

# Oklahoma Country

SUMMER 2009

THE MAGAZINE OF  
THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

INSIDE:

**Producers Know Best**

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**Ties With The Past**

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**Turning Out Country  
Doctors**

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**Cookbook Is  
More Than  
Just Recipes**

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**OKLAHOMANS HAVE LONG BELIEVED  
IN GOOD COVERAGE FOR THEIR VEHICLES.**



A lot has changed since those first brave pioneers crossed into Oklahoma aboard wagon trains. Then again, some things have stayed the same, like the need for good protection for whatever it is you drive. These days, however, that protection comes not from a fellow Okie with a trusty side iron, but from a fellow Okie armed with policies from a trusted insurance provider. Oklahoma Farm Bureau agents are proud to provide the kind of quality auto coverage at great rates that every Oklahoman needs. Because they know that on the highways and byways of this state, it's still the wild wild west.

For details about Oklahoma Farm Bureau, visit us online at [okfbins.com](http://okfbins.com)



*We're OK, so you're okay.*

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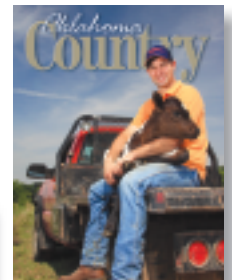
## Hidden number worth \$50!

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 Mike Nichols before the last day of the month Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to

4 p.m. at 405-523-2300.

The OFB membership number hidden somewhere in OKLAHOMA COUNTRY must match the number on the face of your individual OFB 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 must match the hidden number for you to claim the cash prize.



**Cover Image**  
Mason Bolay believes the livestock preemption bill will ensure he and his family can efficiently raise livestock, like this calf, on their Noble County farm.



BY MIKE SPRADLING  
*President,  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
& Affiliated Companies*

## One more reason we're proud to be Oklahomans

**S**ince being President of Oklahoma Farm Bureau I've had an opportunity to do a lot of travel representing our organization and our state. One thing I've been exceptionally proud of, being from a livestock producing state, is Oklahoma's reputation of its livestock industry. The people who have the responsibility of caring for the state's livestock are some of the most caring and giving people on earth. These are the men, women and children who are feeding their animals seven days a week, helping that first-calf heifer calve at 2 a.m. with the wind blowing 20 to 30 miles per hour and the temperatures well below freezing. They are the same people who ensure their animals are well nourished and provided a safe and healthy environment. These are the individuals who may also be helping the sow in trouble having that litter or setting up with the mare in the wee hours of the morning just to make sure the delivery goes well. The members and staff of Oklahoma Farm Bureau know how devoted these people are to their livestock, and so does the Oklahoma Legislature.

With the passage of HB 2151, known as the Livestock Preemption Act, our legislature and governor made a statement in support of the caretakers of Oklahoma's livestock. Basically, this piece of legislation simply states that the Department of Agriculture shall set the standard of care and handling of livestock in Oklahoma. They know that we and the regulatory authority that oversees our industry, the Department of Agriculture, know what's best for the animals under our care. This was a landmark piece of legislation

helping to assure Oklahoma continues to be a leader in the production of the nation's safest food supply while, at the same time, maintaining exceptional health standards and living conditions for the animals under our care.

This piece of legislation was being watched by state Farm Bureaus all across this nation. Why, you might ask, would other states care what happens in Oklahoma regarding livestock regulation legislation? Animal agriculture has been under attack for some time from organizations such as the United States Humane Society and P.E.T.A. These are organizations with entirely different missions than the local Humane Societies in your area. Their mission is to change animal agriculture as we now know it and to eventually eliminate the raising of animals for the purpose of humane consumption. Each state's animal agriculture, one at a time, is being attacked with the efforts of like organizations changing the way we as producers conduct our business at the expense of the consumer. We saw their efforts change California's animal husbandry practices dramatically with the passage of Proposition 2. We've seen similar changes in other states whereby organizations which know the least about the science of animal husbandry have the most regulation over our industry. Oklahoma Farm Bureau does not condone the abuse and mistreatment of animals or livestock. I would be naïve to think every individual who raises livestock or owns animals never mistreated or abuse their animals. Abuse of animals does happen, and as with people, this is certainly an exception not the rule. By far

