

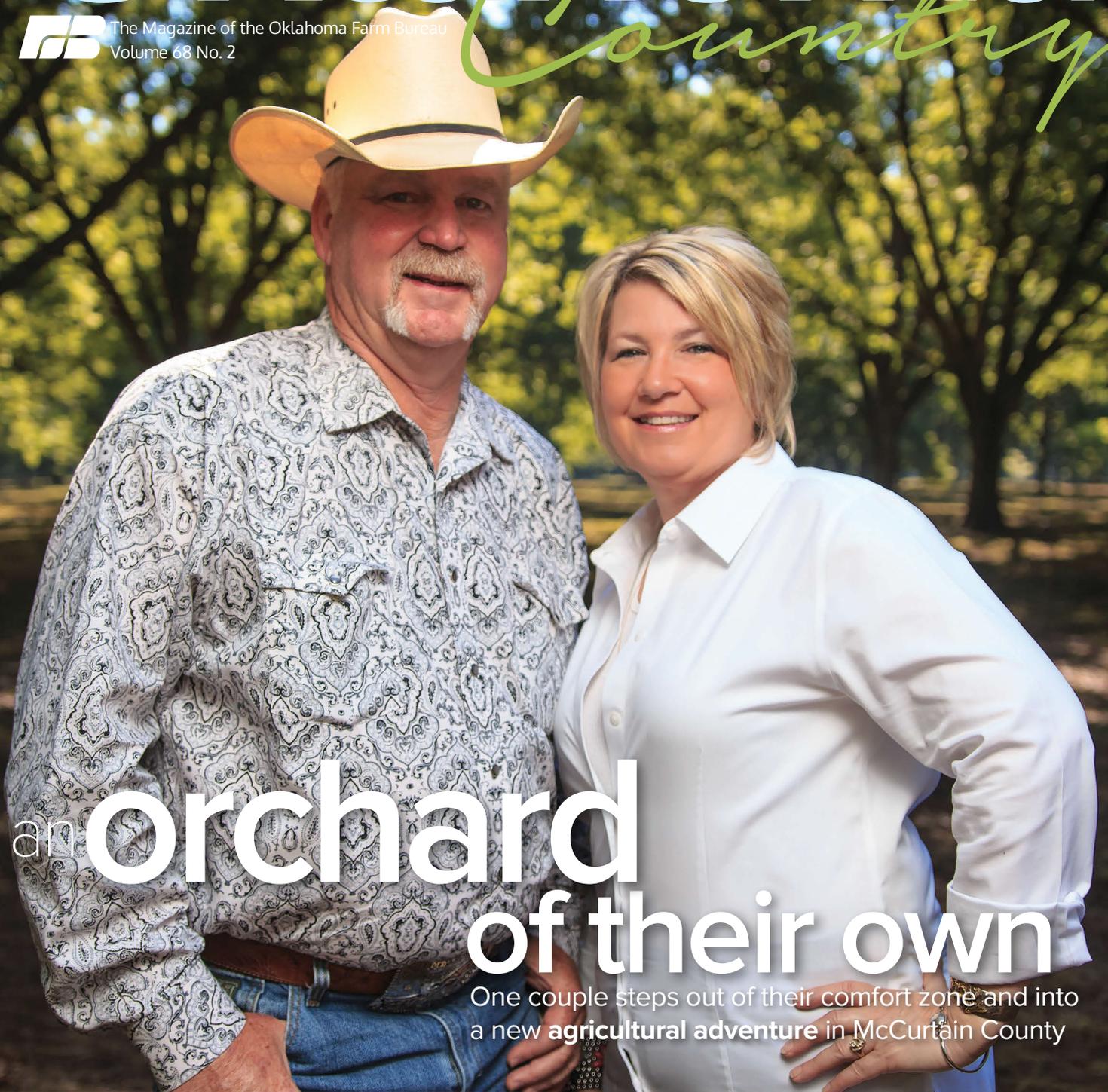
Oklahoma

The Magazine of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Volume 68 No. 2

Country

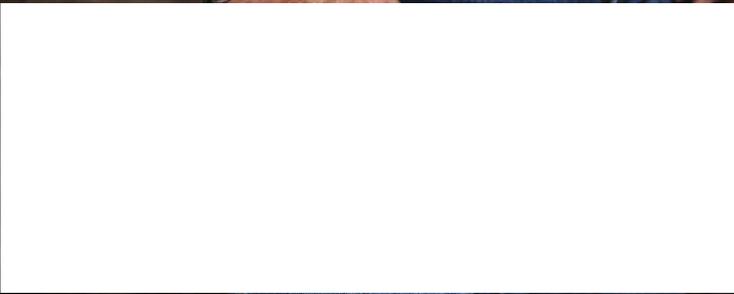


The Magazine of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau
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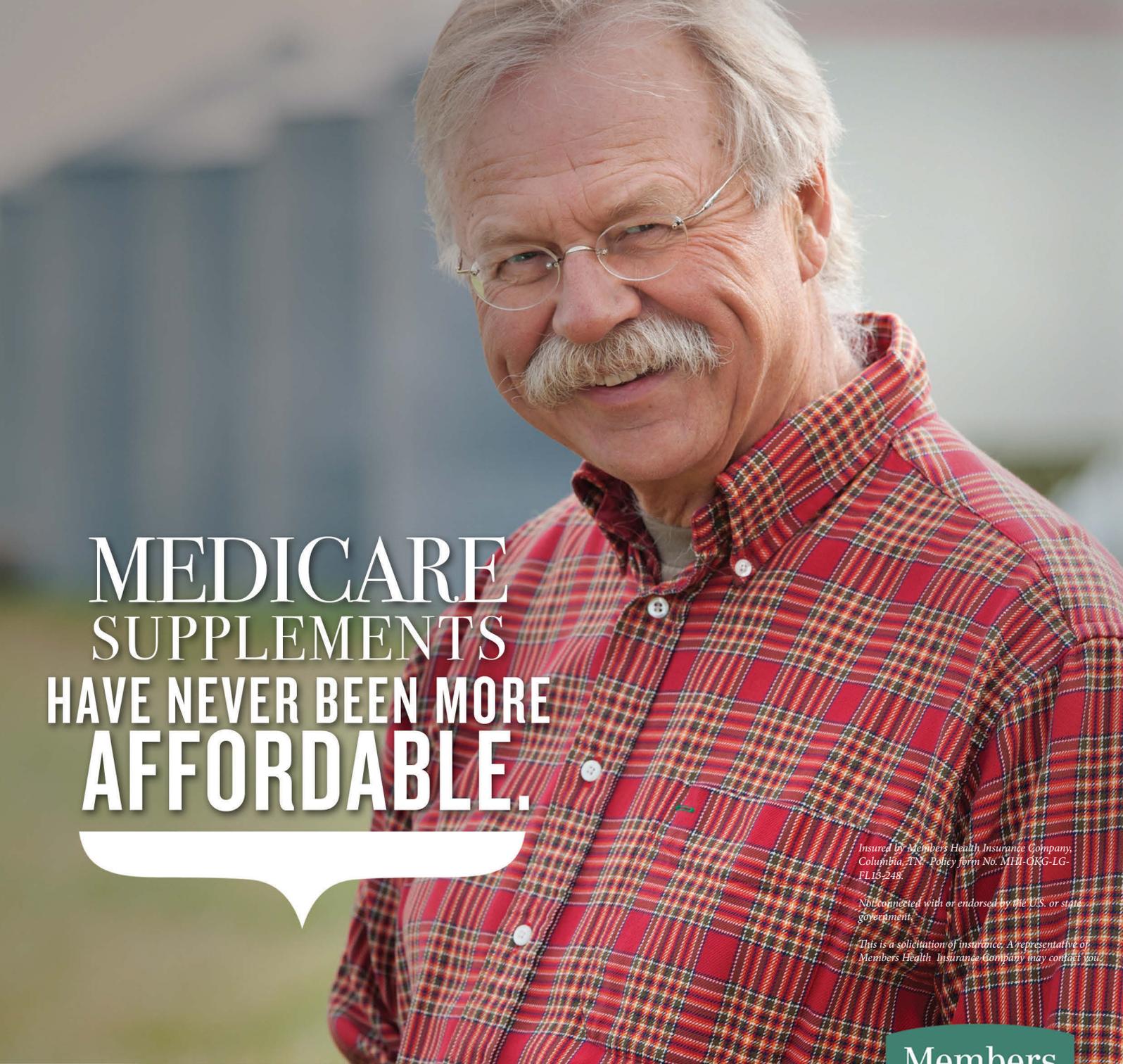


an orchard of their own

One couple steps out of their comfort zone and into a new agricultural adventure in McCurtain County



- The Honor System**
Small-town service, supplies and stories
- Lincoln to Local**
Recapping ag victories in the 2015 session
- Consider the Benefits**
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Oklahoma Country

Volume 68 No. 2
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EDITORIAL TEAM

John Collison

Vice President of Public Policy and Media Relations

Sam Knipp

Director of Corporate Communications

Dustin Mielke

Director of Corporate Communications

Hannah Nemecek

Communications Specialist



Photo by Dustin Mielke

ON THE COVER

Keith and Ski Bateman of McCurtain County own and operate their pecan orchard in Idabel, Okla. To learn more about the Batemans and their adventure with pecans, 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 Hannah Nemecek 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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By Dustin Mielke

A couple leaves behind everything they know in Texas to pursue a new way of life in southeastern Oklahoma.



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By Sam Knipp

At this old-fashioned hardware and feed store in east central Oklahoma, customers are known by name and trust reigns supreme.

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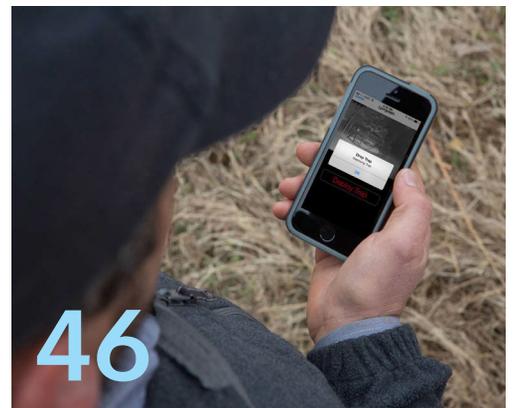
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PRESIDENTIALLY SPEAKING

Protecting our farm and ranch heritage

By Tom Buchanan

President, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

A few years ago, I remember a conversation about protecting Oklahoma's farms and ranches. Animal rights extremists in several states passed legislation threatening the livelihood of agricultural producers. You, our members, wanted to make sure the rights of Oklahoma agriculturalists were never inhibited, and approached our state board with your concerns. Oklahoma Farm Bureau agreed the best option was to let Oklahoma voters decide by sending a state constitutional amendment to the ballot. As an organization, you chose to make this issue a priority, and all 77 counties were on board as we pursued it at the state Capitol.

After much hard work from OKFB staff, leaders and members, I am happy to report the Right to Farm amendment will appear on the general election ballot as State Question 777 in November 2016. The state question will protect our farming and ranching heritage, where agriculture ranks No. 2 in Oklahoma's economy. This is no small thing in a state that has produced food and fiber for more than 100 years. It also will protect consumers by ensuring access to a safe, abundant and affordable food supply.

