

Oklahoma

The Magazine of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Volume 68 No. 1

Country



Legacy of Generations

Faith, family and farm drive our **Farm Family of the Year.**

The Tug of Leadership


OKFB members step up to serve.

Lincoln to Local

OKFB gears up for 2015 legislative session.

Consider the Benefits

Fire safety trailer saves lives through education.



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Oklahoma *Country*

Volume 68 No. 1
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Photo by Dustin Mielke

ON THE COVER

The Krehbiels of Caddo County receive one year's use of a brand-new GMC pickup after being selected as OKFB's 2014 Farm Family of the Year. To learn more about the Krehbiels, turn to page 12.

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 Samantha Smith before the last day of the month, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at (405) 523-2346.

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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Legacy of Generations

By Samantha Smith

Agriculture is a five-generation legacy for this Caddo County family. Meet the Krehbiels: Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 2014 Farm Family of the Year.



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The Tug of Leadership

By Sam Knipp

With the start of the 2015 legislative session comes the beginning of a new journey for many rookie legislators like John Pfeiffer. Farm Bureau's voice is sure to be heard at the state Capitol with more than 40 OKFB members serving in the House and Senate.

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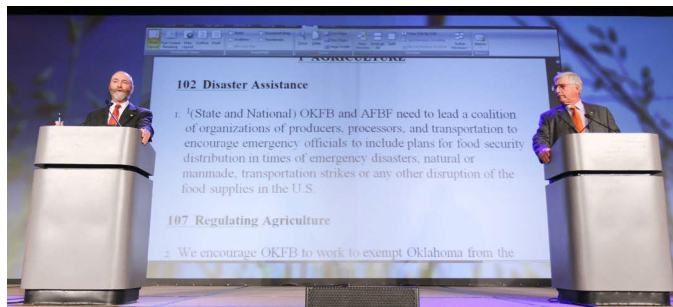
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Country Kitchen Recipes



The 2014 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Annual Meeting was held Nov. 14-16, 2014, in Tulsa. A recap of news and award winners can be found in the Convention Review section beginning on page 26.



PRESIDENTIALLY SPEAKING

Looking ahead to a promising year

By Tom Buchanan

President, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

2014 was a very good year for Oklahoma Farm Bureau. The federation had policy wins on your behalf and the insurance company experienced significant profitable growth. Private property rights were defended as OKFB was required to represent your needs as attacks on property taxes were proposed during this last legislative session. Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company saw a resurgence in financial health, and OKFB experienced a reversal in membership numbers resulting in an increase in voting delegates at the 2015 American Farm Bureau Convention.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau held its annual convention in Tulsa and membership showed unity in the resolution process as the policy book was amended and the direction for 2015 was established. It is always encouraging to see the grassroots process at work and the correctness of the membership body as they work on issues facing Oklahoma agriculture and rural Oklahoma. Members know their organization and show the ability to adopt resolutions which keep OKFB in the driver's seat for the coming year.

As we look to 2015 and what the future holds, I have the utmost confidence the gains made on your behalf in 2014 will continue in the year to come. We will be working for you in support or opposition as your policy book directs, as issues impacting you — our members — are voted on at both the state Legislature and state agency level.

The benefits of OKFB membership will continue to expand and offer more to you — the OKFB member. Our educational

outreach partnership with the Noble Foundation has resulted in a traveling exhibit extolling all aspects of production agriculture. Oklahoma schools now have an excellent tool to reach Oklahoma students and teach the value of agricultural production in Oklahoma. The safety division will continue their education providing life safety skills which have proven to

truly save lives. To read about one of those life-saving benefits, turn to page 18. I encourage you to take advantage of these so your community can benefit.

As an ag producer

“It is always encouraging to see the grassroots process at work and the correctness of the membership body as they work on issues facing Oklahoma agriculture and rural Oklahoma.”

— Tom Buchanan

myself, I am well aware of the unknowns 2015 could bring: input prices, commodity prices, farm bill implementation of ARC and PLC, crop insurance changes, regulations, taxation issues, labor, equipment challenges and the big one — weather. Regardless, the eternal optimism of the Oklahoma producer will prevail and you will continue to meet the needs of the American consumer.

It is with the same optimism that I know 2015 will be a year of growth for you and OKFB. I ask for your continued support as the leaders you elect and the professional staff of OKFB work to advance your organization and achieve additional gains on your behalf in 2015.



Oklahoma Beef Checkoff UPDATE

Digital Consumer Advertising Campaign



The checkoff's new digital advertising campaign recently wrapped up its first full year in the marketplace, and the results are in! The campaign educated millions of consumers on Beef's superior taste, nutrition and ease-of-use – by providing them with

the beef-related information that they need, when they needed it. Through the checkoff's digital campaign, many consumers are now equipped with the beef tips, techniques and recipes they require to ensure a great beef eating experience, each and every time. Some of the campaign's key results – including the campaign's extensive reach (733 million impressions), widespread use of the checkoff's flagship consumer website, "Beef. It's What's for Dinner.com" (3,600,000+ page views), mass viewership of the new "No Recipe Recipe" videos (over 5,000,000 video ad views) and the checkoff's highly engaging social media tools (more than a million consumer engagements with Beef's Facebook and Twitter accounts).

The Oklahoma Beef Council stepped up to further amplify the campaign in Oklahoma and in key foodie markets such as LA, Chicago and New York through Facebook and Google search advertising. As a result of Oklahoma checkoff investments, more than 69,000+ consumers visited the "Beef. It's What's for Dinner" website for meal planning and inspiration and 19,000+ consumers became fans of the "Beef. It's What's for Dinner" Facebook page.

Beef Checkoff Hosts Customized Beef Experience for Key Foodservice Purveyor in Las Vegas

In collaboration with the Oklahoma, California/Nevada Beef Councils and National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the Beef Checkoff created an in-depth beef education experience for Outwest Meat Company, the largest meat company in Las Vegas, NV. The event, "BEEFflexible: Vision, Value and Inspiration," took place at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino where nearly 75 key customers attended to hear from a range of subject-matter experts on topics such as beef production, market conditions, menu trends, and new fabrication techniques for menu strategies.

New Toolkit Helps Grocery Retailers Promote Their Most Profitable Protein



The beef checkoff is offering a new toolkit to help supermarket retailers and their on-staff registered dietitians make their store a health and wellness destination for consumers. The "Go Tasty, Go Lean" toolkit contains turnkey materials proven to drive beef sales and purchase intent.

This new resource is the result of a multi-phase research project the beef checkoff conducted with the assistance of supermarket registered dietitians, to evaluate

the impact of highlighting fresh beef as part of in-store wellness efforts led by supermarket registered dietitians. The result was a significant sales lift for the beef cuts featured and strong purchase intent reported by shoppers.

Outstanding Results for a Social Media Retail Campaign



In cooperation with Ibotta, a popular smartphone app, the beef checkoff recently encouraged customers at two national retailers to choose beef at the meat case. Ibotta shared educational information about freezing beef and about beef nutrition, in addition to sharing the checkoff's Easy Lean Beef Burger and Do It Yourself Taco videos. By engaging with the content, Ibotta users earned a cash rebate for their purchase of Top Sirloin Steak or Ground Beef.

This program gave the checkoff the opportunity to have access to rich consumer data that showed us who is buying, where they are buying and what else they are buying when they buy beef.

The Beef Checkoff social media retail campaign was a huge success – with hundreds of thousands of videos being viewed on how to cook and store beef, more than 141,000 consumers put beef on their shopping list and 35,000 additional beef purchases were being made in just a couple of weeks.

Farmers and Ranchers- Don't forget to sign up for the Oklahoma Beef Checkoff Update, a monthly e-newsletter providing the latest in checkoff information and news at

www.oklabeeff.org/e-newsletter.aspx



INSURANCE MATTERS

The truth about our investment in Oklahoma

By Richard Newberry

General Manager, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company

As the largest domestic property and casualty writer in Oklahoma, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company has always been deeply committed to all 77 counties of our great state. Since 1946, OFBMIC has been here when our insured members need us most, providing the best customer service and issuing billions of dollars in claim payments. Our No. 1 goal has been and continues to be to help our insured members recover monetarily due to loss and damages from tornado, fire, hail, automobile, personal injury losses and much more.

While other insurance companies talk about their investment in Oklahoma, we at Oklahoma Farm Bureau have invested millions of dollars in building brick and mortar offices in every part of our great state to serve our members. We employ more than 500 Oklahomans and we have a presence in all 77 counties. Additionally, we have invested millions of dollars in Oklahoma over the past 69 years as a corporate citizen supporting education, agriculture and people who need a helping hand.

Another investment Oklahoma Farm Bureau makes every year is paying premium taxes. Since 1994 we have paid \$90 million in Oklahoma premium tax. As an Oklahoma insurance company with our home office located here, we have been able to enjoy a tax credit called the home office tax credit which amounts to a significant saving we use to help retain employees in every county across the state.

Before talking about the tax credits, one must understand how Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company is taxed by the state of Oklahoma. Simply stated, our insurance company pays approximately \$4 million every single year in premium taxes. This \$4 million is paid regardless of profit or loss. Yes — that is correct — regardless of profit or loss! No other industry in our state has this type of punitive tax burden with no regard to financial loss. Imagine losing \$81.9 million

dollars during two years of catastrophic loss —which occurred in 2008 and 2009 — and not be allowed to file for a return. OFBMIC experienced eight long years of losses, all the while paying premium tax of approximately \$32 million during the same period. With this scenario, does OFBMIC appear to be a company that should lose any tax credit?