the largest portion of our society has the health and wellbeing of their animals and livestock at heart. This legislation will help assure that when abuse does occur, that the offenders will be dealt with by the proper regulatory authority and in a timely manner. We are fortunate to live in a state where our legislature understands what we as livestock producers go through to produce and why we do the things we do to produce the world's safest, most economical and most wholesome food source anywhere in the world.

**S**everal state Farm Bureaus are now looking at Oklahoma's Livestock Preemption Act to see how it may fit into the laws of their state and assure the continuation of animal husbandry practices by their state's livestock producers. As president of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, on behalf of our state Board of Directors, our staff, and most important of all, our state's livestock producers, I want to thank Governor Brad Henry, Senate Pro Tem Glenn Coffee, Speaker of the House Chris Benge, Senate author Mike Schulz, House author Don Armes, and our Secretary of Agriculture Terry Peach for their leadership in assuring that Oklahoma will continue to be one of the nation's leading producers of the highest quality, most humanly treated livestock in the world.

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*Mike Spradling*

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BY MATT WILSON  
*Executive Director  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
& Affiliated Companies*

## Farm Bureau perfects the practice

**I**n two and a half years Oklahoma Farm Bureau will be 70 years old. Will the coming new era make for vast changes in the organization or will it continue in much the same fashion that it has up to now?

Oklahoma Farm Bureau stands 12th in the nation with a membership of 170,000 families. Approximately 20 percent of our members are voting members leaving 4 of 5 with less financial ties to agriculture.

Looking at the numbers in another way, Oklahoma's population is around 3.2 million people, or something just over a million households. Almost one of every five of those households holds a Farm Bureau membership.

Actually, Farm Bureau's membership is growing far faster than the state's population. In the last 10 years, Oklahoma has gained only about 30,000 people overall, reflecting a minuscule growth rate of just less than one percent. But since 1999, Oklahoma Farm Bureau has grown by 47,200 members, from 122,800 in 1999 to this year's present total of 170,000. That's an annual average of more than 4,720 new member families, or an increase of 38 percent over the 10 years.

Will that average hold up over the next 10 years? If it does, Oklahoma Farm Bureau membership will stand in the range of 234,600 families by the year 2019.

For Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance, the recent growth has been every bit as impressive. The company wrote 281,000 policies in 1999, worth \$146 million in

premium. In 2009, these totals have mushroomed to 460,000 policies, and \$312 million in premium.

As the Farm Bureau's membership has grown and become more diverse, so have the organization's programs changed to match. Such standbys as public policy, corporate communications, women's and young farmers activities and safety programs are still the federation's cornerstone.

The recent addition of the OFB Legal Foundation and the OFB AgFund have added a strong punch to our already strong grass roots lobbying efforts. The combination of the three makes us as powerful as any organization in the state!

The Members First program, which offers discount buying services to Farm Bureau members, has been a very popular program. From Dodge vehicles to eyewear, motel rooms to rental cars, the discount offerings mean less money out-of-pocket for a wide range of products and services.

Ag in the Classroom, Farm City Festival, scholarships, radio shows, youth programs, and many other programs are designed to compliment the legislative efforts of our organization.

**F**arm Bureau's toughest challenge in the decades to come will be to maintain our political clout, representing a constituency that continues to decline in numbers. In 1942,

when OFB was organized, agriculture was far and away the state's biggest industry, comprising the bulk of the population. Today working farmers represent less than two percent of the population nationwide.

Such numbers suggest the need for new approaches by Farm Bureau to continue to be effective in the legislative and regulatory arenas. We need to continue to be proactive and stay on the offensive. We need to continue to find allies to fight for or against legislation. Water regulations affect many groups. Tax inequities often apply across the board. Economic development priorities are a shared concern. We will have to find allies on all the key issues.