Some individuals think it is unnecessary to take such measures. Oklahoma is a rural, agriculture-friendly state, not California, Washington, Oregon or Hawaii where anti-agriculture legislation has passed. But the latest agricultural census indicated only 2 percent of Oklahoma's population is directly involved in production agriculture. With the average Oklahoman three to four generations removed from the farm,

it is vital we take appropriate action to ensure the future of the agricultural industry.

Although Right to Farm passed through the legislature, the hard work is just beginning. OKFB members, the cards are in your hand and it is up to you to make sure we have the winning hand. Our goal for the next year and a half is to make this state question a reality. You, OKFB members, asked for this bill to pass. Now, it is upon all of us to tell the world Oklahoma farmers and ranchers are crucial to the future of our state.

In August, we will come to you with a plan of action for the next year and a half. Trust me when I say this campaign will be long, hard and expensive. We need each and every one of you to

play a part in keeping agriculture out of the hands of animal rights activists and other anti-agriculture groups. Hundreds of thousands of dollars will flow into the state from outside interests trying to defeat us.

This is a fight not only for us today, but also for our children and grandchildren tomorrow. OKFB members, you have the opportunity to write a defining moment in our state's history. Oklahoma cannot survive without our agricultural industry. It is time to take a stand to our enemies. We'll see you in August!

“With the average Oklahoman three to four generations removed from the farm, it is vital we take appropriate action to ensure the future of our industry.”

— Tom Buchanan

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EXECUTIVE OUTLOOK

Happy days are here again

By Monica Wilke

Executive Director, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

Drought is a term we have heard all too often. Over the past few years, our farms and ranches were drastically impacted. We persistently prayed for rain. Finally, it started to rain and our fields, ponds and lakes were refreshed.

Although drought is devastating to everyone affected, it helps us evaluate our practices and procedures. Are we effectively and efficiently using our water? When the drought ends, how do we plan for the next? During a drought, all we think about is water. But when the rain comes, we quickly forget it was ever an issue.

We, at Oklahoma Farm Bureau, also have experienced a sort of drought over the past few years. With a string of unprecedented weather events, the entire insurance industry faced tremendous losses. The combined storm damage and economic recession led Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. to reevaluate our business model. I am pleased to report happy days are here again and OFBMIC is open for business! Although it was no simple process, OFBMIC was able to partner with others to bring products to better suit your needs. We are grateful for the continued support of our customers and look forward to building on this model going forward.

Of course, progress for OFBMIC also means success for the organization. The 2015 Oklahoma legislative session was one for the books. I am very proud of our dedicated Public Policy Division staff who worked tirelessly to protect Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers through the passage of the Right to Farm bill. This victory is a huge step toward preserving the prosperity of agriculture in our state. However, we cannot stop now!

As the bill heads to the general election ballot in November 2016 as State Question 777, I want to encourage you, as agriculturalists, to tell your stories. Living in a state composed of mostly rural areas, you would assume Oklahomans easily would pass a measure with the interests of agriculture in mind. However, we cannot take anything for granted. During the next year and a half, our staff will work to ensure Oklahoma votes in favor of agriculture, but we cannot do it alone. We need you to continue stepping up and telling your story.

I personally learned the importance of sharing agriculture with my colleagues during this past year. As a member of Leadership Oklahoma, I interacted with key leaders from various industries across Oklahoma. I was shocked to learn most of these individuals had little to no understanding of agricultural practices. Many of you can certainly relate. So many people surrounding us do not understand the importance of agriculture. Throughout the experience, I was able to educate

the group about our industry and how important it is to our state, our nation and our world. I encourage you to do the same. Oklahomans must understand agriculture is vital to the welfare of our state and nation.

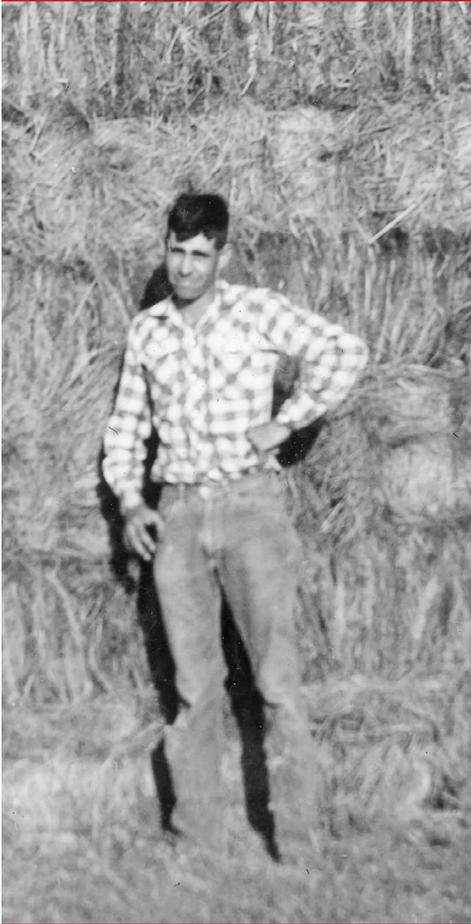
As our Public Policy Division worked to protect you at the state Capitol, our Organization and Membership Division offers a flood of new opportunities to enhance your OKFB membership. Our members always have been and always will be our first priority, so we want to make sure you have the best possible experience. When planning your summer vacation, do not forget about your member benefits. Purchase a discounted gas grill at Sears Commercial, stay at a Choice Hotel, visit Great Wolf Lodge, and more. Learn about all the summer savings you can enjoy on page 20.

With summertime in mind, many of us have plans for harvest, cookouts, swimming and other fun activities. However, the busyness of summer keeps some of us from thinking about safety. Our Safety Services Division has been hard at work training youth around the state in fire, ATV and bike safety. OKFB also is partnering with the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office's ENDUII campaign to fight against impaired driving.

As we improve and evolve organizationally, our communications staff continues to distribute high-quality, relevant information to keep you updated on all things OKFB. Whether through press releases, newsletters, magazines or social media, our staff strives to be your primary means of information. Be sure to stay in touch with the latest news and events by following @okfarmbureau on Twitter and Instagram and liking Oklahoma Farm Bureau on Facebook.

We as agriculturalists understand seasons of plenty and seasons of drought will come and go. The same goes for us organizationally; it is not a question of if challenges will arise, but a matter of when they will arise. As a farmer must do his best to prepare for drought when he or she is in plenty, we as an organization must learn to do the same. We already have made improvements to our strategies and practices, but we are prepared to proactively evolve to meet your needs. We are here to serve you! 2015 has proved to be a year of plenty, and I look forward to reaping the fruits of our labor as the year continues.

We measure success



in generations.

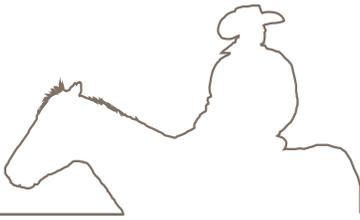
Each and every day across our state, farm and ranch families take up the challenge to feed, clothe and fuel our world. They build upon the sacrifices, the dedication and the progress of those before them who worked the land and tended to the livestock. Generations of Oklahoma Farm Bureau members have rallied together to lift up agriculture and rural Oklahoma, and today, Oklahoma Farm Bureau is helping ensure a bright future for farmers, ranchers and citizens all across our state. Because what we do in rural Oklahoma will touch lives across our nation and our world for generations to come.

OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

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We are rural Oklahoma.

Featured: Four generations of the Williams Family, Red Rock, Oklahoma.



OKFB reflects on 2015 legislative session

In a tremendously successful first year of the 55th Oklahoma Legislature, Oklahoma Farm Bureau focused primarily on one issue – an amendment to the Oklahoma Constitution guaranteeing the Right to Farm and Ranch. For the past few years, OKFB members made the passage of a Right to Farm and Ranch amendment a priority issue.

As a result, OKFB championed HJR 1012, written by Rep. Scott Biggs and Sen. Jason Smalley. The bill proposed an amendment to the Oklahoma Constitution to ensure farmers and ranchers have the right to engage in farming and ranching practices. HJR 1012 placed the amendment on the November 2016 general election ballot as State Question 777.

If approved, the constitutional amendment will prevent the Legislature from passing any law that abridges the rights of citizens and lawful residents to employ agricultural technology, livestock production and ranching practices without a compelling state interest.

“[The amendment] certainly gives a good level of protection for all producers in the state of Oklahoma, no matter how big or how small,” said Sen. Mike Schulz. “It just gives us another level of protection to guarantee we can continue to do what we do on our farms and ranches every day.”

As OKFB members know, HJR 1012 is necessary because of well-funded environmental organizations, such as the Humane Society of the United States, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and the Sierra Club, which actively oppose any modern agricultural production methods.

“These groups think they know what is best for those who live on and work on the land,” said John Collison, OKFB vice president of public policy and media relations. “They want control of farming and ranching operations they do not know anything about.”

Animal rights extremists are using initiative petition, litigation and legislation as weapons of choice to dictate how livestock are raised. Similarly, other organizations oppose growing improved crops and forage, like genetically modified organisms, by using those same weapons.

In August, OKFB staff and leaders will address Farm Bureau members concerning a plan of action for the next year and a half. Although the campaign will be long and expensive, Oklahoma farmers will reap the rewards far into the future, Collison said.

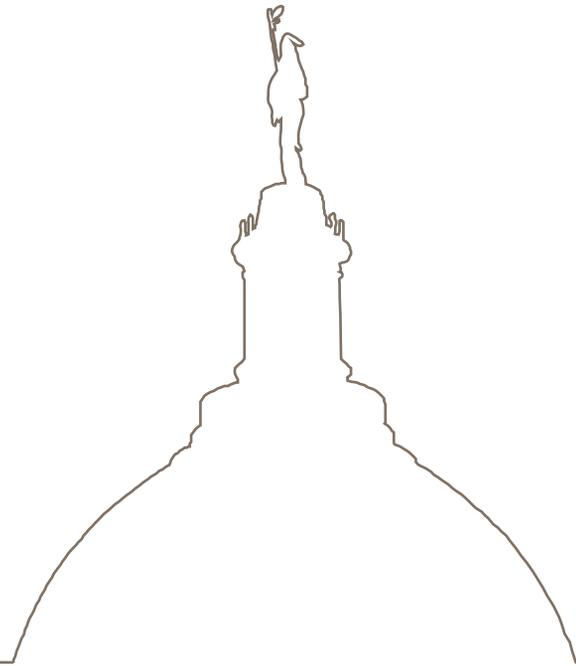
“It is upon us to tell the world Oklahoma farmers and ranchers will stand up to bullies,” Collison said. “We will fight and win.”

Oklahoma experienced record-breaking rainfall in May, interrupting a four-year drought in the state. However, Oklahoma’s farmers and ranchers know all too well another costly drought may be just around the corner. As a geographically diverse, membership-based organization, OKFB is well suited to lead the ongoing water development discussion.

In 2015, 35 senators and 36 house members were named to the OKFB 100 Percent Club based upon their votes on key OKFB issues. OKFB is proud of what its members accomplished this year, and looks forward to another successful year in 2016.

Other Farm-Bureau-supported bills adopted by the Oklahoma Legislature.

HB 1456 enacts annexation reform. The bill states a municipality shall be prohibited from annexing land by a connecting strip that serves no other purpose than to establish contiguity or adjacentness, or to capture territory within the area to be annexed.