A tremendous amount of challenges have been addressed within our company since 2009. The strategic changes made are now allowing our company to begin recovery. At the time of print for this column, it appears we should post a \$10 million dollar profit for 2014. If we were in any other industry, and paid the highest corporate tax rate, we would owe \$700,000 to the state of Oklahoma, which is grossly less than the \$4 million we do pay. We would actually have to make a \$57.1 million dollar profit (which has never happened since our inception in 1946) to be taxed at our current \$4 million rate. Does this sound like an environment that attracts and retains Oklahoma based businesses serving and employing Oklahomans? Does OFBMIC appear to warrant losing our home office tax credit and be faced with an additional \$1 million per year tax increase?

We have one of the strongest grassroots organizations in Oklahoma, and that is only possible because of our members and their willingness to be heard on issues important to them. I urge you to stay aware of issues such as our home office tax credit. We may ask you to contact your state elected officials to let them know you oppose the elimination of any home office tax credit that would increase the current oppressive premium taxes for Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Newberry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

DID YOU KNOW

EVERY **DOLLAR INVESTED*** RETURNS **\$11.20?**

Beef Safety Research

Identifies potential risks to beef safety and develops solutions to maintain a safe beef supply for consumers



Public Relations

Proactively shares positive beef messages with consumers, health professionals and other food influencers



Product Enhancement Research

Discovers new ways to improve beef quality, consistency and value, including research focused on new cuts, taste, tenderness and carcass value



New Product Development

Works with industry leaders to develop new beef products, plus shares beef recipes and cooking tips



Advertising

Creates all domestic consumer advertising –radio, print, outdoor and digital – to reinforce how beef is part of their everyday life



Foreign Marketing

Provides beef market development, promotion, research, consumer and industry information in more than 100 countries worldwide



Channel Marketing

Develops all promotions, training and other programs to help promote beef in restaurants and grocery stores



Nutrition Research

Focuses on beef's role in human nutrition as it relates to overall health and well-being



Industry Information

Safeguards the image of the beef industry by responding to, and correcting, misinformation about beef and sharing the beef production story



*From the Cattlemen's Beef Board budget

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YOUR CHECKOFF

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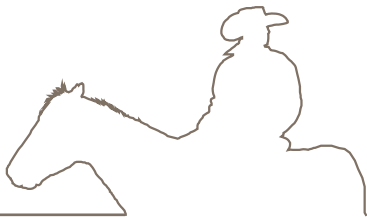


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#beef11:1

Funded by the Beef Checkoff.



OKFB prepares for 2015 legislative session

How did Oklahoma Farm Bureau do in terms of the OKAgFund success rate?

It was a great year for the OKAgFund with a 96 percent success rate when it came to races won that OKFB supported. The OKAgFund is OKFB's political action committee and we do a tremendous amount of research when it comes to candidates we support. We were very bipartisan on both sides of the issue supporting a number of both Democrats and Republicans. We look forward to working with those new members we supported during this year's legislative session.

What does that success rate mean for agricultural issues at the Capitol?

It means we've got people who are likeminded to agriculture and rural Oklahoma. We support them for a reason: because they are out there advocating for agriculture and rural Oklahoma. They are interested in protecting private property rights and solving our state's water situation, which are always important issues to us. We have a number of issues we will face out there and we want to have legislative members who think like we do. We want them to understand who OKFB is, what we do and why we do it. We want them to know we speak for our organization's statewide membership through our lobbying efforts at the Capitol.

What are the main issues OKFB is looking to lobby for?

Every year at the Capitol, someone is always trying to take away private property rights, and at Oklahoma Farm Bureau, we do everything we can to protect our members against that. When

an industry comes to Oklahoma — whether it's agriculture, oil and gas, wind energy or anything else — we want to make sure our landowners have a say in how to make their property work for them.

Education of our children in our Oklahoma schools is a big issue for us, as it should be. Right-to-farm and how to protect agriculture into the future will also be another big issue for OKFB this year. We want to protect the rural way of life, and we look forward to seeing what we can get accomplished during this session.

And of course, water is always our No. 1 priority. We want to make sure we maximize the efficiency of our water resource in the state of Oklahoma, so we are continuing down the path of educating members and legislators of why it's important to utilize our resources for the benefit of all Oklahomans without ever taking a natural resource from another Oklahoman.

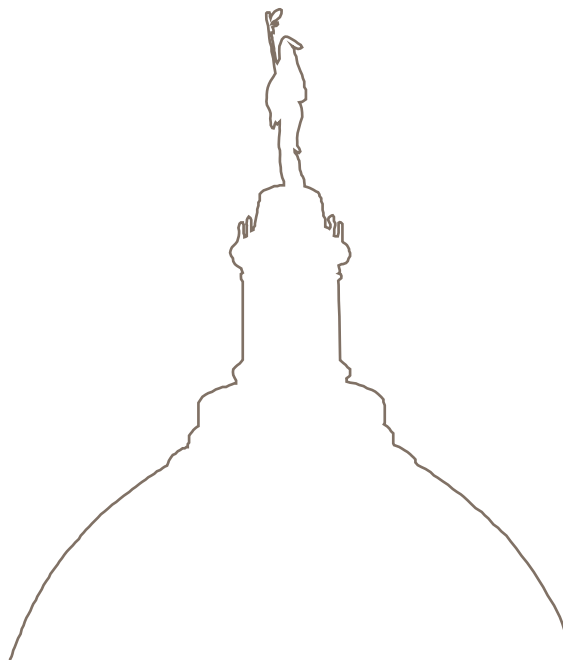
During the 2014 session, OKFB lobbied in opposition of a number of bills rather than lobbying in favor of some. What does the climate look like for this session?

I think the climate will be a lot less toxic than it was last year just because the campaigns are out of the way. Last year we had to oppose a number of bills in order to protect agriculture and rural Oklahoma. In other years we have lobbied in favor of more bills. It just depends on the year and what bills we see come through the House and Senate.

No matter what, we are going to make sure our members are protected as we go down this road. We want our members to be assured that their private property rights, as well as private property taxes, are respected, and that they get to use their property the way they see fit. We will make sure agriculture and rural Oklahoma is always protected.



with John Collison,
OKFB Vice President of Public Policy and Media Relations



What does the rural/urban divide look like in the House and Senate for 2015?

The way the maps are drawn, we still have a lot of rural legislators, and many of them leak into metro areas, but it's our job to educate all legislators no matter what part of the state they represent. We do not exclude the urban counties of our membership — we have members in Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties who we fight for as well. We strive to make sure urban legislators know that even though they represent metro areas, they still represent farmers and ranchers in their districts. We work to make sure every member of the legislative body represents agriculture and the state's second largest industry at the Capitol.

How can members stay up-to-date and get involved with the legislative process?

Come to our website. Our communications staff works hard to keep our information up-to-date and that's the best place to find it. From the site, you can also find links to all of OKFB's social media sites — Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, SoundCloud and many more.

Every other week we also publish *Perspective*, our leadership newsletter. It is packed with information about the legislative process, from calls to action to lobbying updates. If you do not receive a hard copy in the mail, you can go to the OKFB website and view the publication online anytime.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization, so members can get involved through their counties. If you're interested, our field staff or myself will come out to your county and visit with you about issues on your mind. If you're really interested in the process, bring your county members to the Capitol to see it firsthand. We will go meet your legislators and talk to them face-to-face about issues affecting you.

To get involved, contact:

Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Public Policy Department
405.530.2681

Or visit the OKFB website at:
okfarmbureau.org



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A photograph of a man in a red shirt and blue jeans standing next to a large hay bale in a field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. A red barn is visible on the left side of the frame.

LEGACY OF GENERATIONS

Meet the Krehbiels:
OKFB's Farm Family of the Year


Story by Samantha Smith

Photos by Dustin Mielke



“THERE'S SO MUCH TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN
AGRICULTURE ... IT'S AN EXCITING INDUSTRY, AND I
CAN'T WAIT TO BE A PART OF IT.”

— BRITTANY KREHBIEL



WHEN BRITTANY KREHBIEL LOOKS OUT ON HER FAMILY'S LAND, SHE SEES MORE THAN JUST A FARM.

SHE SEES HER FUTURE.

The 18-year-old college freshman is next in line to carry on the Krehbiel family legacy that runs five generations deep. While other college students her age are switching majors twice a semester while looking for their dream job, Brittany has already landed hers.

Her dream, she said, is to be back where she grew up: on the Krehbiel family farm.

"It was something I knew I loved and enjoyed at a very early age," Brittany said. "It is very special to be able to take something my parents and my grandparents have loved for generations and say that's what I want to do, too."

Brittany grew up farming with her mother, Karen, and her late father, Jeff, who passed away in 2011 from brain cancer. She said her father's passing is what solidified her decision to return home after college.

"When my dad got sick, it became so important because that was something he didn't get to see carried out," she said. "For me to be able to carry that out, loving it as much as I do, that's something really special to me, and it fires me up even more to come home."