**D**edicated leadership has long been the custom for Oklahoma Farm Bureau. The willingness of thousands of farmers and ranchers over the years to take the time to be involved has made all the difference. The frugal nature of Farm Bureau has been another source of our strength. Members' dues dollars have been treated with the utmost respect. Grass roots leadership has been the custom. Other groups embrace the concept but Farm Bureau has perfected the practice.

As long as Farm Bureau policies and programs are set by individuals working through county Farm Bureaus, the organization will continue to thrive. Thanks to all of you for making OFB great!

# As Oklahoma Pork producers ...



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By DARRYL SINCLAIR  
General Manager,  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
Mutual Insurance Company

## Agents offer identity theft protection

According to the Identity Theft Resource Center, identity theft is a crime in which an impostor obtains key pieces of personal identifying information such as Social Security numbers and driver's license numbers and uses them for his own personal gain. This is called ID Theft.

It can start with lost or stolen wallets, pilfered mail, a data breach, computer virus, phishing, a scam or paper documents thrown out by you or a business (dumpster diving). This crime varies widely, and can include check fraud, credit card fraud, financial identity theft, criminal identity theft, governmental identity theft and identity fraud.

The President's ID Theft Task Force Report says that what makes identity theft especially challenging is its dynamic and rapidly-changing nature. The profiles, purposes and methods of the perpetrators are continually changing.

No one expects identity theft to happen to him or her, but it affects millions of people in North America each year.

When an identity thief strikes, the emotions can feel similar to those

experienced during a house fire. All of a sudden, everything you've worked for is threatened.

We are pleased to announce to our members that we now offer a product that puts the experts in the field of identity restoration on your side. "Identity Theft ShieldSM" is now available through your Farm Bureau agent. It offers an up-to-date Experian credit report, including your personal credit score, continuous monitoring of your credit file and identity restoration, with licensed investigators working to correct damages caused by identity theft.

The identity theft protection is offered through Pre-Paid Legal Services, Inc., by your Oklahoma Farm Bureau agency force.

A Pre-Paid Legal plan is also available at a discount to Farm Bureau members, and enrolling in a Pre-Paid Legal Plan can save \$3.00 on the monthly cost of "Identity Theft Shield."

Call or visit your county Farm Bureau for more information.

## Oklahoma Country

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# THE BEEF CHECKOFF.... FROM A PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE



In its first year, "Powerful Beefscapes" reached 89.7% of the target an average 16.3 times.

Members of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau have played a significant role in the beef checkoff program since its inception. Leaders of our organization saw a need to increase consumer demand for beef through research, marketing, promotion and education and they were willing to support a mandatory checkoff on themselves. Twenty-five years later, the results of those efforts are still paying off.

I believe without a doubt the most beneficial programs to beef producers are those that deal with research. We continue to see time and again how research is a vital component in helping develop new beef cuts that meet consumer

demand. Research has also helped cattlemen produce a safer healthy product more efficiently while maintaining the same level of quality.

Meeting the demand of consumers is obviously the financial driver of our industry. However, without the creative and powerful advertising programs, the public would not know the

importance of beef to a nutritious, balanced diet. We are fortunate for the knowledge behind the checkoff-funded advertisements, and thanks to market research, the cutting-edge campaigns that make a lasting impact with consumers.

Since I have become involved with the beef council and a decision maker for the state checkoff

program, I am encouraged by the direction we have taken with our research-based promotional materials. We are truly moving the needle when it comes to consumer demand as people know that beef is an essential part of a well balanced diet.

The checkoff is an important part of telling the beef story. We, as producers, have a product that we are proud of and that we want to promote to the consuming public. I believe the beef checkoff allows producers to take an active role in promoting beef, and through excellent research and exceptional, memorable advertising provided by beef checkoff dollars, producers have seen an impact on their bottom line.