SB 498 phases out manufacturing facility exemptions from ad valorem taxes for entities engaged in electric power generation beginning Jan. 1, 2017. Initial applications will not be filed until Jan. 1, 2018.

SB 808 requires financial security should a wind project be decommissioned, and some setbacks from airports, public schools and hospitals. Additionally, the owner of a wind facility must submit a notice of intent to the Corporation Commission, publish a notification in a newspaper of general circulation in a county, and hold a public meeting.

SB 809 states a municipality, county or other political subdivision may enact reasonable ordinances, rules and regulations for some items related to oil and gas operations. However, they may not prohibit or ban oil and gas operations.

Farm-Bureau-opposed bills failed by the Oklahoma Legislature.

SB 563 would have allowed oil and gas companies to use public roads, highways and rights of way to erect poles and posts, and attach equipment, wires, pipes, and conduits. Companies running water lines in bar ditches would not have to compensate the landowner for using the right of way. The only permission required would have been from the Department of Transportation and county commissioners. OKFB initially opposed the Senate bill. However, the bill completely changed language in the House of Representatives, so OKFB took no position on the final version. The Governor vetoed the bill.

HB 1367, HB 1370, HB 1762 and **HB 2083** failed to receive a hearing. **HB 1352** failed in its assigned committee. **FF**

To get involved, attend your August Area Meeting:

- District 1 | Aug. 17 - 12 p.m., 6:30 p.m.
- District 2 | Aug. 20 - 12 p.m.
- District 3 | Aug. 20 - 6:30 p.m.
- District 4 | Aug. 13 - 11:30 a.m.
- District 5 | Aug. 18 - 12 p.m.
- District 6 | Aug. 10 - time TBA
- District 7 | Aug. 11 - 6:30 p.m.
- District 8 | Aug. 18 - 6 p.m.
- District 9 | Aug. 13 - 6:30 p.m.

For more information, contact:

Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Public Policy Division
405.530.2681

Or visit the OKFB website at:
www.okfarmbureau.org.

*One couple pulls up roots in Texas and
Oklahoma to tackle new challenges.*

an oral of their

Nestled down in tree-lined bottomland in southeastern Oklahoma's McCurtain County, beautiful rows of majestic papershell pecan trees rise toward the sky at Waterfall Creek Pecan Farm. Merely a few miles north of the Red River, the farm is located just about as far south and east as one can travel in the state. And here is where a couple, who lived for years in the Texas panhandle, decided to embark on a new adventure and enterprise in agriculture.

Keith and Ski Bateman purchased Waterfall Creek Farm in 2011 after Keith saw an online listing for a place that promised the ability to run some cattle. At the time, Keith was working as an independent insurance adjuster and Ski had experience working for a cattle-feeding operation.

"I thought he was crazy wanting to get rid of our home place in Canyon, Texas," Ski said. "Everything was paid for, and I was very comfortable, but he found it on the Internet and said it could run some cows. He had always wanted to run more cattle, but the land in Texas was so much more expensive than land in Oklahoma."

With the decision made to purchase

and makes the move to southeastern
and open a new chapter of life in

Richard r OWN

Photos and story by **Dustin Mielke**

the farm, the couple left behind their previous jobs and the Texas panhandle and moved to their new spread south of Idabel.

Although she was hesitant at first, Ski now loves the pace of life on the 200-acre spread.

“We jumped off and bought the place and haven’t looked back one day since,” she said.

With a lot of passion and excitement for the farm, the Batemans, McCurtain County Farm Bureau members, set out to develop it into an agricultural destination for the region. Although the couple grew up around agriculture and had experience working in multiple facets of the cattle business, pecans were an entirely different type of agriculture, which the couple learned about from the ground up.

“The only thing we knew about pecans when we bought the place was that we ate them,” Ski said. “We did lots of research. We read the *Pecan South* magazine, we would Google stuff. The previous owner didn’t leave us any real information such as what the time frame was on spraying. We had to venture out and ask questions.”



“We were excited by the challenge of coming in and not knowing anything about the industry, as far as pecans, and trying to build from that,” Keith said. “We wanted to take something that we could see the beauty in, knowing that there’s potential for it. That was one of the big things: that we wanted to come in and put our hand to it and boldly go where no man has gone before. To do something different, you know?”

As with most any endeavor, there were a few hurdles to overcome and many steps to take. The couple had to build their knowledge from the ground up as they shaped the farm into the place they envisioned.

The Batemans added an extra building, created a retail space inside an existing building, added a commercial kitchen, reconfigured the processing barn and added a pneumatic cracker. As the facilities were updated, the orchard itself experienced a renaissance with Keith and Ski at the helm.

“This orchard was started back in the late 1940s,” Keith said. “It was mostly Stuart and Desirable-blend trees. There are four or five different varieties of trees out here.”

Keith said the orchard’s production has grown leaps and bounds compared to when the couple purchased the farm. After learning about management practices to enhance the trees, implementing a regular spraying and fertilizing program has rejuvenated the farm’s production.

“It has grown from about 50,000

pounds of production when we took over to an average of 160,000 pounds,” Keith said.

The Batemans harvest pecans in the fall and winter months, shaking trees to release the nuts and gathering them below using specialized equipment. However, the work in the orchard is more than just seasonal.

“There’s always something to do in the orchard, and we’re always busy,” Ski said. “Anywhere from mowing to spraying trees to dealing with customers and working on accounts and the website – whatever needs to be done. It’s a full-time job that we really do enjoy.”

As the Batemans worked in the orchard and nurtured the land and the trees, Ski concentrated on developing the property into an inviting destination that would draw people from around the region. Her focus of cooking with pecans is reflected in the farm’s website address, pecanscook.com.

The farm’s retail store features shelves lined with all sorts of pecan products, local and regional foods, crafts, and of course, fresh baked goods featuring pecans. Visitors to the store might find any number of delicious treats Ski baked with pecans, including pecan praline fudge, pecan pie, cookies, chewy pralines and perhaps the most beloved by visitors, pecan pie muffins with salted caramel sauce.

“It’s more of a gourmet food item store in addition to selling the pecans,” Ski said. “I have a nut roaster in the kitchen and we’ll do the sugar and

cinnamon-spiced pecans. I also do fudge and pralines and just cookies or whatever strikes my fancy that day. We make pecan pies and granola, too.”

Having the store located on the farm property allows Keith and Ski to see some of their retail customers face-to-face and visit with them. With pecan trees just feet from the store, it also gives visitors a chance to see a working pecan orchard.

“Our customers are the best thing about the farm,” Ski said, “We love getting to know them and their stories – everything from the phone relations to the call-in orders to the businesses that we’ve been packaging together for.”

“We’ve shipped all over the United States, but then we’ve had customers drive in from Ontario, Canada, and places like that,” Keith said.

While the store attracts people far and wide looking for homemade pecan goodies, the Batemans also love to open their farm to tours and school groups. The visits give the couple ample opportunities to share the goodness of pecans.

“It shows why it’s important to know about math and science,” Ski said of hosting school groups. “We explain to them we have 1700 pecan trees on the farm, and that if every tree produced 100 pounds of pecans, how many pounds will we have? We then take it to another level and explain that if what we harvest is 50 percent shell and 50 percent nut meat, then how many thousands of pounds of pecans would be just the nut meat?”



Ski Bateman

shows off a variety of items sold in the Waterfall Creek Pecan store. The selection includes the Batemans' own pecans and baked pecan items as well as local foods, cookbooks and gifts.

Waterfall Creek

pecan farm's bright-red barn stands and greets visitors to the farm, retail store and event setting. The Batemans have worked since they purchased the farm in 2011 to make it a destination for the region.

A favorite Waterfall Creek recipe

Pecan-Crusted Salmon

Ingredients

3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
3 tablespoons butter, melted
5 teaspoons honey
1 cup finely chopped pecans or pecan meal

3 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley
6 (4 ounce) fillets of salmon
Salt and pepper to taste
6 lemon wedges

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
2. In a small bowl, mix together the mustard, butter, and honey. In another bowl, mix together pecans and parsley.
3. Season each salmon fillet with salt and pepper. Brush with mustard-honey mixture. Coat each fillet with pecans & parsley mixture. Place on lightly sprayed cooking sheet.
4. Bake for 10 minutes per inch of thickness, measured at thickest part, or until salmon just flakes when tested with a fork. Serve garnished with lemon wedges.

**Salmon can be grilled using foil boats and smoked over pecan wood - this is the best way to cook with the most flavor.*

**Waterfall Creek
Pecan Farm**



The Batemans even delve into their operating costs, production methods and the health benefits of pecans. It gives students a chance to understand all of the effort the Batemans put in to harvesting their pecans.

“A lot of the time, people are amazed at how labor-intensive pecan growing is,” Ski said. “They don’t realize how much work is involved since people are often three generations removed from the family farm.”

The couple also gives away sapling trees to students when they visit, inviting them to plant them and see how the trees grow and eventually bear fruit. While they have given away a handful of trees, the couple hopes to increase the number of saplings they give to students.

“A pecan tree on average is eight to 10 years old before it begins to bear fruit,” Keith said. “If they’re fourth graders, eight years later when they graduate high school, they’ll be able to see that taking place and think, ‘Yeah, I remember when I got that at Keith and Ski’s place.’ I think that’s an awesome thing.”

The farm’s scenic location with lush, green surroundings, combined with the Batemans’ improvements to the orchard,

makes it a prime venue for outdoor weddings. Rows of pecan trees draping their green canopies over a wedding ceremony make it easy to imagine the trees as steadfast witnesses to a new couple’s nuptials.

Ski credits many people with the farm’s success. The Batemans received help from friends, neighbors and groups like the Oklahoma Agritourism Association.

“It’s not something that we’ve just done all by ourselves, that we just came out here,” Ski said. “We’ve had help from different people who have said, ‘Hey, try this idea.’”

New ideas on the farm are not limited to agritourism, either. In February, the couple sold three shipping containers full of their farm’s high-quality pecans directly to China. Working with an importer provided Keith and Ski with another way to increase the value of their crop.

“The phone rang one day and the pecan buyers were looking for the orchard’s previous owner,” Keith said. “They got to quizzing me about buying pecans, and I just began to try and figure out if maybe this was a fit.”

With two years of successfully shipping pecans to China under their belt, the

Batemans are looking for other Oklahoma pecan producers whose crop they can ship to China, further bolstering Oklahoma’s international export opportunities.

“We will continue to ship to the Chinese because they are a big player in the market,” Keith said. “We’ve built a relationship with other farmers who I will actually be buying pecans from to ship to China to open that market for folks around here, too.”

While the couple currently sells 80 percent of their crop wholesale, like the pecans they ship to China, they are looking to boost their retail sales. The couple helps 4-H, FFA and church groups with fundraisers by providing their pecans at discounted price. They are also increasing the number of businesses that purchase retail packages of the Batemans’ pecans as corporate Christmas gifts and customer appreciation gifts.

With all the changes the couple has implemented in less than five years on the farm, it has proven to be a lifestyle they love.

“It’s the greatest thing we’ve ever done,” Ski said of purchasing of the farm. “We just love it.”



Rows of Pecan Trees

line the Batemans’ orchard, which makes for a stunning setting for weddings. The 1,700 trees on the property are papershell pecan trees that were planted in the 1940s and 50s.



