to Oklahoma," said Jeramy Rich, Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation

president. "This award fits well with our commitment to educating and advocating for our state's hardworking farm and ranch families and their history of responsible environmental stewardship."

The inaugural award will be presented on Earth Day 2018 in Oklahoma City. Recipients will receive \$10,000 and a crystal award, along with recognition through the Sand County Foundation as a 2018 Oklahoma recipient.

Applications for the award are now being accepted. The \$10,000 award will honor Oklahoma farmers, ranchers and other private landowners who voluntarily demonstrate outstanding stewardship and management of natural resources. Applications for the award must be postmarked by Aug. 31, 2017, and mailed to Amanda Rosholt at the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, located at 2501 N Stiles, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105.

For application information, please visit leopoldconservationaward.org.



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Smart irrigation technology helps conserve water usage

By Trisha Gedon
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

As we move into the hottest part of the summer, gardeners may find themselves having to water more and more often in order to keep their landscapes hydrated. It's no secret that rainfall can be sparse across the state, especially during the later summer months.

Because the amount of rainfall fluctuates from year to year, it can be easy for gardeners to over- or under-irrigate a landscape, said David Hillock, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension consumer horticulturist.

"Improper irrigation can increase disease incidence, waste water and decrease your overall landscape condition," Hillock said. "While an irrigation system can certainly make it easier to keep your landscape watered, the efficiency of any irrigation system is dependent on several factors, including design, installation and specific site conditions. Because outdoor water use accounts for approximately 30 to 50 percent of household water use, it's important to make your system as efficient as possible."

Outdoor water savings can be achieved using smart irrigation technologies. Some people may believe technology is found only in computers and smart phones, but technology also can play a big role in saving consumers money when it comes to keeping their landscapes in peak condition.

Hillock said smart irrigation controllers and sensors are available that reduce outdoor water use by irrigating based on the water needs of a specific



Photo courtesy of Hunter Industries.

plant when compared to a traditional automatic timer system.

"With a traditional timed system, it simply came on at preset times," he said. "Smart irrigation technology works to maximize irrigation efficiency by reducing water waste, while maintaining plant health and quality. This technology is appropriate for small, residential landscapes as well as large, managed landscapes. If you already have a traditional system installed, don't worry. There are add-on sensors that can be retrofitted to your current system."

There are two basic types of controllers, including climate-based controllers and soil moisture-based controllers. Climate-based controllers, also known as evapotranspiration (ET) controllers,

use local weather data to adjust irrigation schedules and make irrigation run-time adjustments so the landscape only receives the appropriate amount of water.

There are three basic types of ET controllers. First, signal-based controllers use meteorological data from publicly available sources and the ET value is calculated for a grass surface at the site. The data is then sent to the controller by a wireless connection.

The second type of controller is the historic ET controller, which uses a preprogrammed water-use curve, based on historic water use in different regions. The curve can be adjusted for temperature and solar radiation.

The third type is the on-site weather measurement controller. This controller



uses weather data collected on site to calculate continuous ET measurements and water accordingly.

ET controllers have been shown to reduce outdoor water use. In fact, studies indicate an average of 20 percent irrigation reduction compared to systems with homeowner-scheduled irrigation.