In FY08 the checkoff distributed more than 8,400 copies of its "Enriching Family Mealtimes" toolkit to schools and parents in response to research showing regular family mealtimes have a positive effect on children.



In order to enhance the value of market cow beef, the checkoff funds research to increase consumer satisfaction. Recent successes include:

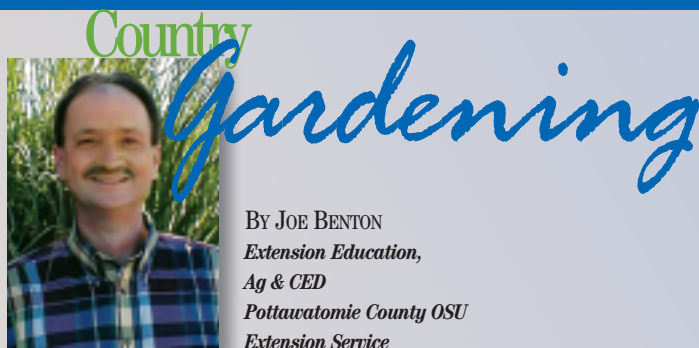
- Product enhancement - The ability to predict yield grade, ribeye size and beef quality using video image analysis systems
- Beef Innovations - The introduction of five new cuts from the chuck roll, thank to Muscle Profiling research



*Scott Dvorak*  
OFB Representative to OBC Board



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BY JOE BENTON  
*Extension Education,  
 Ag & CED  
 Pottawatomie County OSU  
 Extension Service*

## Saving Seeds

**E**nd of summer is when many plants produce seeds, if they haven't begun already. You may want to collect and save seeds of favorite flowers and vegetables to have for future years. To have success saving seeds, there are a few facts you should know and tips you should follow.

The first key fact to success is to avoid collecting seeds from hybrids. These are marked as such in catalogs and on seed packets. Hybrids are produced from two different parents, often unknown to you, so you need these same parents to produce the same plant you are collecting seeds from. If you don't know if a plant is a hybrid, you can still collect and save seed, but just be aware you may not get the same plant from these seeds.

Even if a flower or vegetable isn't a hybrid, many cross (cross pollinate) with other similar selections. This, too, will result in different plants than the one you select seeds from. In this case, the bees or other pollinators have done the crossing to produce a hybrid. Sometimes it is exciting to see just what kind of plant you will get from collected seeds.

Generally with flowers, it is easier to get identical plants from seeds of species than of cultivars (cultivated varieties). With annual flowers, many of these cultivars may be hybrids. With perennial flowers, many cultivars are grown from vegetative means such as cuttings, and won't necessarily produce the same plant when grown from seeds.

If you don't want plants to cross, you need to think about this in spring, and plant them some distance apart. This is often a quarter mile or more, more than is available in most backyards. Spring is also the time to consider

if you want to make your own crosses, and involves special tricks to make sure seeds are produced only from your crosses.

Some of the easier vegetables to collect seeds from, if not hybrids, include beans, broccoli, dill, corn, onions and related plants such as chives and leeks and garlic, and muskmelon. These are bee pollinated except for beans (self pollinated) and corn (wind pollinated). For corn, dry seeds on the ear, then husk and remove. For muskmelon, similar to the slightly more difficult cucumber, strain seeds from the pulp, and spread on paper to dry. For onions and related species, pick heads when the black seeds show, then dry in paper or cloth bags. You can also harvest onion bulbs, dry, overwinter non-freezing, then replant.

**M**ost flowers are pollinated by bees, butterflies and moths. Bees can't see red, so the flowers they pollinate tend to be yellow, or sometimes blue. Some of these have ultraviolet "landing patterns" which they see also. Butterflies see well, and red, but have a weak sense of smell. So most of the flowers they pollinate have little or no fragrance. Moths are nocturnal, so the flowers they pollinate are often whites or colors seen more easily at night. Moths also smell well, so they pollinate strongly fragrant flowers easily found at night.