“It’s been a blessing,” Keith added. “God has really opened up the doors for a lot of different things here. Just the freedom of being able to put your hand to something and see what it turns into is what’s really been intriguing to me.”

After all the exciting things the Batemans have done on their farm, there are still new ideas and changes on the horizon. The couple plans to install a pecan sanitizer in their sorting line. They are also looking for more retail opportunities, including helping more community groups with local fundraisers. Additions to a new building will help extend the season for weddings on the farm, and could even lead to a once-a-month restaurant on the farm.

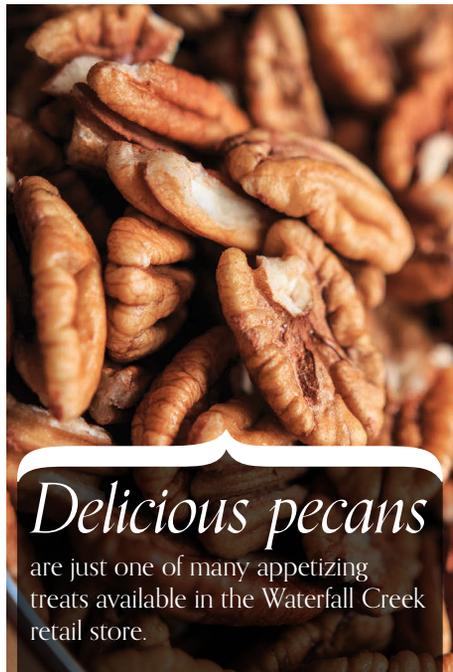
And what of Keith’s initial idea of buying the place to run some cattle? Today, there is not a single cow, calf, steer or bull on the place.

Jumping headlong into a new adventure in agriculture may not be for the faint of heart. But for the Batemans, through their hard work, dedication, love for the land and each other, they have created an agricultural destination in southeastern Oklahoma nestled down in the beautiful scenery just north of the Red River. **FF**



“Just the freedom of being able to put your hand to something and see what it turns into is what’s really been intriguing to me.”

- Keith Bateman



Delicious pecans

are just one of many appetizing treats available in the Waterfall Creek retail store.



Keith and Ski

work daily in the orchard and the around the property, whether it is harvest time, travel season or simply time for maintenance.

A proactive voice for Oklahoma agriculture

By Amanda Rosholt

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

Extreme environmentalists and animal rights groups have set their sights on Oklahoma in an effort to spread misinformation on farmers and ranchers and their production practices. Thus, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation's mission is more important than ever. We continue to work as a proactive and positive voice for farmers and ranchers and to educate consumers of all ages on the importance of production agriculture.

Oklahoma is home to hard-working producers who have, for many generations, devoted their lives to feeding, clothing and fueling consumers across the state and the nation. Because of their hard work and sacrifice, Americans spend less of their disposable income on food than anyone else in the world. And the abundance of choices is second to none.

As consumers, and as Oklahomans, we all have a vested interest in preserving the state's production agriculture industry. Agriculture has been our most stable economic driver since statehood, providing hundreds of thousands of direct and indirect jobs, and billions of dollars of income to spend in rural main street businesses and urban shopping centers.

The Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation's programs support and educate consumers from a variety of backgrounds across the state. From helping to feed chronically hungry children in all 77 counties through the Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs programs; to educating school children with the Grown for You Commodity Trailer and the Bushels for Books program; to educating consumers with the Producer Perspective series and The Agriculture Advocate, an educational electronic newsletter that reaches over 8,000 consumers across the state – the foundation is making an impact.

Taking our message to the urban centers of Oklahoma and educating consumers on the safety of scientifically-proven food and fiber production practices is key to protecting production agriculture going forward. With your help, we can continue telling the story of agriculture where it is needed most.

One of our greatest sources of pride is you, our generous donors. The foundation offers individual and corporate sponsorships and benefits at every gift level. Please consider joining our team by returning the attached donation card or visiting www.OkFarmingAndRanchingFoundation.org. 



Pork for Packs program



Grown for You commodity trailer



Annual Fund Contribution Levels

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- Press Release
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A gift of any size is tax deductible as a charitable donation to a 501(c)(3) corporation, pursuant to IRS guidelines. Please mail contributions to: Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

CONSIDER THE BENEFITS

Take a trip with OKFB

School is out, temperatures are warming up and the kids are getting antsy. It's time to plan a summer vacation! Although it seems like a difficult task, Oklahoma Farm Bureau wants to make it a little bit easier. Looking to travel across the globe this summer? Or maybe just stay in Oklahoma? Regardless of your summer plans, Oklahoma Farm Bureau membership saves money while granting a wonderful vacation experience. From discounted theme park tickets to savings on rental cars, OKFB helps its members save on summer vacations. The hard work is already done - all that remains is booking the trip! To learn more about membership benefits, visit www.okfarmbureau.org.

San José, Costa Rica

Interested in an exotic getaway? Visit coffee plantations where some of the world's premiere coffee is grown or take a zip line tour through the tropical rainforest. The opportunities are endless, especially with OKFB member discounts.

- Save 15 percent on a weekly car rental from Hertz.
- Book a discounted stay at the Wyndham Garden San José Escazu or any other Wyndham Hotel Group locations.
- Enjoy many Wyndham hotel amenities like fitness facilities and shuttle services.

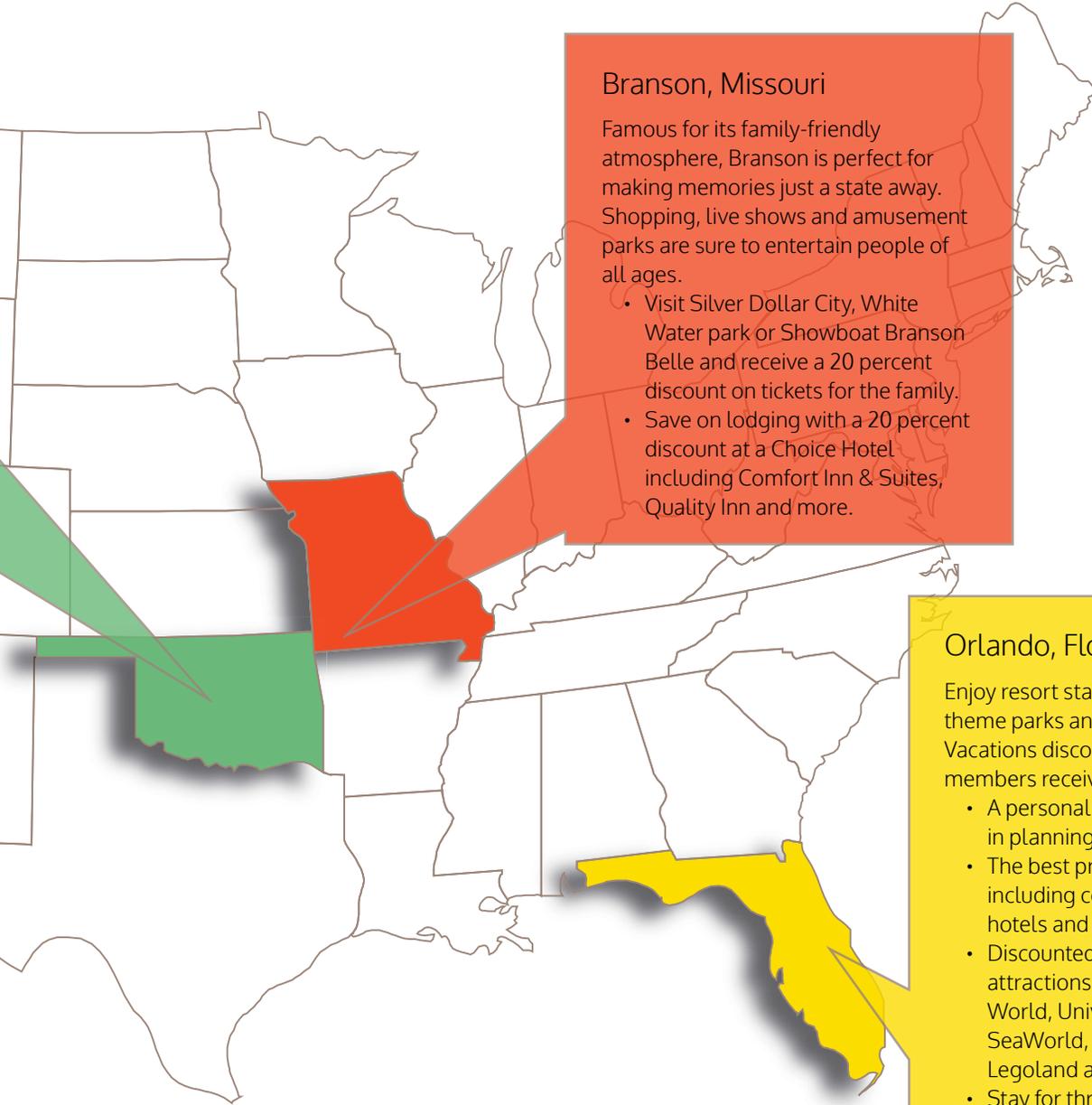
Oklahoma 'Stay-cation'

If a getaway seems like just too much, OKFB members can still save on summer fun right here in Oklahoma.

- Planning a barbecue? Going camping or fishing? Store supplies in a new ICEHOLE cooler with a 10 percent discount.
- Create fun at home with off-road vehicles from Polaris. OKFB members receive up to \$300 off all full-size utility and sport vehicles, all-terrain vehicles and GEM electric vehicles.
- Visit Frontier City or Whitewater Bay with tickets for less than \$25 per person.
- Build an outdoor living space with discounted pricing on gas grills, fire pits, outdoor furniture and more from Sears Commercial.



Using an OKFB member benefit on your summer vacation? Post a photo and tag OKFB!