While others tend to return to the family farm begrudgingly, Brittany is more than excited to continue her life there. Her family's legacy combined with the potential possibilities that come with the future of agriculture are what fuel the fire in Brittany's heart.

"There's so much to look forward to in agriculture," Brittany said. "It has come so far in 50 years, and I can't wait to see where it could go in the next 50. It's an exciting industry, and I can't wait to be a part of it."


Karen said she could not be happier about Brittany carrying on the Krehbiel family tradition.

"It's very satisfying to know that the work we've put in will continue for another generation, that she's interested, that she enjoys it and that it's profitable enough that another generation will continue," the proud mother said.

Brittany is preceded by four generations of Krehbiel farmers, and the three most recent generations were chosen as the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Farm Family of the Year at the 2014 annual meeting. The family received one year's use of a brand-new GMC pickup for being selected for the prestigious award. Karen and Brittany, along with Karen's father- and mother-in-law, Wayne and Fern, were chosen as farm family of the year based on their ability to best represent farming and ranching and the spirit of Oklahoma agriculture.

"It's a tremendous honor that we would be chosen out of all the farms in Oklahoma to get to represent Farm Bureau," Karen said. "We may not be traditional at this point — it's not a husband and wife and 2.5 kids — but we are a farm family."

The Krehbiels run a 2,000-acre farm near

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, wearing a red plaid shirt, resting on the green metal frame of a tractor. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the tractor and some dry vegetation on the ground.

Hydro, Oklahoma, and their operation can best be described as diversified. The Caddo County family harvests wheat, milo and peanuts and raises 200-head of commercial ewes. They also own and run their own business custom designing, selling, servicing and installing T-L brand center pivot irrigation systems, all while Karen runs her own accounting practice.

Maintaining a healthy bottom line is the main goal for the family, Karen said.

"To be able to net a higher bottom line is always a goal," she said, "whether that's gaining a higher yield on a lambing crop or gaining higher production numbers and marketing our wheat crop."

Wayne acquired the farmland from his parents and began farming on his own in 1954. Since then, Wayne said he has been fascinated with the details of farming.

"I enjoy trying to figure out those details," Wayne said. "I always like to look for a better way or maybe a more efficient way to do things and see what I can come up with. I just like to help my community and my neighbors."

The patriarch of the farming family has figured out those details to make farm life easier in numerous ways. Wayne holds a patent on a flexible shaft sheering machine and also built his own wool baler to compact their sheep's wool for easier transportation.

The family has a scrap pile that Wayne said is "innovations that are coming."

While keeping the farm productive and efficient is a huge part of the farming business, family is equally important to the Krehbiels.

"Family is a huge part of everything we do," Brittany said. "Being able to incorporate family time into something you do every day is so special, and that's something not many people get to have."

Karen considers family time a bonus when it comes to their farming business.

"Being able to wake up every day and spend time with family is a blessing few businesses get to have," she said. "It's just a perk because it doesn't have anything to do with the bottom line."



“ I ALWAYS LIKE TO LOOK FOR A BETTER WAY OR
MAYBE A MORE EFFICIENT WAY TO DO THINGS AND
SEE WHAT I CAN COME UP WITH. I JUST LIKE TO
HELP MY COMMUNITY AND MY NEIGHBORS. ”

— WAYNE KREHBIEL

CONSIDER THE BENEFITS

OKFB Fire Safety Trailer saves children's lives

Beckham County children use OKFB's fire-safety training to escape a house fire.

A recent house fire in rural Beckham County proved the value of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's fire safety training when 11-year-old Aiden Brown put into practice what he had learned during a demonstration at his school.

The fifth grader and his 7-year-old sister, Abigail, had just returned home from school when Aiden discovered the fire and quickly made sure his sister was safely outside when he alerted the fire department.

Only weeks before, David Turner, OKFB safety specialist, had set up the fire safety trailer outside the Sayre Elementary School where the students were taught what to do in a situation just like this.

"We teach them to get out, go to their designated safe spot and call the authorities," Turner said.

Sayre Fire Department Chief Robert Ahrens said the Farm Bureau fire safety training saves lives.

"I can't say enough good things about the trailer and David's training," Ahrens said. "He does a great job of relating to the kids as they seem to retain the information. I really do think the trailer makes a difference in people's lives."

Aiden and Abigail's mother, Melisa Brown, said the educational tool undoubtedly impacted their lives.

"I'm so grateful Farm Bureau goes to schools with their fire safety trailer," Melisa said. "My kids are safe today because of that training. It's a great program."

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Safety Trailer is a 34-foot mobile classroom that travels across the state with Turner and fellow OKFB Safety Specialist Micah Martin. The trailer is built similar to a mobile home with a kitchen, living room and bedroom. Students learn to navigate through the makeshift home with a non-toxic, smoke-simulated area that shows what the atmosphere of a home would feel like during an actual fire. Children must feel their way around heated doors that simulate flames and heat.

The trailer is very versatile, allowing children to practice escaping from either the first floor or the second floor.

Turner and Martin make educational presentations before the children are allowed to practice navigating through the smoke-filled trailer. Basic topics include: home evacuation, smoke detectors, common household hazards that create fires and what to do in case of a fire.

"It's so important that children get hands-on experience with what to do in case a fire should happen in their home," Turner said. "The trailer allows us to educate more than 60,000 kids every year."

The trailer is just one of numerous benefits associated with a Farm Bureau membership. For more information about the OKFB Fire Safety Trailer or to schedule a demonstration in your school or community, contact Micah Martin at (405) 641-5151.



Aiden Brown used the experience he gained during a school visit from the OKFB Fire Safety Trailer to rescue his sister, Abigail, and himself from a house fire in Beckham County.



From the time he was a young
boy, John Pfeiffer has felt the
tug of leadership.

Story by Sam Knipp | Photos by Dustin Mielke



As a sixth grader at Mulhall-Orlando elementary school, Pfeiffer nervously paced the floor delivering a speech about production agriculture to a Farm Bureau audience. Today, after stints as an Oklahoma State University student and U.S. Marine Corps non-commissioned officer, the 28-year-old rancher joins the ranks of the Oklahoma Legislature as one of more than 40 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members.


“Service is something my parents have always stressed,” Pfeiffer said.

It is a stretch but we could say Pfeiffer has been part of Farm Bureau leadership since before he was born.

“My mom [Gaye Pfeiffer] was pregnant with me when she won the Farm Bureau discussion meet contest,” Pfeiffer said.

The young legislator was elected in November of 2014 to represent District 38 in the House of Representatives, which includes parts of five counties in north-central Oklahoma. Pfeiffer has served on the Logan County and State OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers committees and invested many hours as a volunteer Farm Bureau leader. He joins a distinguished group who cut their leadership teeth in Farm Bureau.

State Sen. Mike Schulz was a member of the OKFB YF&R committee in the mid 1990s representing southwest



“There's a strong sense of community in rural Oklahoma, and I hope this concept allows us legislators to be part of the same community.”

— Rep. John Pfeiffer

Oklahoma. In 2006, many of those same residents elected him to represent Senate District 38. Today he is the majority floor leader and considered the second-most influential Republican in the Senate.

“Farm Bureau has always been an important part of my life,” Schulz said. “The YF&R activities taught me the importance of serving others, and I have used that experience today to serve western Oklahoma.”

The Altus farmer shares many of the same values supported by the farm organization.

“I’m a big believer in protecting private property rights, the expression of individual freedoms and preventing regulatory overreach,” Schulz said.

The strong Farm Bureau influence in the Capitol helps smooth the rough edges off rural/urban issues.

“There’s a strong sense of community in rural Oklahoma, and I hope this concept allows us legislators to be part of the same community,” Pfeiffer said.

For Scooter Park, bringing the rural influence to the Oklahoma Legislature is a natural extension of wanting to serve the public as a citizen legislator. Park is also a rookie legislator as voters elected him to represent District 58 in the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

“I’m just a common person wanting to stand up and make a difference for rural Oklahoma,” Park said.

Many of the legislators credit Farm Bureau’s campaign management school for helping to spark the political servant embers.

“The campaign school really helped me understand what it was going to take to get elected,” Park said.

The campaign school, taught by OKFB and American Farm Bureau Federation staff, focuses on the details of running a campaign including advertising, media interviews and budgets.

Farm Bureau leadership in the Oklahoma Legislature includes former OKFB President Steve Kouplen. He serves Oklahoma House District 24 in east-central Oklahoma. Kouplen’s colleagues include former OKFB board directors Wade Rousselot, House District 12, and Larry Boggs, Senate District 7.