Some general tips for success saving seeds include the following:

- Select plants that have the best vegetative or fruit characteristics, not necessarily those that produce the most seeds.
- Side dress plants with fertilizers high in potash (the third ingredient of the three in a fertilizer analysis; choose one with 10 or higher).

- Keep plants healthy using controls for diseases and insects if needed.

- Use netting to keep out unwanted insects that may damage seeds, and birds that may eat them.

- Collect seeds when fully ripe. Hang whole plants, stalks with seedheads, or just the seedheads dry in a protected place to avoid pests and weather extremes.

- "Thresh" seeds in tight mesh bags. Close tightly before beating or stomping on the bag. You can often just place flower seeds in paper bags, close, and shake vigorously.

- Remove plant debris and chaff with fine mesh screens. "Winnow" by pouring seeds down in front of an electric fan (just not too close). The heavier seeds will drop and the lighter chaff will blow further away. Dry seeds in thin layers on screens, or on nylon mesh screens if seeds are tiny.

- Keep seeds in tight containers (such as quart canning jars), in cool (40 to 50 degrees F, such as a refrigerator), and dry. I often use small plastic bags for each type of seeds (don't forget to label them). Add some corn meal, silica gel, or similar in the bottom of the container to absorb moisture. Such low moisture (10 to 15 percent is ideal) helps to keep seeds viable and avoid premature sprouting.

With many plants you may be able skip many of these steps—just collect seeds without a lot of debris, and store them properly. Make notes next season of those varieties that "come true" from seed (make the same plants as those you harvest the seeds from), so you can keep some of your favorite plants going yearly on your own, and more cheaply than buying new ones. This is also the way to preserve heirloom seeds.

See you next time!

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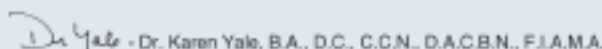
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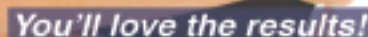
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—Lillian Cargill, Holly Springs, MS

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# Producers

A man wearing a tan baseball cap, an orange and white plaid short-sleeved shirt, and blue jeans stands in a grassy field. He is looking down at a yellow object in his hands. Several cows are visible in the background, including a white cow with black spots in the foreground on the left. The scene is set in a rural landscape under a clear blue sky.

*OFB's livestock preemption bill makes it clear that animal rights activists are not welcome at the table for animal welfare discussions in Oklahoma.*

*By Traci Morgan*

# Know Best

**A**s animal rights activists move state to state, picking off traditional production agricultural practices, Oklahoma has set up a roadblock at its borders with a clear message: you're not welcome here.

"Oklahoma is not a good playground for your issues," said Rep. Don Armes, a southwest Oklahoma livestock producer and chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Mike Spradling said farmers and ranchers will not tolerate interference from outside groups.

"We don't want an outside group coming into Oklahoma, mandating how we care for livestock," he said. "Our producers have learned through experience and training the proper animal husbandry, and they have every intention to care for animals in the best possible way."

State agricultural leaders have become more and more concerned as



*Young producer Mason Bolay, Perry producer and member of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, feeds hay to his cattle herd. He said groups who seek to place restrictions on livestock production practices should be aware of potential ramifications. "Agriculture producers are who feed America. If you tie our hands behind our back with regulations and laws and restrictions, then we cannot produce our animals and products in an efficient manner. And someone's going to go hungry."*

they've watched animal rights groups, such as the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), engage in battles against agriculture in several states and win. Their growing list of state victories includes Florida, Arizona, Oregon and Colorado.

Perhaps their most publicized victory was the passage of Proposition 2 in California, which forever changed the face of traditional agricultural practices in that state. The ballot initiative, passed in November 2008, prohibits the confinement of certain production livestock.