Branson, Missouri

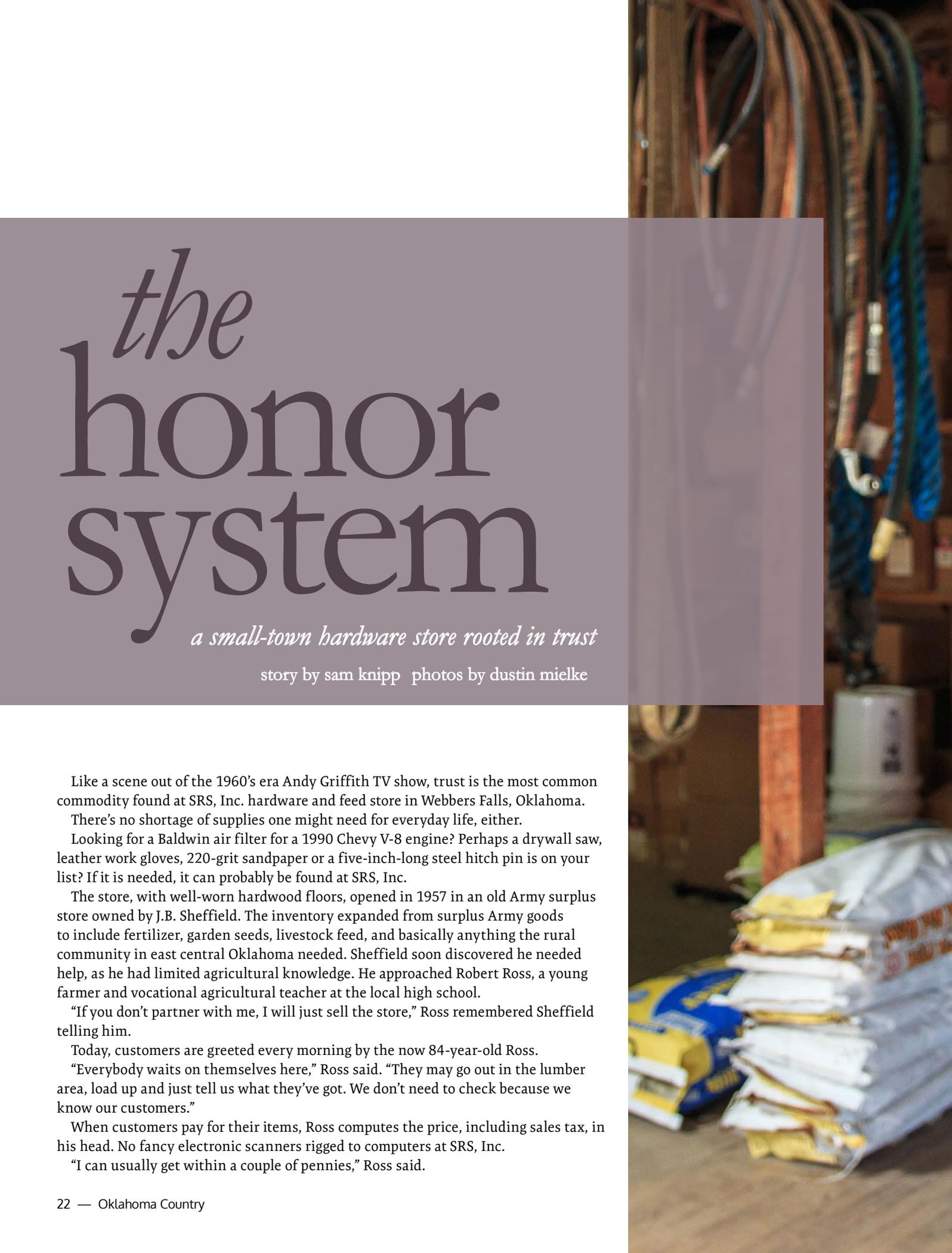
Famous for its family-friendly atmosphere, Branson is perfect for making memories just a state away. Shopping, live shows and amusement parks are sure to entertain people of all ages.

- Visit Silver Dollar City, White Water park or Showboat Branson Belle and receive a 20 percent discount on tickets for the family.
- Save on lodging with a 20 percent discount at a Choice Hotel including Comfort Inn & Suites, Quality Inn and more.

Orlando, Florida

Enjoy resort stays, beach visits, theme parks and more! With Orlando Vacations discount program, OKFB members receive:

- A personal travel assistant to aid in planning a Florida vacation.
- The best prices on lodging including condos, townhomes, hotels and resorts.
- Discounted tickets to popular attractions including Disney World, Universal Studios, SeaWorld, Busch Gardens, Legoland and more.
- Stay for three nights and receive a coupon for \$25 off the next hotel or vacation home booking. 



the honor system

a small-town hardware store rooted in trust

story by sam knipp photos by dustin mielke

Like a scene out of the 1960's era Andy Griffith TV show, trust is the most common commodity found at SRS, Inc. hardware and feed store in Webbers Falls, Oklahoma.

There's no shortage of supplies one might need for everyday life, either.

Looking for a Baldwin air filter for a 1990 Chevy V-8 engine? Perhaps a drywall saw, leather work gloves, 220-grit sandpaper or a five-inch-long steel hitch pin is on your list? If it is needed, it can probably be found at SRS, Inc.

The store, with well-worn hardwood floors, opened in 1957 in an old Army surplus store owned by J.B. Sheffield. The inventory expanded from surplus Army goods to include fertilizer, garden seeds, livestock feed, and basically anything the rural community in east central Oklahoma needed. Sheffield soon discovered he needed help, as he had limited agricultural knowledge. He approached Robert Ross, a young farmer and vocational agricultural teacher at the local high school.

"If you don't partner with me, I will just sell the store," Ross remembered Sheffield telling him.

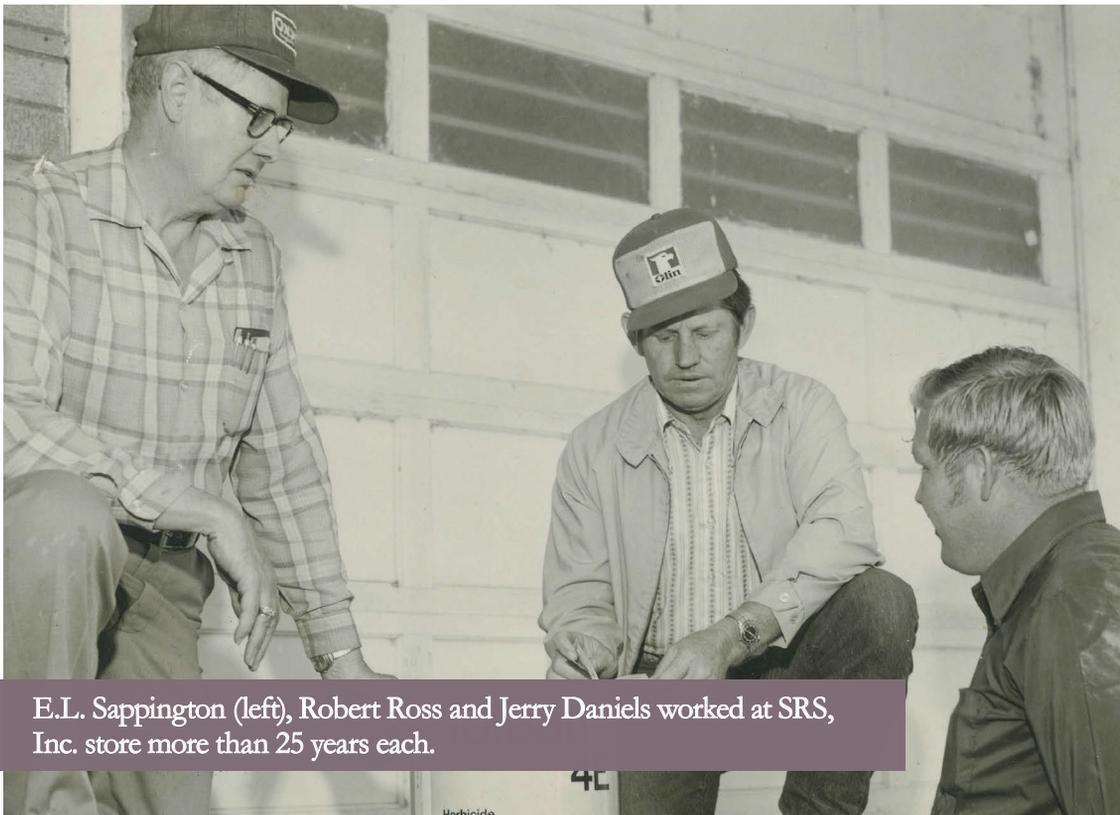
Today, customers are greeted every morning by the now 84-year-old Ross.

"Everybody waits on themselves here," Ross said. "They may go out in the lumber area, load up and just tell us what they've got. We don't need to check because we know our customers."

When customers pay for their items, Ross computes the price, including sales tax, in his head. No fancy electronic scanners rigged to computers at SRS, Inc.

"I can usually get within a couple of pennies," Ross said.





E.L. Sappington (left), Robert Ross and Jerry Daniels worked at SRS, Inc. store more than 25 years each.



SRS, Inc. assists local 4-H and FFA members with livestock show projects.

A keen sense for accuracy, trust and humor are always on display, right next to the power tools and concrete screws.

“I can tell you more about the past than I can the future,” Ross joked as he gave a walking tour of the 58-year-old store.

The SRS stands for Sheffield, Ross and Sappington. Ellis Sappington was a local construction businessman who shared the vision of supplying the needs of this rural community. Ross bought out the other partners and he now shares ownership with his grandson, Steve Shelby.

A veteran customer walked in holding up a small rubber washer and asked, “Do you have one of these?”

“Check the junk box,” Ross said after inspecting the item.

Customers can search through a pile of odds and ends on an old wooden table near the drinking water fountain, just before entering a room where sacks of livestock feed are stored.

“That was one of my former students,” Ross said.

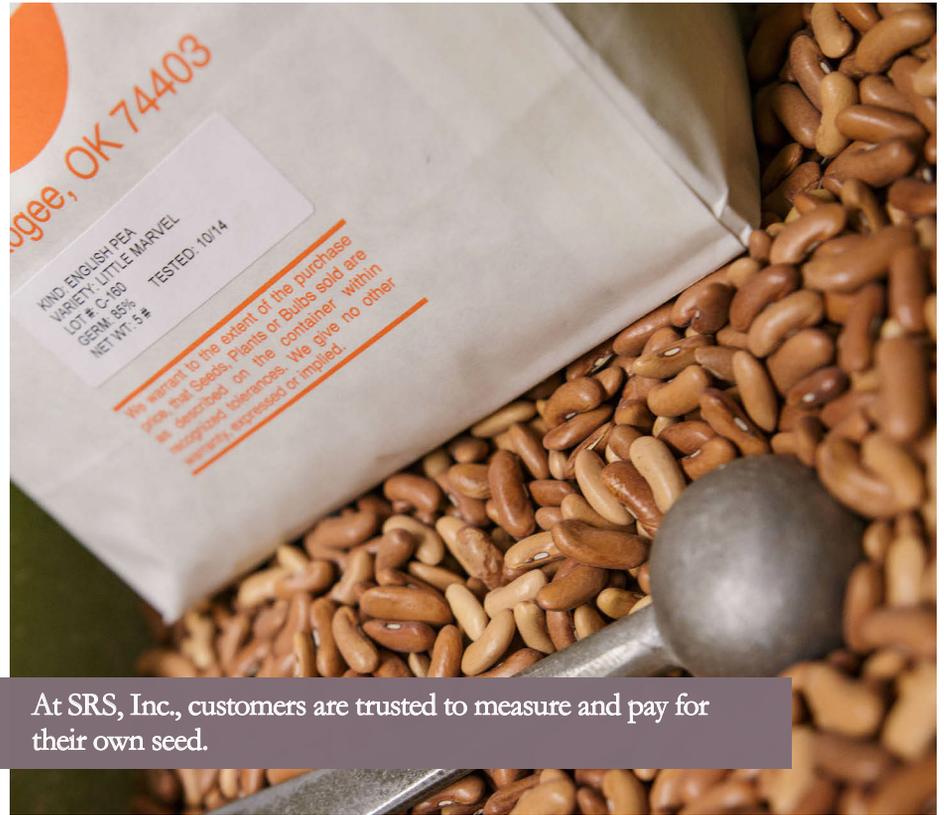
Before starting the vocational agriculture program at Webbers Falls high school, Ross taught agriculture to soldiers returning from World War II.

The organic aroma of livestock feed and garden insecticide mixes with the old-world feel of entrepreneurship as one moves from room to room in the old building.

A walking inventory reveals a stack of plumbing supplies next to new doors, roof vents and fiberglass insulation. One entire wall is filled with boxes containing nuts, bolts and washers.