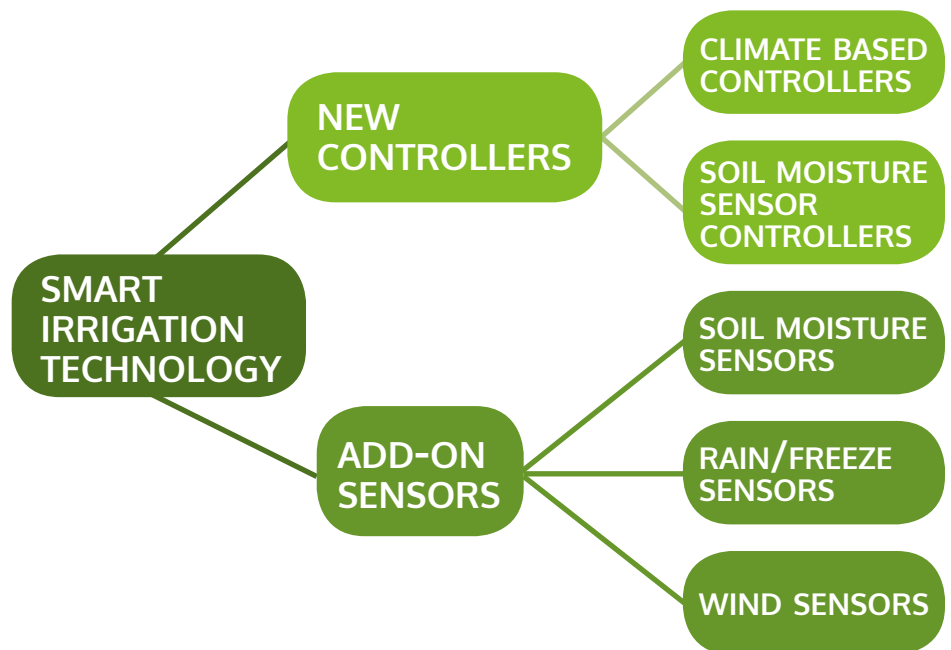
The second type of smart irrigation controllers is the soil moisture controller. Instead of using weather data, soil moisture sensor technology utilizes a soil moisture sensor placed below ground in the root zone of lawns to determine water need.

“The sensor estimates the soil volumetric water content, which represents the portion of the total volume of soil occupied by water,” Hillock said. “Similar to ET controllers, soil moisture controller studies have shown reduced irrigation while maintaining turfgrass quality.”

For those who may already have an irrigation system in place, implementing smart irrigation technology doesn’t mean installing a whole new system. Sensors can be added to an existing system.

Soil moisture sensors can be connected to an existing irrigation system controller and it will measure the soil moisture content in the root zone before scheduled irrigation begins. If the soil moisture is above a specific threshold, the cycle can be bypassed.

“We all know watering during a rain or freeze event is unnecessary. It wastes water, money and causes wasteful runoff,” he said. “There are several different types of rain sensors



available, with each function based on separate concepts.”

The original rain sensor works with a small cup that collects water. Once a preset amount of rain is collected, the weight of the cup interrupts the irrigation cycle. Be sure to check the cup for debris as it also can interrupt the cycle.

The second type of rain sensor uses a dish with electrodes that are a specific distance from the bottom of the cup. The distance can be adjusted to allow for small rain events. When the water reaches the electrodes, the irrigation cycle is interrupted.

Hillock said the third type of rain sensor is low maintenance because it doesn’t have a rain catch cup. Instead, the sensor uses several disks that expand as they get wet. The expanded discs trigger the switch to interrupt the cycle. Once

the disks dry out, regular scheduled cycles resume.

Not only are Oklahomans familiar with hot, dry summers, they also know a thing or two about wind. The state has an average wind speed of 16 miles per hour. Watering during windy conditions reduces irrigation distribution uniformity across the landscape and decreases the amount of water getting into the soil. Wind sensors will interrupt an irrigation cycle if wind speeds exceed a specific threshold.

“All of this technology may sound complicated, but it really isn’t,” Hillock said. “Implementing smart technology into an existing system, or having a smart technology system installed are great ways to help ensure your landscape gets the moisture it needs while saving you money on your water bill.”

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Each OKFB member family is limited to one free classified ad per issue. No call-in ads will be accepted. The length of the ad cannot exceed the number of lines on this form. Ads run one time. We reserve the right not to publish submitted ads. Return to Country Classifieds, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

All information must be completed.

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Deadline for the next issue is Aug. 15, 2017.



Registered Polled Hereford bulls. 13 months old. Remittal Online 122L and PW Victor Boomer P606 genetics. 48 years breeding. Call 580-332-2468.

Registered Gelbvieh and Balancer Bulls. 14 months to Aged Bulls. Black. \$1,500 - \$2,500. Call 405-761-1166 or 405-990-9198.