**I**t's victories like this that have Oklahoma livestock producers on edge.

"Having people tell us what to do who don't understand what we do is a huge concern for all agriculture producers," said Mason Bolay, Perry producer and member of OFB's Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee. "If that were to happen here in Oklahoma, it would be devastating to Oklahoma agriculture, and we can't afford to let that happen."

Oklahoma Farm Bureau's farm and ranch leaders agree and have decided enough is enough. Instead of sitting back and waiting for the attack that would surely come, they will stop activists at the gate.

"Our livestock producers, who are feeling the pressures of the animal rights movement, were eager to step out and get something on the books before what happened in California or any other state happens here in Oklahoma," said Lori Kromer Peterson, OFB vice president of public policy.

**S**o, Oklahoma became the first state in the nation to get out in front of the action and protect its livestock industry with OFB's livestock preemption bill. HB 2151, authored by Armes and Sen. Mike Schulz, will provide a uniform, state standard for the care and handling of livestock.

Armes said it's better to be in the driver's seat on an issue than playing catch-up.

"I think if you just sit back and wait and assume things are going to go well, then you have to play defense all the time," he said. "I'd much rather get ahead of the curve than to wait until somebody actually makes an attack."

The original version of the bill stated the Oklahoma State Legislature would set the standard for animal welfare in the state, however, the final legislation gives the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry the authority to set the standard for the care and handling of livestock.

"If we're going to write regulations that deal with the care and handling of livestock," said Schulz, vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee and southwest Oklahoma farmer and rancher, "then it should be left up to the experts that not only know the industry, but know how it affects us every day on our farms and ranches."

Surprise opposition to the bill came from a misunderstanding about zoning. As the legislation made its way through the process, municipalities became concerned about the bill's affect on local ordinances.

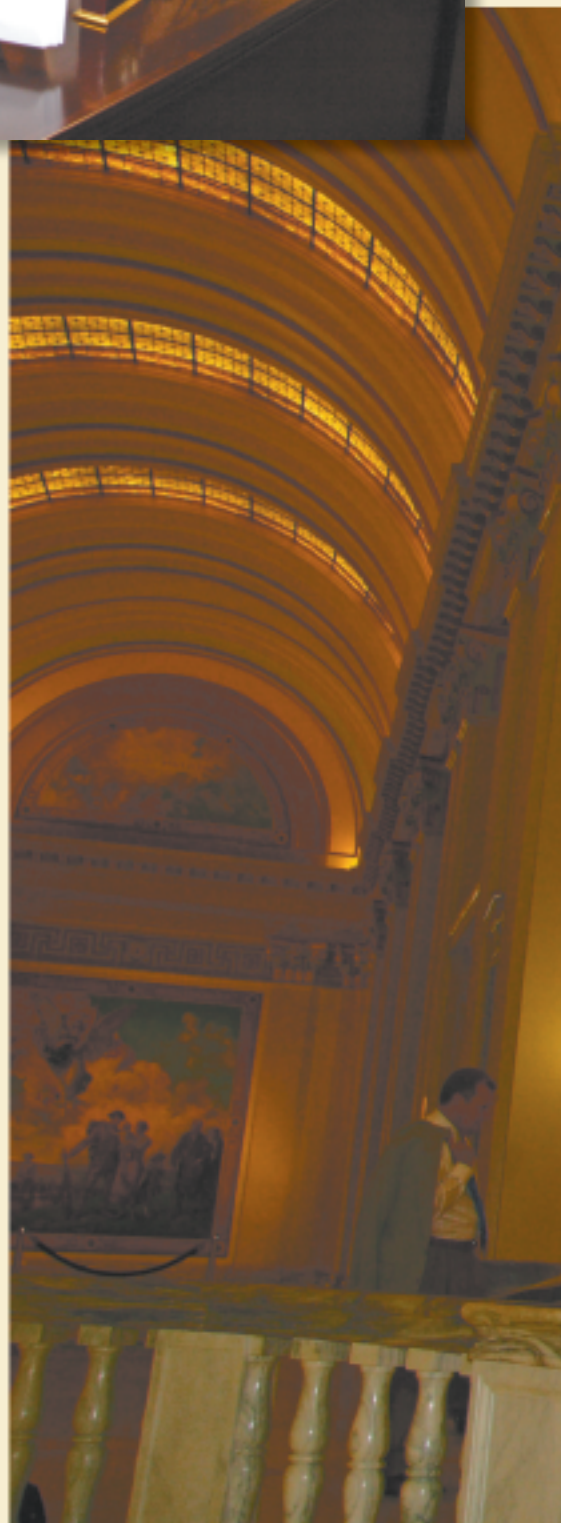
"We were so clearly focused on our opposition coming from animal rights activists, that we did not foresee the debate on zoning," Peterson said.