“We used to have a lot of construction supplies for local guys who built houses,” Ross said. “But now they mostly go direct to the supplier.”

The store once attracted customers from towns in all the surrounding counties including Muskogee, Haskell, Wagoner,



At SRS, Inc., customers are trusted to measure and pay for their own seed.

Cherokee and Sequoyah. Today, the customer base has shrunk to about a 30-mile radius of Webbers Falls.

“We’re basically a convenience for local folks now,” Ross said.

That’s not as much sad as it is a reality brought on by urban sprawl and large retail outlets.

Over in the far corner sits a small display of clear glass panels ready to be custom cut for windows. Occasionally, customers need a specific size glass pane cut.

“We break a lot, and cut a little,” Ross said.

Circling around the backside of the main store, shelves are filled with quarts of 10w-30 engine oil, shiny steel water pans for chickens, electric fence chargers, safety goggles and toilet bowl cleaner. At the far end of the aisle sit 25-pound boxes of Diamond Classic horseshoes in various sizes.

“It’s here if you can find it,” Ross said.

In the garden section, right next to the overflowing bins of nails, handwritten signs scrawled on old cans containing seeds of French breakfast radishes, purple top turnips, black diamond watermelons, Detroit dark red beets and top crop bush beans, tell customers, “A small dipper is \$1.” Sitting next to the cans are several small, wooden or metal spoons or “dippers”.

Try to find that at one of the big-box stores in the city and be prepared for disappointment in mankind.

Swing through another of the rooms, out by the loading dock, and one is surrounded by stacks of horse feed, rabbit pellets, and livestock mineral blocks, medicated dewormer blocks for cattle and bags of clover seed. Stored in the overhead rafters are new shovels, rakes, posthole diggers and axe handles.

The demographic population shift from mostly rural to mostly urban is the biggest change noticed by Ross during the almost

six decades of doing business in Webbers Falls.

“There used to be a house on every 40 acres,” Ross said. “Now there are nearly 40 houses on every acre. We’ve become a bedroom community where most people drive to jobs in Muskogee and Tulsa. There are not as many farmers either, as only about a half dozen large-scale farmers now work the fertile Arkansas River Valley surrounding Webbers Falls.”

Scattered throughout the store are faded photographs and thank you notes from local 4-H and FFA youth. Ross has helped many of the locals learn the work ethic of showing livestock.

After moving a few containers of Ortho insecticide, a large white sign becomes visible. In bold letters it says, “You cannot do today’s job with yesterday’s methods and hope to be in business tomorrow.”

The sign provides insight into how Ross has survived the changing retail scene.

“You have to adapt to survive,” Ross said. “We’ve just added whatever people needed.” 

everybody waits
on themselves
here ... we don't
need to check
because we know
our customers.

— *robert ross*

Here's the dirt on container gardening

By Trisha Gedon
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

For some homeowners, the crowning jewel of their home is an expansive landscape and garden. Many people envision large flowerbeds filled with colorful perennials and annuals, sidewalks lined with bushes and shrubs, or row upon row of juicy vegetables.

Fortunately those without ample space around their home do not have to miss out on the gardening fun. Those with just a few square feet of available space still can work on their green thumb and beautify their outdoor space. Even if the available space is a concrete patio or an apartment balcony, one can still demonstrate green-thumb skills by planting in containers.

Container gardening has a multitude of advantages, said Ray Campbell, who currently is serving as a guest host on the television program “Oklahoma Gardening”, which airs each weekend on OETA.

“Many people think of container gardening as being only flowers or small shrubs, but you can actually grow many different types of edibles, including vegetables and herbs,” Campbell said. “Although container gardening includes many of the same elements as traditional gardening, it isn’t nearly as time consuming.

“Once you get your flowers, herbs or vegetables planted, basically all you have to do is keep it fertilized and watered. The Oklahoma summer heat can quickly dry out the potting soil in your containers, so your gardening time will mostly be spent watering instead of pulling weeds,” he said.

When it comes to the container itself, get creative. Anyone can go to the gardening store and pick up the basic terracotta pot. Consider one's personality and try to find containers to reflect one's interests.

If interested in antiques, consider using an old galvanized washtub as a planter. An empty birdbath not being used for birds any longer is another great choice. A child's wagon or even an old toy dump truck can also hold a variety of plants.

“Whatever container you choose, make sure it has good drainage,” said David Hillock, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension consumer horticulture specialist. “If your potting soil becomes waterlogged, your plants can experience root rot and won't survive. If your container doesn't

have drainage holes, just drill a few through the bottom.”

Once the container is selected, choose the potting soil and plants from the gardening store. Just as good quality soil is needed for traditional gardening, it is a must for container gardening as well. Hillock suggests starting with a reputable potting soil manufacturer, which will be weed and disease free.

“When selecting the plants you want to grow, be sure to choose plants for the sun/shade exposure you have in the space you want to place the containers,” he said. “Also, if different types of plants are going in the same container, make sure they have similar sun, shade, fertilizer and water requirements. It'll be a disappointing outcome if your plants don't have similar needs.”

To help create visual interest in containers, consider planting an upright, bold plant in the middle. Fill in the space around the taller plant with filler plants and finish it off with a plant variety that will drape over the edges of the container. Add interest with pebbles, rocks and other nonplant materials.

Campbell said soil in containers dries out much quicker, so attention to daily watering is a must. In the heat of the summer and depending on the size of the container, twice-daily watering may be required.

When it comes to vegetables, zucchini, squash, bush beans and patio tomatoes are great choices for containers. Because space is limited, gardeners are not likely to be inundated with more produce than can be consumed.

While ease of care is a big advantage to container gardening, Campbell said containers also are convenient because they are not permanent.

“Your containers are portable,” Campbell said. “If you happen to move to a new location, simply load up your containers and go. If you're staying put, but the sun exposure on your patio is changing throughout the summer, simply move the pots into or out of the shade.

“And as the weather cools down in the fall, you can move some of your plants indoors. This will allow you to enjoy those fresh herbs all year long,” he said.

Fertilizer is another important aspect of any garden. Hillock suggests fertilizing every week or two to help ensure the most



gardening success.

“Don’t give up on your dream of having a garden simply because you live somewhere in which the outdoor space is limited,” Hillock said. “With container gardening, the only limitation is your imagination.” **RF**



Ray Campbell, OETA's "Oklahoma Gardening" guest host, says containers allow gardeners to grow plants with little space.





Former OKFB director Joe Mayer receives the Governor's Excellence in Agriculture Award from Gov. Mary Fallin. Pictured from left to right: Gov. Mary Fallin, Joe Mayer, Gunnar Rice, Kate Christensen, Eric Rice, Margie Rice and Secretary of Agriculture Jim Reese.

Mayer honored with Governor's Excellence in Agriculture Award

Former Oklahoma Farm Bureau board member Joe Mayer received the Governor's Outstanding Achievement Award in Agriculture April 1 at the state Capitol. Mayer served as the District 1 Director from 1993-2002 on the OKFB Board of Directors.

"We are so pleased a Farm Bureau member and former director has been honored for his contributions to agriculture," said Tom Buchanan, president of Oklahoma Farm Bureau. "Joe has contributed so much to the agriculture industry, and I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award."

Mayer and his family are actively involved in all aspects of a prosperous

grain and cattle business in the Oklahoma Panhandle. He has been a pioneer in utilizing genetic testing in cattle to improve calving ease, docility, gainability and cutability.

Just as important as his agricultural production skills is his strong commitment to serve his community. Mayer has benefited his home area by serving on the Texas County Farm Bureau Board, Texas County Election Board, Texas County Excise and Equalization Board and the Tri-County Electric Cooperative Board.

With his desire to serve his community and the agriculture industry, Mayer also demonstrates the impact an agricultural

producer can have on the political front. He has helped elect political leaders with an interest in helping agriculture and has served on the Oklahoma Agriculture and Stabilization and Conservation Service and on numerous other state boards including the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Mayer is a hardworking, distinguished Oklahoman proud to serve his community, his industry and his country. His many contributions to agriculture and Oklahoma cement a strong foundation for future generations of agriculturalists to build upon.



Legislators celebrate passage of Right to Farm

After the passage of HJR 1012 in May, the Right to Farm resolution, Speaker of the House Jeff Hickman of Fairview, Okla., center, holds a signing ceremony with the resolution's co-authors. Others pictured include, left to right: Rep. John Pfeiffer, Rep. Josh Cockcroft, Rep. Scott Biggs, Rep. Lee Denney, Rep. Mike Sanders, Rep. Charles McCall and Rep. Jon Echols.



OKFB women bring farm message to OKC-area schools



OKFB WLC members Lena Henson (left) and Margaret Ann Kinder present Parmalee Elementary student Emmanuel with a new bicycle at Super Ag Day May 7.

Members of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee shared the farm and ranch story with third- and fourth-grade students during Super Ag Day held May 6 and 7 in Oklahoma City.

The WLC members used the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation's commodity trailer to teach students how food gets from the field to consumers' tables. Another station hosted by the women used American Farm Bureau's My American Farm program to play interactive games with students about farm-related topics.

"I told them what would happen if the store shelves were empty and that their food actually comes from farmers here locally and across America," said Roberta Hughes, WLC vice chairman from Konowa, Oklahoma. "That's our mission: to inform city children where their food comes from."

The third- and fourth-graders learned about many aspects of agriculture, including vegetable production, the many

uses of soybeans, showing livestock, and the usefulness of goats.

"I'm going to teach them about all the products we can make, and about the goats," said Addison Schmidt, a 10-year-old who shared her experience raising goats on her family's farm.

The event, a combined effort between Oklahoma County Extension, Ag in the Classroom, Oklahoma City Public Schools and other groups, was held at the state fairgrounds in OKC. Approximately 800 students from the Oklahoma City Public School system, as well as students from schools in Cleveland and Canadian Counties, rotated through five stations filled with farm and food information.

The OKFB women donated and gave away two bicycles to one lucky student each day through a drawing. Winning a bicycle and a helmet were Mariano from Heronville School and Emmanuel from Parmelee Elementary. OKFB's Safety Services Director Todd Honer gave a bike safety presentation to the full group before each bike was given away.

OYE animals donated to food banks across Oklahoma

Behind the scenes of the Oklahoma Youth Expo was an exhibition of a different kind: the generosity of youths donating animals to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma.

The donated animals were actually handled by Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, which processes the animals through its Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs programs.

The Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs programs use donated cattle and hogs to produce beef and pork sticks for the food banks' Food for Kids program.

Together, the two food banks provide backpacks with non-perishable, kid-friendly food to students in 596 schools across all of Oklahoma's 77 counties.

More than 179 animals were donated

by students participating in OYE. A total of 347 animals were donated between May 1, 2014 and April 1, 2015.

"The generosity of these young people is incredible," said Amanda Rosholt, director of fundraising and public relations for the foundation.

Rosholt credited Thad Doye, manager of OKFB's crop insurance program and a longtime supporter of the foundation, for transporting the donated animals.

"He has donated countless hours to the loading and hauling of these animals and we are extremely appreciative of his efforts," Rosholt said.

Donations to the foundation allow the foundation to help Oklahomans through similar projects now and in the future.

For more information, contact Rosholt at (405) 202-1463, or Amanda.Rosholt@okfb.org.