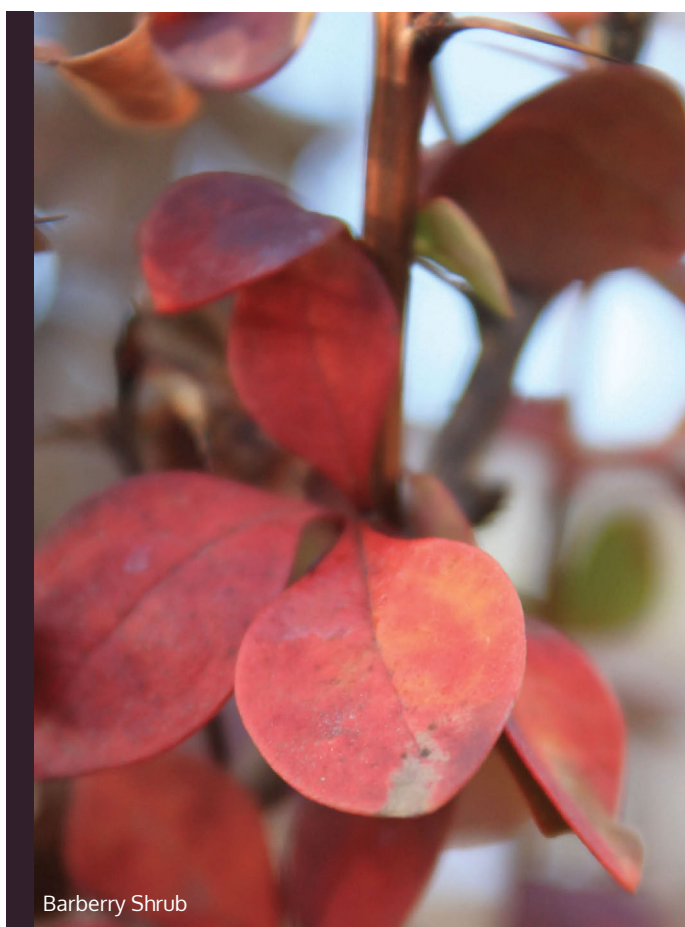
In addition, numerous county Farm Bureau members now hold prominent legislative positions. That list in the Senate includes: Sen. Mark Allen, Sen. Patrick Anderson, Sen. Don Barrington, Sen. Kim David, Sen. Eddie Fields, Sen. Ron Justice, Sen. Kyle Loveless, Sen. Joseph Silk, Sen. John Sparks, Sen. Anthony Sykes and Sen. Charles Wyrick.

The list in the House of Representatives includes: Rep. Scott Biggs, Rep. Chad Caldwell, Rep. Dennis Casey, Rep. Bobby Cleveland, Rep. Donnie Condit, Rep. Ann Coody, Rep. Jeff Coody, Rep. Tommy Hardin, Rep. Jeff Hickman, Rep. Dennis Johnson, Rep. James Leewright, Rep. James Lockhart, Rep. Ben Loring, Rep. Jerry McPeak, Rep. John Montgomery, Rep. Charles Ortega, Rep. Leslie Osborn, Rep. Scooter Park, Rep. Pam Peterson, Rep. John Pfeiffer, Rep. R.C. Pruett, Rep. Brian Renegar, Rep. Mike Ritze, Rep. Sean Roberts, Rep. Wade Rousselot, Rep. Jerry Shoemaker, Rep. Johnny Tadlock and Rep. Steve Vaughn.



Oklahoma Proven plants can help gardeners succeed

By Trisha Gedon
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service



Barberry Shrub

When it comes to gardening in what can be some pretty harsh environmental conditions in Oklahoma, gardening enthusiasts may need a leg up when it comes to selecting plants, shrubs and trees for their landscapes.

Fortunately for these gardeners, much research has gone into selecting plants that have proven themselves to be worthy of being named as Oklahoma Proven Plant Selections.

David Hillock, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension consumer horticulturist, oversees the Oklahoma Proven Plant Selection program and said the 2015 selections have just been announced.

“Every year a set of plants is chosen by horticulturists that have been proven to do well in Oklahoma’s diverse climate and growing conditions,” Hillock said. “Oklahoma Proven began in 1999 and has been providing gardeners with wonderful plant selections for 17 years. The program began by selecting a tree, shrub, perennial and annual, and in 2009 added a new category called Collector’s Choice.”

The Collector’s Choice selection is for the adventuresome gardener and has been shown to do well in Oklahoma, but it may require special placement or a little extra care.

The 2015 Oklahoma Proven selections promise to provide gardeners with a lot of color and texture to highlight the landscape. This year’s tree selection is the hedge maple, the shrub is the barberry (columnar forms), the perennial is the Summer Phlox Volcano® series, and the annual is the spider flower. The Collector’s Choice selection is the black gum.

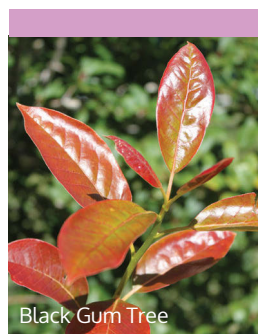
Black gum, also known as black tupelo or sour gum, is an eastern native. Black gums generally are slow to moderate



Hedge Maple Tree



Spider Flower Annual



Black Gum Tree



Summer Phlox Volcano®



growers, reaching a height of 50 feet to 60 feet or more. They make excellent shade trees with beautiful summer foliage and brilliant fall color. They grow well in full sun to part shade and prefer moist, well-drained soil. Improved varieties of black gums should be considered as they offer better form, brilliant fall colors and better disease resistance. One selection, 'Wildfire,' even offers red shoots on new growth.

The hedge maple is a small to medium sized tree growing to 25 feet to 35 feet high and wide. Its compact size makes it a great selection for smaller, urban landscapes, and even under utility lines. In the summer its foliage is a beautiful green, and in the fall the leaves turn a yellow to yellow-green color.

"The branches often develop very low to the ground, which allows the hedge maple to provide excellent coverage for wildlife, but it also can easily be limbed up," Hillock said.

Barberries are a fairly tough shrub and offer a wide variety of leaf color. The newest varieties are the columnar types that offer a vertical element in the landscape. Depending on the cultivar, plants grow 3 feet to 5 feet high and not more than 2 feet wide. While they prefer moist, well-drained soils, they are adaptable to a wide range of soils. Once established, the barberry can be quite drought tolerant.

Plants of the Volcano® series are more compact, more floriferous and more powdery mildew tolerant than other varieties of summer phlox. The flowers are larger, fragrant and borne in abundance on sturdy stems with deep green leaves and grow to be 24 inches to 28 inches tall. The Volcano® series

flower colors range from red, pink, ruby, white, lavender and purple. The flowers also may have eyes of pink, red or white or may be bicolored. While they grow best in full sun, they will grow in shady areas.

"Keep in mind that too much shade and poor air circulation will increase chances of mildew developing," he said. "This plant can be grown as an accent or in larger group plantings. As an added bonus, butterflies and hummingbirds are attracted to the colorful, fragrant flowers."

The final Oklahoma Proven selection this year is the spider flower. The flowers have abnormally long stamens that give the flowers a frilly look, which resembles spider legs. Flower colors come in shades of white, pink, blue and purple. The plants grow 3 feet to 6 feet tall, depending on the cultivar, and do well in full sun to part shade with well-drained soils. Improved varieties of spider flower are stockier, bushier and bloom longer than older types.

"While there's never a guarantee in gardening, gardening enthusiasts who use the Oklahoma Proven selections definitely are a step ahead of the game when it comes to a successful garden," Hillock said. "Oklahoma has very diverse growing conditions when it comes to soil, moisture and heat. Making selections that have proven themselves to do well in such diversity definitely puts Oklahoma gardeners at the head of the pack. Be sure to look for the Oklahoma Proven signs and posters at your local nursery."

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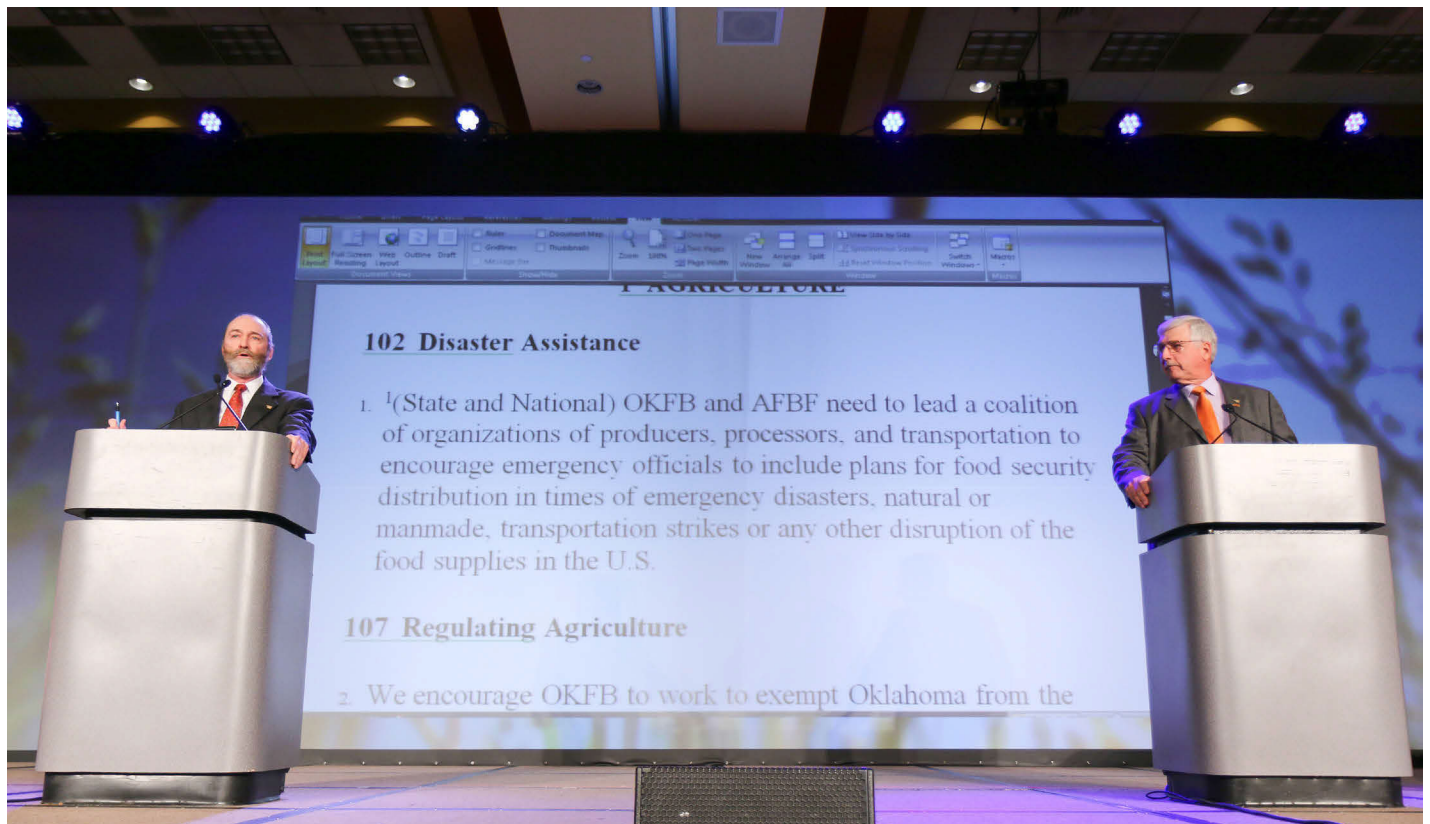
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CONVENTION REVIEW



Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Tom Buchanan and Resolutions Chairman Roland Pederson lead discussion during the business session of the 2014 OKFB Annual Meeting.

OKFB delegates set priority issues for 2015

Voting delegates at the 73rd Oklahoma Farm Bureau Annual Convention selected two issues as top priorities for the next year. The right-to-farm legislation and working against federal overregulation will both be a focus of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's policy.

"The issue of right-to-farm is very important to modern-day production agriculture not only in Oklahoma but also across the nation," said Tom Buchanan, OKFB president. "We are working to protect one of the primary economic drivers in the state of Oklahoma so our industry can continue to function as new technologies develop."

The delegate body also addressed

agricultural issues such as wind and water, along with private property rights, which is a cornerstone of Oklahoma Farm Bureau policy.

"Protecting the private property rights of farmers and ranchers is continually a top priority for Oklahoma Farm Bureau and its members," said Buchanan.

One new state board member was elected and two state board members were re-elected to serve three-year terms on the board of directors. Alfalfa County Farm Bureau member Keith Kisling, Burlington, was elected to represent District 7 on the board. Beaver County rancher Alan Jett, Slapout, was re-elected to represent District 1, and Cotton

County farmer Jimmy Wayne Kinder, Walters, was re-elected to represent District 4.

The Women's Leadership Committee re-elected Kitty Beavers, Stephens County, to serve as chairman for a two-year term. Mignon Bolay, Noble County, was elected to represent District 7 on the committee. The committee also re-elected Linda Fox, Ellis County, to represent District 1 and Margaret Ann Kinder, Cotton County, to represent District 4.

The OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee elected Zac and Amy Harris, Kiowa County, to serve a one-year term as committee chair.



#OKFB14

Thank you to all the members who tweeted along with us during the 2014 Annual Meeting. Social media is one of the most effective ways to reach a large number of people, and you are all helping to spread Farm Bureau's message. Keep tweeting!



Danna Fowble (@nonprofitick)

#okfb14 love it when an organization blesses the food.



Oklahoma Farm Bureau (@okfarmbureau)

The breakout session on a #farmbill update is standing room only! Discussing the difference between ARC & PLC. #okfb14



Brenda Brantley (@BrendaLynn10)

Payne County YFR & Board are Ready, Set, and "Ready to" Grow! THANKS TO OKFB MEMBER BENEFITS & Chris Kidd! #okfb14



Mason Bolay (@BolayMasonOK)

Rise & shine its flap jack time @jessicawilcoxOK @okfarmbureau @kinderjw @anchorbcattle #yfrfundraiser #okfb14



Ron Hays (@Ron_on_RON)

Howdy Neighbors! We are spending the day at #OKFB14 in Tulsa- great to see so many friends here- now down to work as general session starts!



Sandra (@hammyberry)

Yum! Ice cream with 1000 of my friends at the Oklahoma Farm Bureau State Convention! #okfb14



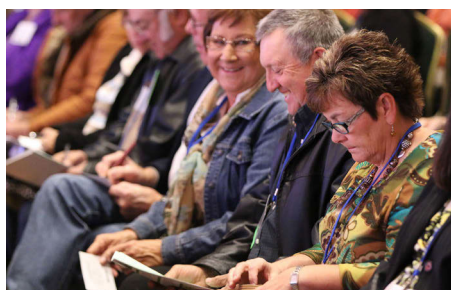
Jessica Wilcox (@jessicawilcoxOK)

Just saw the #PetersonBrothers walk in to our @okfarmbureau Annual Banquet! #SureSignOfAGoodTime #okfb14



Jimmy W. Kinder (@kinderjw)

Water policy is up at #okfb14



Pederson honored with Distinguished Service to Oklahoma Farm Bureau Award

Roland Pederson of Alfalfa County was recognized with the Distinguished Service to Oklahoma Farm Bureau Award during OKFB's 73rd Annual Convention Nov. 15 in Tulsa.

The Distinguished Service Award honors OKFB members who have made outstanding contributions to agriculture and the Farm Bureau organization. Pederson has been working in agriculture for nearly 40 years and joined OKFB in 1972.

Pederson has been actively involved in the organization serving on the Alfalfa County board of directors for 20 years and serving as the state director for District 7 for the past nine years.

"I feel very humbled to receive the

award," Pederson said. "I contributed some to the organization, but nothing like a lot of people have. I'm very thankful for Farm Bureau for allowing this to happen."

Pederson and his wife, Terry, began their transition into farming and ranching full time with a custom harvesting business. Currently, they produce wheat, milo, corn, soybeans, canola and alfalfa. They also run a cow/calf herd and stockers on wheat pasture.

"I developed a love for agriculture growing up," he said. "I've always enjoyed trying to improve the quality of any of the animals and crops I've produced. It's a challenge I've enjoyed, and it's a passion I've had all my life."

The Alfalfa County farmer is an active member in several other state and community organizations. Gov. Mary Fallin appointed him to the Agriculture Diversification Enhancement Board in 2012, and he is a member of the Alfalfa Electric Round-Up Board. He also serves as a board member at Driftwood Christian Church, as a member of the Burlington Lions Club and is a graduate of the third class of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program.

Pederson also served six years in the U.S. Air Force Reserves. He earned his bachelors and masters degrees in natural sciences from Northwestern Oklahoma State University.



Roland Pederson receives the Distinguished Service to Oklahoma Farm Bureau Award during the 2014 annual meeting. Pederson served OKFB in many capacities including serving on the OKFB board of directors for nine years.



E.J. and Wanda Snider farm on the land that has been in E.J.'s family for more than a century. The Sniders were honored with the YF&R Lifetime Legacy award to recognize their lifetime of achievements in agriculture.

Sniders receive YF&R Lifetime Legacy Award

E.J. and Wanda Snider of Chelsea, Oklahoma, are the recipients of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers Lifetime Legacy Award.

E.J. grew up in agriculture in Rogers County and Wanda grew up in Arkoma, Oklahoma, with a love for animals. Together, the couple has continued to farm on the land that has been in E.J.'s family since 1889.

E.J. and Wanda managed a dairy for 30 years on their farm while also maintaining a beef cattle herd.

E.J. and Wanda said they were surprised to be honored with this award by YF&R.

"After a lifetime in agriculture, this is just more than you can expect and better than you can imagine," E.J. said.

E.J. always had a love for draft horses and purchased a team of Belgian mares, which the couple still has today. E.J. often drives the draft horse team in local parades and even takes local church and school groups for rides in their wagon.

The Snider's love for agriculture has

influenced many and the couple enjoys helping others succeed in the industry.

E.J. and Wanda are also active in their community. E.J. currently serves as the vice president of Mayes County Rural Water District 5 and the couple serves on the Rural Water Conservation and Development Board. The couple is also involved in their church community.

The Sniders are lifelong Farm Bureau members and E.J. currently serves as the Rogers County Farm Bureau president. The two have served on the state resolutions committee and as delegates to state convention.

The YF&R Lifetime Legacy Award serves as a living memorial for members by recognizing their life achievements. It is intended to honor an individual or a couple who has spent their life enriching and inspiring rural Oklahomans' quality of life.

“After a lifetime in agriculture, this is just more than you can expect and better than you can imagine.

— E.J. Snider



Marty and Crystal Williams and their two children, Ava and Morgan, farm near Red Rock, Oklahoma. The couple was chosen as the winners of the YF&R Achievement Award.

Noble County couple wins YF&R Achievement Award

Marty and Crystal Williams of Noble County were named the winners of the 2014 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award. They were recognized as OKFB's top young farming and ranching couple at the 73rd annual convention last November.