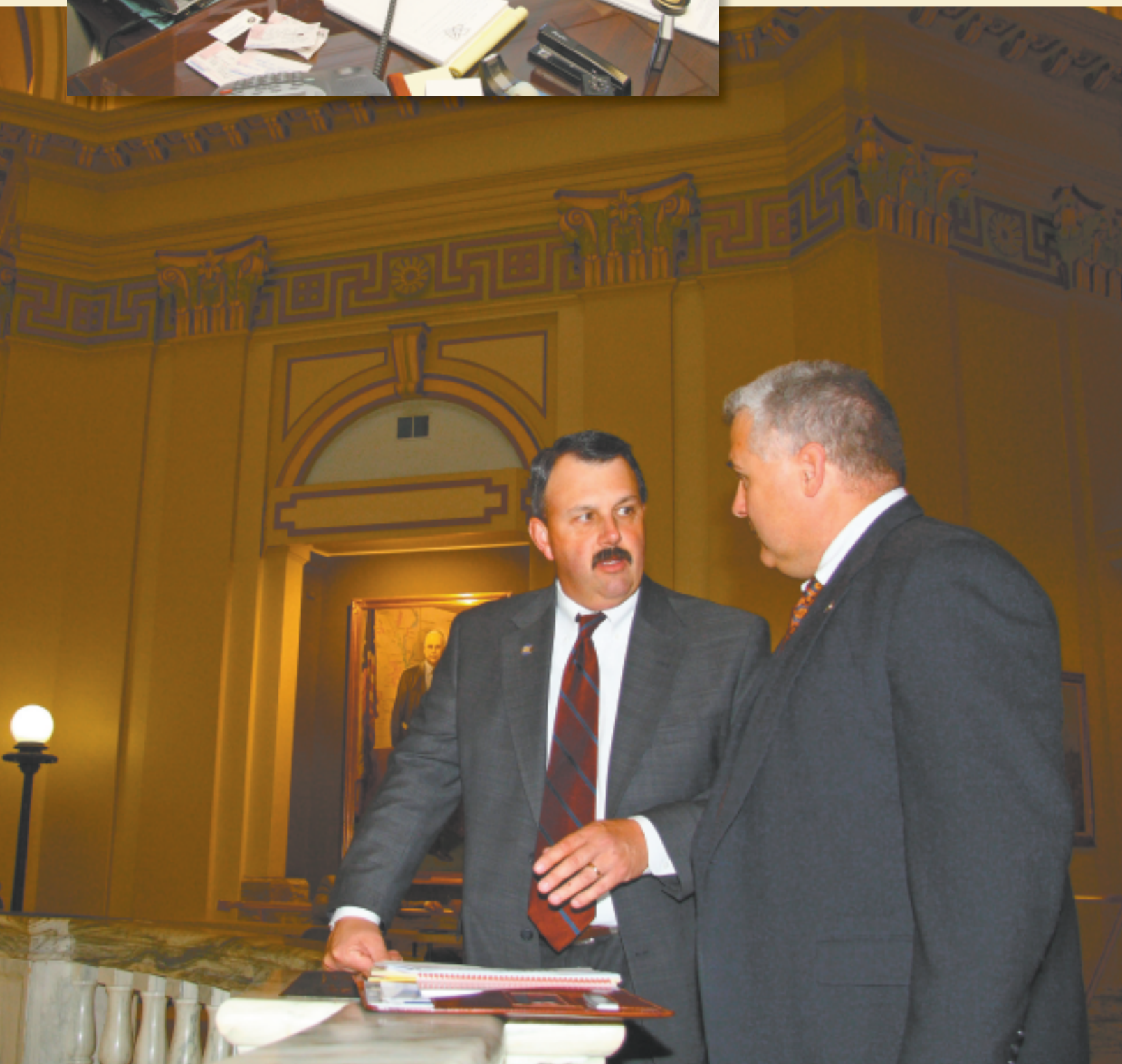


*Rep. Don Armes, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and southwest Oklahoma producer, works in his office during the recent legislative session. Armes authored HB 2151, Oklahoma Farm Bureau's livestock preemption bill.*

*Sen. Mike Schulz, vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee and southwest Oklahoma farmer and rancher, takes care of business in his office at the Oklahoma State Capitol. Schulz is the Senate author of HB 2151, Oklahoma Farm Bureau's livestock preemption legislation.*

*Rep. Don Armes, left, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and Sen. Mike Schulz, vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, visit about HB 2151, the livestock preemption bill they authored during this legislative session. HB 2151 gives the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry the authority to set the standard for the care and handling of livestock in Oklahoma.*





In the end, Schulz said, the issue was clarified to the satisfaction of all involved in the discussion.

"That dialogue, I think, actually made the bill stronger by clarifying that our intention is not to zone," he said. "Our intention solely deals with the care and handling of livestock."

**O**klahoma Governor Brad Henry signed HB 2151 into law May 12.

Schulz said the bill was never intended as a challenge to animal rights activists, but to protect the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers across the state.

"There are some groups out there that thought we were drawing a line in the sand and picking a fight," he said. "I never viewed it as picking a fight. I always thought we were doing the right thing to protect the livestock producers in the state of Oklahoma, so they can continue to operate their farms and ranches the way they know best, the way they've done for years and years; taking care of their animals in a very safe and well cared for manner."

"Animal agriculture and agriculture in general is second only to oil and gas in Oklahoma. It's a huge industry here," Arnes said. "A lot of us make our living from animals and agriculture, and we're the best stewards of those animals. We have the most knowledge... the ability to