OKFB's Thad Doye loads a trailer of hogs donated by OYE exhibitors to the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation's Pork for Packs program.

OKFB members explore northeast Oklahoma on annual commodity tour



OKFB members tour the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve located near Pawhuska, Okla.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau held its 2015 Commodity Tour March 25 through 27 in northeast Oklahoma. The theme for this year's tour was "Osage to the Ozarks: A Journey through Northeast Oklahoma."

The 54 OKFB members who attended the commodity tour participated in a variety of tours including the Port of Catoosa, Natural Falls State Park, the Pensacola Dam, Will Rogers Museum, the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve and the Ted Turner Ranch.

As participants explored the northeast part of Oklahoma, they had the opportunity to learn the history and way of life in the area. The tour also included a focus on industry and commodities in northeast Oklahoma.

Each year, the OKFB Membership and Organization Division organizes a commodity tour throughout an area in Oklahoma. The tours allow OKFB members to experience the diversity of agriculture throughout Oklahoma.



OKFB recognizes legislators for supporting agriculture, rural Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau board of directors has announced the members of the 2015 OKFB 100 Percent Club. Presented to 71 Oklahoma legislators, the award is based upon a 100 percent voting record on key Farm Bureau legislative measures during the 2015 Oklahoma legislative session.

“The members of the 100 Percent Club helped support Farm Bureau’s mission to protect personal property rights, keep taxes low, and boost agricultural and rural business,” said John Collison, OKFB vice president of public policy and media relations. “Oklahoma Farm Bureau sincerely appreciates the leadership of this group at the state Capitol this year.”

OKFB calculates the voting percentages each year following the conclusion of the Oklahoma legislative session. Important bills affecting agriculture and

rural Oklahoma are selected during the legislative process to be scored.

Each vote is calculated according to whether OKFB supported or opposed a bill, and legislators are positively scored for voting in accordance with the OKFB’s stance on each piece of legislation. A record of absent counts neither for nor against a legislator.

Thirty-five senators received the award including: Patrick Anderson, Don Barrington, Stephanie Bice, Brian Bingman, Rick Brinkley, Corey Brooks, Bill Brown, Kim David, Eddie Fields, John Ford, Jack Fry, A.J. Griffin, David Holt, Darcy Jech, Clark Jolley, Ron Justice, Kyle Loveless, Bryce Marlatt, Mike Mazzei, Dan Newberry, Susan Paddack, Anastasia Pittman, Marty Quinn, Mike Schulz, Ron Sharp, Ralph Shortey, Frank Simpson, Jason Smalley, John Sparks, Rob

Standridge, Gary Stanislawski, Anthony Sykes, Roger Thompson, Greg Treat and Ervin Yen.

OKFB honored 36 representatives including: Gary Banz, John Bennett, Scott Biggs, Kevin Calvey, Mike Christian, Josh Cockroft, Doug Cox, David Dank, Lee Denney, John Echols, John Enns, Katie Henke, Jeffrey Hickman, Dennis Johnson, John Jordan, Chris Kannady, James Leewright, Mark McBride, Charles McCall, Randy McDaniel, Casey Murdock, Jason Nelson, Tom Newell, Jadine Nollan, Terry O’Donnell, Charles Ortega, Leslie Osborn, Pam Peterson, John Pfeiffer, Sean Roberts, Mike Sanders, Earl Sears, Weldon Watson, Justin Wood and Harold Wright.

To view OKFB’s full legislative scorecard, visit the Public Policy page at www.okfarmbureau.org.

OKFB women feed legislators, advocate for agriculture at Farm City Festival

The annual Farm City Festival, hosted by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, gave state lawmakers a taste of country at the state Capitol on April 21.

The OKFB Women's Leadership Committee, consisting of rural women leaders from throughout the state, used the Capitol's first floor rotunda to set out a spread of freshly prepared food, much of it home-baked, for the legislators. There were trays of fresh vegetables, sandwiches, cheese and fruit, cookies, cupcakes and brownies.

"We want them to see where their food comes from, and we want to promote farming and all the things we do," said Kitty Beavers, OKFB Women's Leadership Committee chairman.

Beavers said the event gives the women a unique opportunity to connect with Oklahoma's lawmakers.

"We think it's very important for legislators to know we are real people," Beavers said. "We want them to know we are interested in what they do, and we want our voices heard. We want them to know who the Oklahoma Farm Bureau women are."

More than 400 plates of food were prepared for legislators and their staff members. It gives the legislators a chance

to not only enjoy a delicious lunch, but also hear from rural Oklahomans about issues that concern them.

"Farm Bureau women do a great job of bringing food in here, and it always amazes me," Sen. Mike Shulz said. "It's a great opportunity for Farm Bureau members to lobby us."

Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Jim Reese said Farm City Festival is one of the most popular days at the Capitol.

"I know it's one of the legislators' favorite days," Reese said. "People love it when Farm Bureau brings their Farm City Festival to the Capitol."



OKFB Women's Leadership Committee Chairman Kitty Beavers greets Sen. Eddie Fields at the 2015 Farm City Festival. More than 400 legislators and staff members were served.

Farm Bureau selects nine students to receive college scholarships

Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee selected nine Oklahoma high school seniors to receive \$1,000 scholarships to pursue agricultural degrees.

Students receiving scholarships are: Megan Trantham, Boise City, District 1; Tucker Sawatzky, Weatherford, District 2; Madison Reasnor, Cashion, District 3; Samantha Howe, Sulphur, District 4; Bay Bolen, Idabel, District 5; Hallie Barnes, Hulbert, District 6; Lakan Light, Enid, District 7; Kase Donor, Konawa, District 8; and Colton Pratz, Stillwater, District 9.

The scholarships are given to one student from a Farm Bureau member family in each of the nine OKFB districts. Students receiving the scholarships must enroll as full-time students in an agricultural program at an Oklahoma college or university.

"We are proud to provide these scholarships to students who choose to study agriculture," said Holly Carroll, OKFB YF&R coordinator. "Oklahoma agriculture needs young leaders with new visions for the future, and we hope these scholarships will help provide

opportunities for these students to use their education to improve our industry."

The YF&R scholarships are granted each year based upon applications. State YF&R committee members reviewed applications and selected the nine scholarship recipients.

The OKFB YF&R program develops leadership and knowledge in young Oklahoma agriculturalists ages 18 to 35. YF&R also sponsors several youth programs around the state to help the growth and development of young agricultural leaders.

Dewey County Farm Bureau opens new satellite office



Dewey County Farm Bureau holds a grand opening Feb. 20 for its satellite office in Seiling, Okla. Insurance agent Brian Besch will be in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Pictured from left to right: Brian Besch, insurance agent; Ken Gore, county director; Shurae Terrel, CSR; Phyllis Nevels, CSR and county secretary; Ron Cole, county director; LaManda Rutz, CSR; Mark Davis, county director; Chet Purvine, county director; Lee Vanderwork, county director; and Matt Oakes, state YF&R committee member.

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OKFB members take farm bill, EPA, security concerns to Washington, D.C.

Farm bill implementation, EPA overregulation and national security were among the top concerns for the 53 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members and staff who attended the annual OKFB Congressional Action Tour in Washington D.C. April 11-16. The group gathered in our nation's capital to discuss policy with their United States elected officials.

The group met with U.S. Representatives Markwayne Mullin,

Frank Lucas, Steve Russell, Tom Cole, Jim Bridenstine, and U.S. Senators Jim Inhofe and James Lankford.

The Congressional Action Tour provides an opportunity for Oklahomans to share some of the challenges facing rural communities with their legislators, said OKFB President Tom Buchanan.

“Implementation of the farm bill and making sure that continues smoothly is a top priority for Farm Bureau,” Buchanan

said. “Waters of the U.S. is still a burning issue, and we have members of the Oklahoma delegation who are actively working to protect landowners and producers from onerous regulations that come with WOTUS.”

Agency overreach and the security of our nation were two topics OKFB Director Monte Tucker made a point to discuss with the U.S. legislators.

“EPA, regulatory, IRS – you name the



OKFB members Johnny Taylor (left) and James Fuser (center) visit with Rep. Frank Lucas about policies affecting Oklahoma agriculture.

agency and we've had definite overreach," Tucker said. "National security has also been a big concern for us, and it's been great to get to talk with our legislators about federal issues."

U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe said he enjoys seeing Oklahomans in Washington D.C.

"My favorite group has always been Farm Bureau," Inhofe said. "They have strong values and they know what makes America great."



Top: Sen. James Lankford discusses key policy issues with OKFB members.
Bottom: OKFB members engage with Rep. Tom Cole.

Chevrolet expands benefit offering for eligible Farm Bureau members

Chevrolet is excited to announce the addition of Motor Trend's 2015 Truck of the Year – the all-new Chevy Colorado – to the list of 80-plus Chevrolet, Buick and GMC vehicles that qualify for a \$500 incentive for eligible Farm Bureau members. In addition, the new GMC Canyon is now eligible.

“Chevrolet is proud to partner with Farm Bureau with its long tradition of supporting American agriculture,” said Ashlee Jenkins, assistant retail advertising manager for Chevrolet. “We are excited to expand our offering to better serve member needs.”

Chevrolet is the most awarded car company of the year, and included in that award-winning line-up is the all-new Chevy Colorado. This game-changing truck offers Farm Bureau members the best highway gas fuel economy of any gas pickup – EPA estimated 27 mpg, available

4G LTE Wi-Fi technology, most advanced available safety package of any midsize truck and the best pickup coverage.

The new GMC Canyon offers the premium features and materials GMC customers have come to expect, combined with capability and versatility in a maneuverable, right-sized package. It offers both power and efficiency with an available V6 with 305 horsepower with an EPA estimated 26 mpg highway fuel economy. With features like the Duralife brake rotors and electric power steering, the Canyon redefines the small truck. It was awarded Autoweek's Best of the Best Truck for 2015. 00413012

“Providing exclusive access to superior, high-quality brands, programs and products is one of the many ways we strive to exceed member expectations,” American Farm Bureau Federation President Bob Stallman said.

The new Farm Bureau incentive may be stacked with other available in-market incentives, like Owner Loyalty or the GM Business Choice program.

To take advantage of incentives available for the purchase or lease of a qualifying Chevrolet, Buick or GMC vehicle, members can visit fbverify.com/gm. Only customers who have been active members of a participating Farm Bureau for a minimum of 30 days will be eligible to receive a certificate. Members can confirm eligibility and print a required certificate by entering their membership number and zip code. The certificate should be taken to your dealership of choice and presented to the sales person. There is no limit to the numbers of certificates that a member may print or use, but certificates do expire after 60 days.

Wilke addresses Oklahoma FFA convention, presents sponsorship donation



OKFB Executive Director Monica Wilke (center) presents OKFB's sponsorship donation to Oklahoma FFA state officers Logan Johns (left) and Garrett Reed April 29.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Executive Director Monica Wilke addressed more than 10,000 Oklahoma FFA members during the afternoon general session Wednesday, April 29 in downtown Oklahoma City.

Wilke told agricultural education students from around the state that OKFB views the sponsorship of FFA as an investment with amazing return. She presented OKFB's platinum-level sponsorship check to 2014-2015 Oklahoma FFA State Officers Logan Johns and Garrett Reed.