MISCELLANEOUS

Had to close antique store. Everything must go. \$3,000 for between \$12,000 and \$15,000 worth of antiques. Call 405-990-9933.

Stanley Home Products – Fuller Brush: full line of cleaning, Kitchen & Personal Products, degreasers, lotions, brooms, mops, utensils, etc. Call 580-497-2249.

3 spaces at Resthaven Cemetery, SW 104th in Western OKC. \$3,200 each. Call 405-598-0216.

400 guns; Gold/silver coins; structural pipe; new cable; 1000 sucker rods; fiberglass post. www.branchauction.com.

White MFg.Co. Treadle Sewing Machine: scroll design, cabinet model with drawers & operating manual. Call 405-683-2995.

For sale – all metal cable tool drill rig with 3 sets of tools. Price is \$9,000 cash. Phone: 918-327-0860.

For sale: 4 choice lots in Sunset Memorial Park Cemetery in Cleveland City near Norman at 179th & Air Depot Blvd. Call 1-580-933-2732.

Antique dining room table w/ built-in leaf and w/ 6 chairs and buffet. Call 918-423-3184.

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Cinnamon Rolls

from the Oklahoma Wheat Commission

Mix together in a mixing bowl:

- 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup white enriched flour
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup powdered milk
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp yeast

In a separate bowl mix together (large stand mixer with a dough hook works best):

- 1 cup warm water (115 degrees)
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. yeast

Let stand until yeast begins to work then add dry ingredients in mixer. Mix for 30 seconds and then add the following:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- 2 Tbsp. molasses
- 1 cup warm water

Continue mixing and adjust the water level to achieve dough consistency. You may have to add anywhere from another $\frac{1}{2}$ cup to 1 cup of extra warm water for dough not to be too dry. Remember dough should mix approximately 8 minutes and a dough ball should form that cleans all dough off the sides of the bowl. **Helpful Hints: On a KitchenAid 4 quart mixer use the #2 setting for speed to begin and then you can move up to the #4 setting. You may also have to use a large rubber spatula to scrape the dough into center of the mixing bowl when beginning in order to make sure all ingredients are incorporated.** Allow dough to double in size and punch down.

Roll dough into large rectangle. Coat dough with either one stick of melted butter or margarine or use liquid margarine. Sprinkle on a mixture of (or to taste):

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. cinnamon

Make sure to spread mixture to the edges of dough. Roll dough from the long side of rectangle, keeping the roll tight. Cut into 36 slices and place on a parchment paper lined baking sheet or two jelly roll pans. Allow the rolls to double in size and bake at 350 degrees for 18 to 20 minutes. Glaze the warm rolls with a mixture of:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. evaporated milk



The Oklahoma Wheat Commission baked cinnamon rolls and bread for Farm Bureau members in the IdeAg trade show using Oklahoma wheat during the 2017 American Farm Bureau Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Oklahoma Wheat Commission was established in 1965 as a framework for Oklahoma wheat producers to invest in the promotion of their product: hard red winter wheat. State producers elect their peers to serve on a five-member board of commissioners. For more delicious recipes using wheat or for more information, visit the Oklahoma Wheat Commission's website at okwheat.org.

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OKFB YF&R State Leadership Conference
July 13-15

Nurse's Scholarship App Deadline
July 15

OKFB YF&R High School Discussion Meet
July 18 • Stillwater

OSU Big Three Field Days
July 18-20 • Stillwater

State Farm & Ranch Family Recognition Award Deadline
August 15 • OKFB Home Office

Shotgun Shoot Fundraiser
August 25

YF&R State Fair Livestock Judging
September 14 • Oklahoma City

OKFB Women's Leadership Committee Fall Conference
September 15-16 • Oklahoma City

Country Women's Council/ ACWW Annual Meeting
October 2-4 • Huntsville, Alabama

Resolutions Due
October 6 • OKFB Home Office

OKFB Awards Deadline
October 13 • OKFB Home Office

YF&R Awards Deadline
October 13 • OKFB Home Office

State Resolutions Meeting
October 17-18 • Oklahoma City

OKFB Annual Meeting
November 10-12 • Norman

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