*Young producer Mason Bolay, member of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, looks over his herd of cattle near Perry. Bolay says recent victories by animal rights activists have him on edge. "Having people tell us what to do who don't understand what we do is a huge concern for all agriculture producers."*

care for those animals better than anybody else."

Bolay knows that times are changing in agriculture, but is confident farmers and ranchers are keeping up. He also has a warning for those who would work to "cut off the hand that feeds you."

"Agriculture producers feed America," he said. "If you tie our hands behind our back with regulations and laws and restrictions, then we cannot produce our animals and products in an efficient manner. And someone's going to go hungry."

The livestock preemption legislation has attracted national attention as other states are being targeted by animal activists attempting to restrict livestock production methods.

"It's smart to be proactive," Peterson said. "There are many other states who are attempting to put legislation like this on the books. And they really had the same feeling that we had... don't wait three or four years from now and we have a problem, and we didn't take care of it when we could have."

Peterson does not believe farmers and ranchers can breathe easy just yet... only a little easier.

"You know, I'd love to say we're done, but I don't think we are," she said. "I think this is definitely a step in the right direction. Certainly, some of what we do down the road will have to be reactionary when we see what animal rights activists are attempting to do."

"I'm sure that we will continue to work on this," Peterson added, "but I think we're one step ahead from where we were before this legislative session now that we have this clear statement in protection of the livestock industry on the books that is law in Oklahoma."

***"A lot of us make our living from animals and agriculture, and we're the best stewards of those animals. We have the most knowledge... the ability to care for those animals better than anybody else."***