Marty said the YF&R Achievement Award is one of the reasons the couple chose to become involved in Oklahoma Farm Bureau.

"I saw how neat it was at my first convention I attended to be honored for the work that you do," Marty said. "It was really neat to continue to strive toward that goal, but more than winning the award, we wanted to represent Oklahoma."

Marty and Crystal grow a variety of crops including wheat, corn, grain sorghum, canola, soybeans and native grass pastures on their farm near Red Rock. The couple also manages a cow/calf operation.

“It was really neat to continue to strive toward that goal, but more than winning the award, we wanted to represent Oklahoma.” — Marty Williams

"There is always a crop," Marty said. "Sometimes there are five or six or even seven different crops. But we do it so we can feed the world."

The Williams couple has been active in Farm Bureau for eight years and has served on the state YF&R Committee and the state resolutions committee. Crystal is active in her homeschool co-op and also teaches art classes, while Marty serves on numerous conservation and co-op boards.

As Achievement Award winners, the Williams family received a John Deere Gator HPX 4x4 courtesy of GEO 720 and

P&K Equipment, a chainsaw donated by Smith Farm and Garden in Tulsa and an expense-paid trip to San Diego for the 2015 American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in January.

The couple competed on a national level for the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award during the AFBF Annual Meeting where they represented Oklahoma well and placed in the top 10.

OKFB's Young Farmers and Ranchers Program is open to both men and women, ages 18 to 35, who hold a membership in his or her county Farm Bureau.

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Pittsburgh County couple wins YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Award

J.T. and Sara Bain of Pittsburgh County were named the winners of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 2014 Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award.

The award recognizes successful young adults ages 35 years or younger who are involved in farming but whose primary occupations are not farming or owning an agricultural business. Winners are chosen based on their involvement in agriculture and participation in Oklahoma Farm Bureau and other community organizations.

"I'm just very proud that we can be recognized for this award," Sara said. "It shows our accomplishments and I hope it also helps other people who are in our situation to go out and be active in Farm Bureau and Young Farmers and Ranchers. That's what it's really about."

J.T. and Sara are the owners and operators of Anchor B Cattle, where they currently have a 300 head cow/calf operation and also manage a stocker cattle operation. J.T. is a farm loan manager for the Farm Service Agency in

Pittsburg, McIntosh, Latimer and Atoka counties and Sara is responsible for the day-to-day management of the ranch. The couple has three daughters.

The Bains received a four-wheeler ATV, courtesy of Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma, Chisholm Trail Farm

Credit and Farm Credit of East Central Oklahoma and an expense-paid trip to the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting Jan. 11-14 in San Diego.

The couple competed for the National YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Award during the AFBF Annual Meeting.



J.T. and Sara Bain receive the award for winning the YF&R Excellence in Agriculture contest.

Haken wins YF&R Discussion Meet

Brent Haken of Payne County was named the YF&R Discussion Meet winner at the OKFB 2014 Annual Meeting.

Haken competed against three other participants in three rounds of debate-style discussion where performance was evaluated on the exchange of ideas and information on pre-determined topics. Participants were judged on their ability to offer constructive criticism, cooperation and communication while analyzing agricultural problems and developing solutions.

"I learned and heard so many different inputs from other parts of the state," Haken said. "As we move to the national level, I'll learn so much more about what other agriculturalists in the country have to offer."

As the state discussion meet winner, Haken received an iPad package and the opportunity to compete in the national discussion meet contest in January at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting where he advanced as one of the top 16 competitors.

Brent and his wife Jenny operate a Simmental-influenced cattle seedstock operation near Glencoe. The couple has two children: Emmie and Luke.



Brent Haken, second from right, wins the OKFB YF&R Discussion Meet contest during the 2014 annual meeting.

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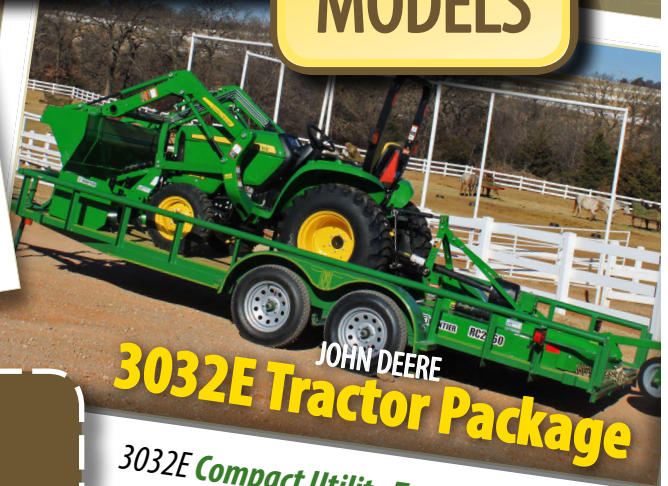
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First Gentleman receives Oklahoma Farm Bureau Agriculture Advocate Award

Oklahoma's First Gentleman Wade Christensen was recognized with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Agriculture Advocate Award during Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 73rd Annual Convention on Nov. 15 in Tulsa.

The OKFB Agriculture Advocate Award honors those individuals who have been an advocate for the agriculture industry to the general public. Specifically, Christensen has worked on promoting agriculture during his time on the National Governors Association Spouses Leadership Committee.

"Oklahoma Farm Bureau thanks First Gentleman Wade Christensen for shedding light on the important role farming and ranching families play in our nation's economy," said Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Tom Buchanan. "The

agriculture industry is well-served and well-represented because of agriculture advocates like Mr. Christensen."

As chairman of the NGA's Spouses Leadership Committee, Christensen moderated a signature session on the topic of agriculture. The session — America's Farms: Feeding and Strengthening Communities — emphasized the importance of the agricultural industry in providing a safe and affordable food source in the U.S. and the world.

Christensen learned the significance of agriculture in Oklahoma as he grew up farming and ranching on his family's land in western Oklahoma. He was active in the FFA and was named Oklahoma's first "Star Agribusinessman."



Gov. Mary Fallin and First Gentleman Wade Christensen attend the banquet to receive Christensen's award.

Garfield County Farm Bureau receives top county award



Gary Johnson and Desdive Milacek accept the John I. Taylor Award on behalf of Garfield County Farm Bureau.

OKFB named Garfield County as the 2014 John I. Taylor Award winner.

The John I. Taylor Award is named after OKFB's first president and serves as the organization's highest county honor. County winners are required to earn the Four-Star Presidential Award and excel in at least six different program areas.

Desdive Milacek, Garfield County Women's Leadership Committee member, said winning this award was a result of their county's hard work during the year.

"You just feel like everything that you put forward and worked so hard for has been rewarded," Milacek said.

Garfield County is active in multiple program areas including policy development, membership, safety, political education, and YF&R.

Gary Johnson, Garfield County Farm Bureau president, said it was tremendous to win this award.

"It was a complete surprise," Johnson said. "I'm just so happy."

Garvin County recognized for political education

Oklahoma Farm Bureau presented Garvin County with the Lewis H. Munn Farm Bureau Builders Award during the OKFB 73rd Annual Convention in November.

The award is named after the second president of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, and each year a specific area of involvement is judged for the award. This year's area was political education.

Garvin County established a committee to develop areas of political education that would benefit not only Farm Bureau members but also the general public. By partnering with the Pauls Valley Chamber of Commerce, the committee presented a local program on the U.S. Constitution.

Dale Schauer, Garvin County Farm Bureau president, said the goal of the event was to help educate people in their

rural Oklahoma community about the U.S. Constitution.

The lectureship featured detailed information on the U.S. Constitution, including the process of writing and practical application. A lengthy question and answer session was held during the program, which showed the value and interest in the topic.

Noble County honored with top county YF&R award

The Noble County Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee is the 2014 recipient of the Charles L. Roff Award.

The Charles L. Roff Award encourages county YF&R groups to improve their local committees and activity participation while strengthening the Farm Bureau organization.

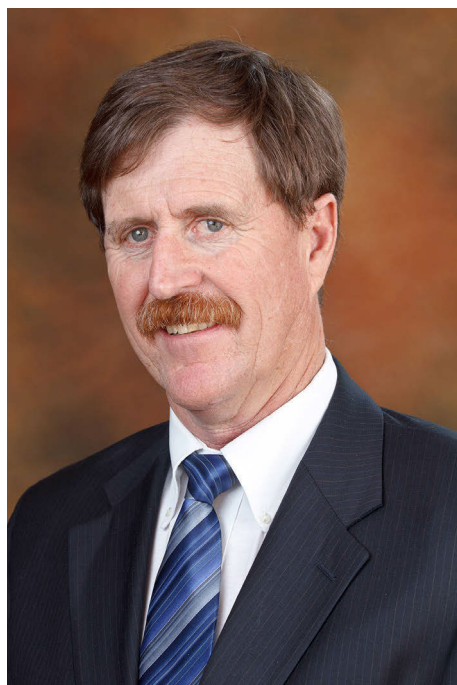
Noble County YF&R's highlight activities for the year included a membership drive, which focused on recruiting new YF&R members, and a Farmhand Olympics, which helped to engage high school students in Oklahoma Farm Bureau. 09626028

Dustin Ratliff, Noble County YF&R

chair, hopes winning this award will bring attention to the work of Noble County YF&R.

