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OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

# Perspective

May 24, 2019

## Legislative Update: Historic State Budget Deal Reached

**A**fter weeks of public debate and private negotiations, Gov. Kevin Stitt, the House of Representatives and the Senate have finally reached an \$8.3 billion state budget agreement for the 2020 fiscal year. This budget agreement is the largest in Oklahoma history and paves the way for a timely adjournment of the legislative session this month. Listed below are a few noteworthy funding increases for members to be aware of.

### Education

- \$59 million has been allotted for additional teacher pay raises (\$1,220/teacher average).
- \$74 million for local school boards and administrators to address specific needs within their districts.
- \$18 million for career tech center teacher and other employee pay raises.
- \$28 million designated for higher education research programs and teacher pay raises.

### Agriculture

- \$500,000 for conservation cost-share projects related to water quality in northeast Oklahoma.
- \$1.59 million for flood control structure rehab projects through the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.
- \$378,000 for Oklahoma Conservation District programs.
- \$900,000 for wildfire mitigation activities, rural fire departments and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry Services Division.
- \$90,000 for an additional staff veterinarian at ODAFF.
- \$500,000 for ODAFF wildlife control.

### Other Items of Interest

- \$30 million in funding has been restored to the County Improvements for Roads and Bridges Program at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. In previous years,

these funds been raided to make the legislative budget balance. Oklahoma Farm Bureau members adopted policy specifically supporting this restoration.

- \$4 million for two new Oklahoma Highway Patrol trooper academies, putting an estimated 80 more troopers on the roads beginning in 2020. One of these academies will be financed by the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority and the other with funds from the recent sale of the state airplane by Gov. Stitt.
- \$200 million has been set aside for Oklahoma's savings account, to protect core services during future state budget declines. This is the first time in state history that large of an amount will be voluntarily held back by the legislature. Coupled with the amount currently in the Rainy Day Fund and an additional general revenue deposit in late summer, the savings account total is expected to reach \$1 billion by the end of the calendar year.



## Nash joins OKFB as summer communications intern

**R**ebekah Nash joined Oklahoma Farm Bureau as the 2019 summer communications intern in mid-May.

Rebekah Nash is an agricultural communications and animal science senior at Oklahoma State University. Growing up in central Illinois, she was involved in Farm Bureau from an early age.

“I have always had a passion for informing the public about agricultural practices,” Nash said. “So, an opportunity like being an intern for Farm Bureau will allow me to do this on a large scale.”

Nash grew up on a small show pig and grain operation, specifically corn and soybeans. With a diverse knowledge of agriculture, she is able to tell producers’ stories in a way that makes sense to the public.

The OKFB communications internship allows the student to experience all aspects of the communications profession. Each intern has the opportunity to develop skills in writing, graphic design, photography

and videography.

“I would like to inform the public about the impact agriculture has on their daily lives and why it matters,” Nash said.



## Members participate in annual OKFB Commodity Tour

**D**uring the 2019 Commodity Tour held May 8-10, roughly 60 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members had the opportunity to discover new points of interest within Western Oklahoma.

Stops along the three-day trip included SS Farms, Triple S Farms, P-Bar, Goat Farmer’s Wife, WW Livestock, Sesaco, SportsChassis, Davis Farms, Route 66 Museum, Cornell Farms, and Stafford Air and Space Museum.

For more information on how you can attend the 2020 Commodity Tour, contact Marcia Irvin at 405-523-2405 or [Marcia.Irvin@okfb.org](mailto:Marcia.Irvin@okfb.org).