"Hopefully our membership in Noble County will increase and we will be more active on a county level," Ratliff said. "It is just phenomenal to win."

OKFB delegates elect three board members



Alan Jett
District 1



Jimmy Wayne Kinder
District 4



Keith Kisling
District 7



Sharon King from the Caddo County Farm Bureau office receives her award for OKFB's Secretary of the Year.

King named OKFB Secretary of the Year

Sharon King of the Caddo County Farm Bureau office was honored as the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Secretary of the Year at the OKFB 73rd Annual Meeting Nov. 14 in Tulsa.

King has worked in the Caddo County office for 11 years. This is King's third time to be nominated as District 3's Secretary of the Year and her first time

to be named the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Secretary of the Year.

"It blows my mind," King said. "I love it, and I'm so very thankful for my job at Farm Bureau."

County secretaries serve as the face of the county Farm Bureau office with not only customers but also with potential new members.

"Sharon is always willing to do anything for Caddo County Farm Bureau," said Brittany Mikles, OKFB field representative for southwest Oklahoma. "She is so easy to work with and there's no doubt she deserves this award."

King and her husband live in Eakley, Oklahoma, where they farm. They have three children and eight grandchildren.

Laubach, Brabham and Thompson named OKFB Journalists of the Year

Paul Laubach of the Hennessey Clipper, Okeene Record, Canton Times and Dewey County Record; Caleb Brabham of the Bristow News; and Herman Thompson of The Morris News were recognized with Oklahoma Farm Bureau Journalist of the Year awards during the OKFB 73rd Annual Meeting.

Laubach and his wife, Maria, are

the owners and publishers of four newspapers, the Hennessey Clipper, Okeene Record, Canton Times and Dewey County Record, in western Oklahoma. He is also a rancher raising registered Hereford cattle near Okeene.

Brabham is a writer for the Bristow News, a weekly newspaper in Bristow.

Thompson and his wife Patsy are the

owners and publishers of The Morris News, a weekly newspaper in Morris.

The three newspaper journalists were honored for their contributions made reporting accurately and regularly about Farm Bureau news, agricultural issues and the importance of these to Oklahoma and the nation.



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ALL AROUND OKLAHOMA



Mary Sloan of Sequoyah County, Desdive Milacek of Garfield County and Clara Wichert of Major County work on their projects during the "Make a Bag" workshop at the 2014 OKFB Women's Leadership Committee Winter Rally.

OKFB Women's Leadership Committee hosts winter rally

Safe holiday shopping, weather and Ag in the Classroom were just a few of the topics discussed at the annual Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Winter Rally on Dec. 5-6 in Norman. More than 70 OKFB women gathered in District 8 for educational workshops and fellowship.

"I am so pleased with the turnout at this year's winter rally," said Kitty Beavers, OKFB Women's Leadership Committee chairman. "The Women's Leadership Committee is an integral part of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, and I'm so glad we all had the opportunity to get together and enjoy each other's company while also attending educational workshops."

The rally, held every year in December,

began with a trade show where OKFB women could purchase goods from several vendors from across the state. The rally also featured a silent auction where attendees could bid on numerous items. The silent auction raised \$613 to benefit the White/Reinhardt Foundation.

During the opening lunch on Friday, the OKFB women heard from Mona Adkisson, Seminole resident and author of "Nevertheless, I Live: Hope for a Hurting Heart." Adkisson spoke to the crowd about maintaining hope despite the twists and turns of life and keeping those who are hurting in mind during the holiday season.

Friday afternoon and Saturday morning were booked with educational breakout sessions. Session topics included crime

trends, Ag in the Classroom, weather, safe shopping and crafting projects.

The dinner on Friday evening featured special guests Kaylee Hughes, Miss Perfect Cheer, and Ashley Thompson, Miss Okmulgee, and musical entertainment from the a capella singing group from the Beta fraternity at the University of Oklahoma as well as Toby Baldwin.

The OKFB women heard from Debbie Greenlea who decorated the White House in Washington, D.C., for Christmas. Each member in attendance also received a charm bracelet to add charms to each year at the conference.

Next year's rally will be consolidated with the Women's Leadership Committee Summer Conference on Oct. 30-31.



Oklahoma Farm Bureau names 2014 Champion Award Recipients

Nine of the state's top agricultural advocates will receive the Oklahoma Farm Bureau 2014 Champion Award during the OKFB Leadership Conference, Feb. 16-17, at the Renaissance Convention Center Hotel in Oklahoma City. The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Board of Directors is recognizing the state leaders and legislators for going above and beyond to protect and improve agriculture and rural Oklahoma during

the 2014 legislative session.

"It is the responsibility of Oklahoma Farm Bureau to protect the livelihood and legacy of our fellow farmers and ranchers," said Tom Buchanan, OKFB president. "We are honored to recognize these state leaders who continue to help make positive strides for agriculture and rural Oklahoma."

The following state leaders will be recognized for their outstanding efforts:

Attorney General Scott Pruitt, Tulsa; Rep. Scott Biggs, Chickasha; Rep. Tom Newell, Seminole; Rep. Mike Sanders, Kingfisher; Sen. Brian Bingman, Sapulpa; Sen. A.J. Griffin, Guthrie; Sen. Ron Justice, Chickasha; Sen. Bryce Marlatt, Woodward; and Sen. Mike Schulz, Altus.

Nominations for the awards were received from county Farm Bureau boards and the OKFB board of directors.

Rosholt named director of fundraising and public relations for Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation



Amanda Rosholt

Amanda Rosholt was recently named the director of fundraising and public relations for the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation. As director, Rosholt will be responsible for raising funds and serving as the media relations contact for the foundation as well as maintaining the website.

Rosholt, who grew up on a farm, said this position gives her an opportunity to advocate for agriculture and spread the word about the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation.

"I'm really excited about it," Rosholt said. "I grew up on a farm and my grandparents created a farming and ranching legacy that my dad and his brother have carried on, so it's exciting for me to have that opportunity to come back home and be able to work with my family and also be a voice for the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation and others who are involved in agriculture."

She said she wants to reach the

younger generation to spread the positive message of agriculture.

"I really want to educate them on where their food and fiber comes from and that there are ways to use business in agriculture and that it is important," the new director said.

The El Reno native previously worked as a field representative for U.S. Congressman Frank Lucas for two years, so working in communications is something she feels quite comfortable with, she said.

Rosholt graduated from Oklahoma State University with an undergraduate degree in journalism and broadcasting and public relations and also earned her Master of Business Administration.

Rosholt and her husband reside in El Reno and have started a cow/calf operation while helping on their family farm. They have two children: Hayden, who is 3 years old, and Drake, who is 18 months old.

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Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation aims to educate, advocate for Oklahoma agriculture

By Amanda Rosholt

Director of Fundraising and Public Relations for the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation

As Americans continue to become further removed from agriculture, the general public relies on gatekeepers like animal rights activists, environmental groups and uninformed media to shape their perception of agriculture. We cannot afford to stand back and let others create misconceptions about what happens inside the farm gates. The Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation was formed as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit to be a proactive and positive voice for agriculture in the state of Oklahoma. We aim to educate all ages of the general public about the importance of production agriculture in our state and our nation.

In partnership with the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation and Oklahoma Farm Bureau, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation is able to provide a mobile agricultural classroom that teaches students of all ages about the importance of agriculture in our everyday lives. The Grown For You commodity trailer uses videos, games and hands-on activities to educate audiences about the commodity crops grown in Oklahoma. It is available to visit schools and community events across the state.

The Bushels for Books Program provides a key opportunity to educate the next generation of producers and informed consumers. In partnership with the OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation takes donated bushels of any commodity crop

“We have an opportunity to change the face of agriculture. It is time for agriculturalists to step up and tell their story — the true story. If we do not, no one will.”

— Amanda Rosholt

and uses the proceeds to put accurate agricultural books in Oklahoma school libraries. In 2014, we provided books for four Oklahoma schools and we look forward to expanding the program in the coming year.

Educating up-and-coming leaders and policymakers will be a key focus for the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation in the coming year. We plan to put together an educational presentation for leadership groups across the state, including those at the state's universities. It is vital to the continued success of agriculture in our state and our nation to have educated and informed policymakers who realize the importance of production agriculture and will fight to protect it.

Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers have always had a heart for service and providing for those in need. Through Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs, the Foundation uses donated cattle and pigs to produce nutritious beef and pork sticks for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's

Food for Kids Program. The Food for Kids program serves 475 elementary schools in 53 counties across central and western Oklahoma, providing backpacks of nutritious food to more than 13,500 chronically hungry children each week.

Our educational and social programs have seen great success in the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation's brief three-year history. We look forward to growing those programs and adding new ones with your support in the coming year. All donations are tax-deductible and will be used to enhance awareness and understanding of agriculture's contribution and importance to the state of Oklahoma. To make a donation, please contact me at (405) 202-1463, or Amanda.Rosholt@aggiving.org.

We have an opportunity to change the face of agriculture. It is time for agriculturalists to step up and tell their story — the true story. If we do not, no one will.





Above: OKFB Director Monte Tucker and OKFB President Tom Buchanan discuss resolutions during the business session of the 2015 American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.