## Calendar

### On the Road with Ag in the Classroom

June 4-6 • State of Oklahoma  
Contact: Marcia Irvin 405-523-2405

### National Ag in the Classroom Conference

June 18-21 • Little Rock, Arkansas  
Contact: Marcia Irvin 405-523-2405

### Nurse’s Scholarship Application Deadline

July 1  
Contact: Marcia Irvin 405-523-2405

### OKFB YF&R State Summer Conference

July 12-14 • Oklahoma City  
Contact: Zac Swartz 405-523-2406

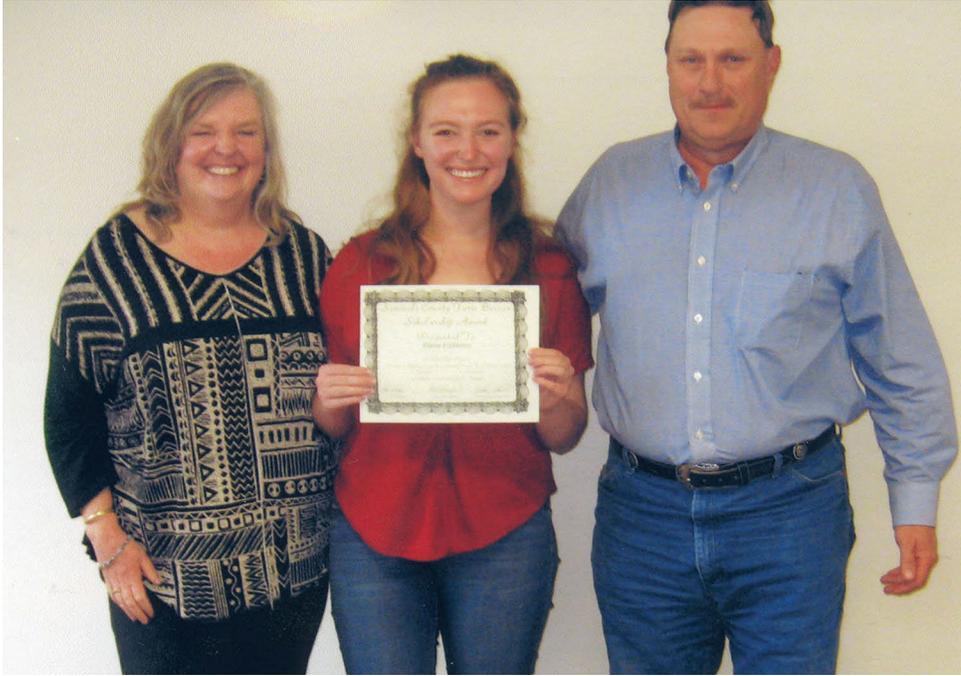
### OSU Big Three Field Days

July 16-18 • Stillwater  
Contact: Zac Swartz 405-523-2406

### State High School Discussion Meet

July 16 • Stillwater  
Contact: Zac Swartz 405-523-2406

## Seminole County Farm Bureau awards \$2,000 scholarship to high school senior



Above: Seminole County Farm Bureau recently awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to Elaina Edelman, a Prague high school senior. This fall, Edelman will begin her studies at the University of Oklahoma where she will be majoring in journalism. Seminole County Farm Bureau scholarship recipients are able to use the scholarship funds at any Oklahoma college.

2019  
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DISCUSSION MEET

TUESDAY, JULY 16

Oklahoma State University,  
Ag Hall

(Held in conjunction with the  
Oklahoma State University  
Big 3 Field Days)

Scholarships awarded to the top  
four finalists.

**Must submit  
registration form  
no later than  
June 28.**

For more information, contact  
Zac Swartz at 405-523-2406.

## AFBF calls for quick resolution on China trade

America's farmers need a swift resolution to the ongoing trade war between the U.S. and China, American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall said in a letter to President Trump.

The six-year downturn in farm prices that has produced "near-unprecedented economic uncertainty and hardship" is worsening as a result of Chinese tariffs, he wrote. "U.S. farmers and ranchers now face a third wave of tariff increases by China in retaliation against the latest increase in U.S. tariffs that went into

effect Friday, May 10. The mere threat sent prices further downward for certain commodities last week."

Bad weather this spring has only added to difficulties posed by trade challenges, as some farmers may opt not to plant a crop at all this year, Duvall told the President. An aid package would help some continue to farm, he added, but the real solution is open markets.

"We ask that your trade negotiators make a deal as soon as possible to end the tariffs that are slashing our exports, destroying a once-promising market

for agriculture, worsening the farm economy, and contributing to high levels of stress and uncertainty for many farm and ranch families and other Americans whose jobs are connected to agricultural production."

Duvall also called for progress on trade agreements with Mexico, Canada, Japan and the European Union. "Our agricultural trade surplus previously has been a tremendous success story for the U.S.," Duvall told the President. "We hope to return to that success for agriculture and our country."

## Member Benefits

### AgBoost

AgBoost shows ranchers the genetic profile and attributes of a single animal or the entire herd. Interested to know that one of your animals scores 60 percent in marbling, 90 percent in average daily gain, but only 30

percent in pregnancy rate? Now, you can breed with that information at your fingertips.

Compare the profiles of all your animals, clearly see where your herd is strongest and breed what you really need.

It takes an average of three to four years

to determine the quality of a calf for breeding purposes. AgBoost removes the guesswork and waiting. Send a small hair sample and see the results on your phone, desktop or in the field.

[www.okfarmbureau.org/benefits](http://www.okfarmbureau.org/benefits)

Published by Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
Postmaster: Send address corrections to:  
Perspective, P.O. B. 53332,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-3332

Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
2501 N. Stiles  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3126

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
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Permit No. 131  
Okla. City, OK.

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## Seminole County Farm Bureau encourages safe driving to local high school students



Above: Seminole County Farm Bureau recently brought the Oklahoma Farm Bureau DUI Prevention Program to both New Lima and Strother High Schools for their junior and senior students. Through this opportunity, students learned in a safe way the importance of not driving impaired. To bring this program to a school near you, contact the Safety Department at 405-523-2300.

## Bushels<sub>for</sub> Books

# HOW

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farmers and ranchers  
help?

Donate your harvested crops  
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books for schools around  
the state!

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[okfbfoundationforagriculture.org](http://okfbfoundationforagriculture.org)  
for more information on how  
you can help.