OKFB members travel to San Diego for American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members gathered in San Diego Jan. 10-13 for the American Farm Bureau Federation 96th Annual Convention and IDEAg Trade Show.

The convention featured a variety of workshops on many topics. A livestock market update, FDA regulatory and issue update and application of UAS technology

in precision agriculture were just a few of the informational sessions offered to members in attendance.

Members also heard from several speakers including US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Navy SEAL trainer Commander Rorke Denver and comedian Jay Leno.

Several OKFB YF&R members made the

trip to San Diego to compete on a national level for AFBF YF&R awards. Marty and Crystal Williams, Noble County, competed for the YF&R Achievement Award. Marty and Crystal represented Oklahoma well and made it to the top 10 finalists in the competition.

J.T. and Sara Bain, Pittsburg County, also competed during the convention. J.T.

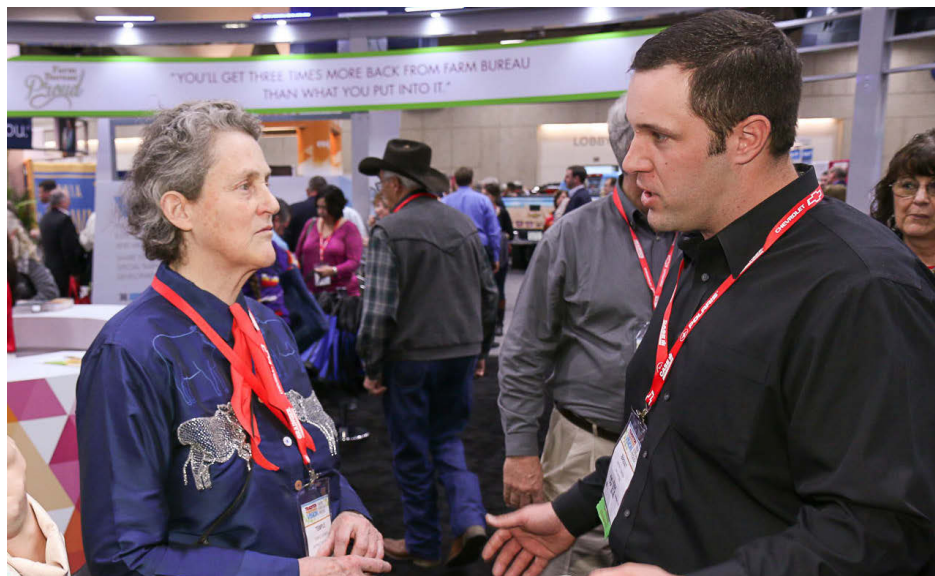


Above right: OKFB President Tom Buchanan carries the Oklahoma flag during the opening session of the AFBF Annual Meeting.

Right: Payne County's Brent Haken visits with Temple Grandin during the IDEAg Trade Show at the AFBF Annual Meeting.

and Sara represented Oklahoma in the competition for the YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Award.

Brent Haken of Payne County represented OKFB in the AFBF YF&R Discussion Meet. Brent discussed a variety of agricultural issues and qualified for the "Sweet Sixteen" in the Discussion Meet.





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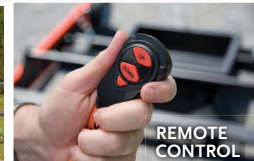
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Deadline to register:
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Contact:
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405.530.2681



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Fields of Green

Noble Foundation researchers tackle the year-round grazing challenge, hoping to unlock its economic potential and improve sustainability.

Cody Goodknight comes from four generations of Tillman County ranchers who have learned from decades of raising cattle how to keep hay costs under control. His herd grazes on native grasses that have adapted to the uncertain rainfall of the southwest Oklahoma plains. He moves his animals to a new pasture every few days or at most two weeks, allowing fields time to rest and revive. He puts up hay most summers and plants winter wheat to tide him through the winter months. The system takes planning, water resources and miles of fencing, but it works. It is how Goodknight manages his 300-400 heifers. It is how most ranchers operate.

A new initiative from The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation hopes one day soon to take this idea further than most managers now can, enabling ranchers to raise their herds with little or no need even to cut hay, much less buy it. Called Forage365, the initiative hopes to create ranches where the grass is always green (or at least greener) with cool-season crops that persist through winter and heat-resistant species able to withstand the scorching summer sun.

"Many producers can make hay. All producers can buy hay," said Billy Cook, director of the Agricultural Division at the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation. "In many situations, it's not the most cost-effective practice. We envision a forage system where cattle can graze year-round and the need for hay is reduced or even eliminated."

In some parts of the country, ranchers rely on hay for up to 150 days of the year, Cook explained. "We want to do a better job of managing existing species," he said. "We now have more technology for management than we've ever had."

A Foundation-wide Effort

The effort brings together different parts of the Noble Foundation campus – from those who investigate the secrets of particular genes, to experts on plant breeding and management, to researchers in applied agricultural practice. Noble scientists and researchers will identify and work with

external scientists and researchers around the region and nation to expedite the progress.

"The Noble Foundation has the combination of expertise and resources, along with the necessary relationships within the research community, to successfully develop and execute this program," said Michael Udvardi, Ph.D, director of the Plant Biology Division. "We needed to collaborate to tackle and solve bigger problems."

And feeding during lean times falls into the category of "big": the expense of hay is one of the major costs of raising livestock. Noble isn't a newcomer to the idea of sustainable grazing. When Ann Wells, DVM, who operates Ozark Pasture Beef near Fayetteville, Arkansas, established her ranch in the late 1990s, she and her business partner were using information they obtained from Noble even then to reduce the need for outside hay. She has learned the value of letting fields rest and replenish themselves. Today, she rarely lets her cattle and sheep stay on any given pasture for more than a day or two.

"It requires planning and thinking," Wells said. "We start at least a season before, if not six months. We keep records, noticing how the pastures change and figuring out what we're going to need. What do these pastures look like now, and how can we get them to grow?"

Still, they don't grow year-round.

The Four Pillars

Given their expertise in the area, Noble scientists settled on a goal of endless forage for two main reasons: first, it stands to have a major impact on the production of beef cattle, the largest agricultural endeavor in the region and the country (and a focus for Lloyd Noble himself in the 1940s). Also, scientists are confident they have the scientific knowledge and resources to make a difference. Select outcomes will be available as early as 2018; however, several of the projects are intended to provide building blocks for scientists and breeders to provide improvements over the next decade.



Noble personnel, along with select collaborators, will be working on the four crops that make up the core of Forage365.

All of these species are available now to farmers and ranchers, Udvardi said, “but the reality is that even if you plant all of those crops, there are some periods of time when they are not growing.”

One of the Noble scientists’ first goals is to coax the plants into longer growing seasons, while making them tougher in the face of drought or cold. This won’t just come from experimenting with different breeds. The Noble Foundation’s Forage Improvement Division, directed by Zengyu Wang, Ph.D., is examining the mechanisms for survival at a molecular level – pinpointing genes that protect a plant from harsh conditions.

All told, Forage365 includes a strategic set of nine interconnecting projects that will improve forage system productivity and the profitability of livestock production, examine management practices and economic systems, and demonstrate how the system can improve sustainability.

“As a whole, Forage365 focuses on the improvement and management of the four pillar species in a unified system, as well as advances the use of cover crops,” Wang said. “This whole-system approach enhances the sustainability of grazing lands, taking quality practices by agricultural producers to the next level.”

Not only will the project benefit livestock management today, it stands to better prepare the next generation of ranchers. Even crops that grow well today will need to better withstand the ever-changing weather patterns.

“It’s predicted there will be a wider range of temperatures and rainfall,” Udvardi says. “I think it’s prudent that we prepare for more challenging conditions for plants in the future. This project assists us today, but it’s also going to revolutionize the future of forages.”

Postdoctoral Fellow Ana Paez Garcia, Ph.D., samples field-grown wheat to study root architecture.



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COUNTRY KITCHEN RECIPES



Presented by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee

Steak Delight

From the kitchen of: Lena Henson, Okmulgee County

Ingredients

2 pounds round steak
2 tablespoons minced onion
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of mushroom soup
2 tablespoons worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 cup cold water

Preparation/Cooking

Cut steak into bite-size pieces and brown with lots of flour. Take off heat and sprinkle with minced onion and let set 10 minutes. Heat together rest of ingredients and pour over meat you have put in a baking dish. Bake at 300° for 2.5 hours. You can also heat together in a crock pot. Serve with noodles or mashed potatoes.

Kitty's Coleslaw

From the kitchen of: Kitty Beavers, Stephens County

Ingredients

1 pound package coleslaw
1 bunch green onions, chopped
1 cup slivered almonds
1 cup sunflower seeds
2 packages ramen noodles (beef)
1 cup salad oil
1/3 cup white vinegar
3/4 cup sugar

Preparation/Cooking

Mix salad oil, vinegar, sugar and season packets from the noodles. Let this set awhile. In another bowl, mix together coleslaw, green onions, almonds and sunflower seeds. Crush the ramen noodles and add to the mixture. Pour over dressing and stir well.

If you are a Farm Bureau member and want to see your recipes featured in *Oklahoma Country*, send a full list of ingredients along with preparation and cooking instructions to Samantha.Smith@okfb.org or mail a hard copy to Oklahoma Country Recipes, 2501 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

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