OKFB President Tom Buchanan also presented an OKFB-sponsored Washington Leadership Conference scholarship to Breckin Horton of the Spiro FFA chapter. The five-day leadership event is held in the nation's capital where FFA members from across the country develop leadership skills.

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The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee donates \$600 to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oklahoma City on Feb. 25. Oklahoma County Farm Bureau also donated \$100 to the Oklahoma City charity.

OKFB Women's Leadership Committee donates to Ronald McDonald House Charities

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee recently donated \$600 to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oklahoma City as a part of the "Our Food Link" initiative. In addition to the donation made by state women's committee, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau also donated \$100 to the charity organization.

OKFB women have a long history of partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities, donating time and money in many capacities over the last several years. The women's group has previously served as guest chefs for the house and chose to make a significant monetary donation this year.

"The Farm Bureau has been a longstanding partner for Ronald McDonald House Charities," said Susan

Adams, president and CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oklahoma City. "We're fortunate to have such an active group here in Oklahoma."

Ronald McDonald House Charities provides a "home away from home" by providing lodging, meals and laundry facilities for families with seriously ill or injured children receiving medical treatment in the Oklahoma City area. The charity organization has had a facility in Oklahoma City since 1984 but recently opened a brand-new facility on the University of Oklahoma Children's Hospital campus in January of 2015. The new facility added 14 more rooms for families in need, bringing the total capacity to 33 rooms in two Oklahoma City facilities.

"[The new facility] will allow us to

serve nearly 500 more families each year," Adams said. "What's unique about it is that it is on the hospital health sciences center grounds and families are connected by a walk-way to their child's bedside in the hospital. It helps keep families close to their child and allows them to interact with their child's caregivers and medical team."

The donation from the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee will go toward providing meals for families when guest chefs are not present. It will also be used to stock the pantry at the Ronald McDonald House to provide breakfast and lunch provisions for families.

The OKFB Women's Leadership Committee will also make a monetary donation to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Tulsa in the near future.

Couch addresses OKFB Water Committee

Oklahoma City Manager Jim Couch speaks with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Water Committee April 2 about transferring water throughout the state. Couch told the OKFB committee members the Oklahoma City metro area has transferred water since the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The OKFB Water Committee, made up of various OKFB members and leaders, was formed to start a conversation about the ever-increasing problem of water and water policy in Oklahoma. The committee meets regularly to discuss potential OKFB policy regarding water in Oklahoma.



Beef for Backpacks

The Beef for Backpacks and Pork for Packs programs use donated cattle and hogs to produce nutritious beef and pork sticks for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma's Food for Kids program.

For more information on how to donate livestock, contact Thad Doye by phone at (405) 523-2307 or by email at thad.doye@okfb.org.

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OKFB counties visit state Capitol



During the 2015 legislative session, County Farm Bureaus travel to Oklahoma City to stay updated on legislation affecting Oklahoma agriculture. After visiting with OKFB Public Policy staff, the groups traveled to the state Capitol to visit with legislators from their areas. Each year, OKFB encourages County Farm Bureaus to schedule a Capitol visit, which allows members to voice concerns to legislators. Top left: Cotton County Farm Bureau. Top right: Garvin County Farm Bureau. Center: Noble County Farm Bureau. Left: Payne County Farm Bureau.

Buckner promoted to senior VP of operations

Buckner, former vice president of claims for OKFB Mutual Insurance Company, takes over an expanded and redefined position following the untimely passing of Robert Peeler, vice president of FB Building Corp. Buckner's new responsibilities include managing the building's infrastructure, company vehicle fleet and the Information Systems department.

His new duties basically cover everything with a "moving part," from the heating and air conditioning system, to company cars, to the companies' vast computer infrastructure.

"I am excited by the opportunities to continue to be an asset for Oklahoma Farm Bureau," Buckner said.

Comparing his previous work in claims with his new position, Buckner said there are similarities.

"Both roles are demanding, fast-paced with new, daily challenges," he said.

Buckner said his background helped prepare him to take on new challenges.

"I was taught to work hard and the rest will fall into place," Buckner said.

Buckner said his favorite part of his new position is "learning more about Oklahoma Farm Bureau."

Buckner joined Farm Bureau in 1996 as an all-lines claims adjuster for the McAlester district claims office. He was promoted to manager of the Shawnee district claims office in 2002, and in 2005 he was named associate claims manager-property. In 2010, he was promoted to vice president of claims.

Buckner is a native of Talihina, Oklahoma, and graduated from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his wife, Ashley, and two sons, Logan, 16, and Lawson, 13. Favorite family activities include camping and riding dirt bikes.



Gary Buckner

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Cheyenne Simmons
Administrative Assistant
Organization & Membership



Zac Swartz
Safety Specialist
Organization & Membership



Hannah Nemecek
Communications Specialist
Corporate Communications

Simmons, Swartz, Nemecek join OKFB Federation staff

Three new faces have joined the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Federation staff since the beginning of the year. Cheyenne Simmons and Zac Swartz were hired by the Membership and Organization Division, and Hannah Nemecek joined the Corporate Communications Division, respectively.

Cheyenne Simmons is the new administrative assistant in the Membership and Organization Department. She will oversee the development of statewide membership campaigns, work closely with county leadership to ensure members' needs are heard and incorporated in departmental outputs and develop collaborative approaches to increase member growth and retention.

She joined the staff full time after interning for OKFB for two years.

"I'm so proud to work for an organization that invests such a great deal into advocating for the protection and future success of Oklahoma agriculture," Simmons said.

Simmons comes to Farm Bureau from Waurika, Oklahoma. She earned her bachelor's degree in communications

from the University of Oklahoma.

Zac Swartz, a Sulphur, Oklahoma, native, has joined the safety services team in the same department as a safety specialist. He will work with the DUI Prevention Program, Fire House Safety Program and the OKFB Grown for You Commodity Trailer.

"Growing up, I always wanted to find a way to help children, and working at Farm Bureau allows me to do just that," Swartz said. "I enjoy promoting awareness and safety to children of all ages while teaching them about Oklahoma agriculture."

Swartz graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma with a degree in general studies.

"Oklahoma Farm Bureau has been blessed with talented individuals at all levels within our organization, and Cheyenne and Zac are prime examples," said Chris Kidd, vice president of organization and membership. "With the talent they bring, I am confident they will advance our efforts to strengthen and preserve rural communities and agriculture in Oklahoma."

Nemecek began as a communications

specialist in mid-May after interning with OKFB in the summer of 2014. She will oversee production of Oklahoma Country magazine and Perspective, OKFB's bi-weekly newsletter. She also will assist OKFB communications staff with press releases, social media, website updates and more.

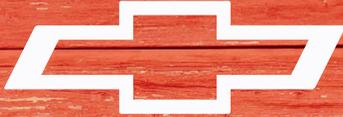
"It is humbling to work for an organization that is fighting for the farmer each and every day," Nemecek said. "Agriculture is vital to our state, our nation and our world. I plan to use my communications skills to play a part in OKFB's mission of improving the lives of rural Oklahoma."

Nemecek graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in agricultural communications. She is a native of Skiatook, Oklahoma.

"Hannah is a perfect fit for the OKFB staff," said John Collison, vice president of public policy and media relations. "Her talents will help OKFB serve our members and ensure their voices are heard."



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Sixteen high school seniors attend the Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference June 10-12 in Oklahoma City.

OKFB trains Oklahoma youth in agriculture, leadership

The Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference was held at the OKFB home office June 10-12.

The conference is a three-day event hosted by OKFB's Young Farmers and Ranchers. Participants of the conference were high school seniors selected through an application process. The students selected represent some of Oklahoma's most promising high school agriculturalists.

OYLA is aimed at not only preparing young people to be future leaders of Farm Bureau, but also of the Oklahoma agriculture industry as a whole, said Holly Carroll, OKFB YF&R coordinator.

During the conference, students had the opportunity to take part in discussions with other agriculture leaders including Tom Buchanan, OKFB president, Jayson Lusk, Oklahoma State University professor of agricultural economics and others about current events in the agricultural sector.

Along with gaining skills to become leaders themselves, each student learned

creative methods to transmit the benefits of agriculture to others.

"We want them to be able to share agriculture with their hometowns," Carroll said. "We equip them as much as we can with tools to go to their local schools and do something to generate knowledge about agriculture."

Being proponents of farming, students were given the opportunity to evaluate their stance on issues like GMOs and animal rights through a tour of Whole Foods, and a media interview training session with Dustin Mielke, OKFB director of corporate communications.

"It helped me to be able to see how a consumer thinks, and if you weren't educated or didn't come from the production side of things how one might interpret agriculture," said Grant Wilber, OYLA participant representing Alfalfa County Farm Bureau.

It is important to invest in the youth that will lead Oklahoma agriculture and OKFB in the future, and holding events like this can help those future leaders

grow and develop, Carroll said.

"I'm interested in the future of agriculture, and part of that is growing leaders that are going to lead the organizations," said Sarah Gruntmeir, representing Kingfisher County Farm Bureau. "I want to do my part for agriculture and teach more people about our practices."

2015 OYLA conference participants included: Marisa Burke, Harper County; Braden Egger, Pottawatomie County; Shelby Schulte, Comanche County; Sadie Higgins, Caddo County; Sydney Cannon, McClain County; Jaryn Frey, Kingfisher County; Sarah Gruntmeir, Kingfisher County; Lexi Newman, Stephens County; Victoria Chapman, Carter County; Ross Priddy, Johnston County; LeighAnn Alexander, LeFlore County; Chelsea Allen, Rogers County; Grant Wilber, Alfalfa County; Kailee Fitzpatrick, Grady County; Alexis Musshafen, Grady County; and Jill Coats, Seminole County.

Discounts on ICEHOLE coolers offered to OKFB members

Oklahoma Farm Bureau encourages its members to take advantage of a new member benefit with ICEHOLE coolers. OKFB members can now enjoy a 10 percent discount on all ICEHOLE high-performance cooler products.

“Farm Bureau members in Oklahoma are accustomed to having exclusive access to superior, high-quality brands, programs and products,” said Tom Buchanan, Oklahoma Farm Bureau president. “ICEHOLE’s generous offer to Farm Bureau members that includes a 10 percent discount on all products means our members can experience more savings than ever before.

“This is just one more example of how why it pays to be a member of Farm Bureau,” he said.

ICEHOLE coolers are built for the outdoor enthusiast who demands high-performance products and designed with the environment in mind. Its insulating foam is high-density for superior performance and is ecofriendly.

To take advantage of the ICEHOLE discount, please call 830-895-4405 to place your order. Offer is not valid for online purchases.

For a full list of OKFB member benefits offered, visit okfarmbureau.org/benefits.



Students at OKFB Youth Safety Day observe an electricity demonstration by OG&E.

OKFB hosts Youth Safety Day

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee hosted its Youth Safety Day on June 4 at the OKFB home office in Oklahoma City.

At the event, 12- to 17-year-old youth from around the state learned ATV safety, fire safety, DUI prevention, poison control and more.

“We want our children, our young people, and even parents to be aware of safety,” said Kitty Beavers, chair of the OKFB Women’s Leadership Committee.

Throughout the day, students cycled through stations that focused on safety in various situations. At each booth, students had the opportunity to learn the

appropriate safety techniques through hands-on activities.

In the past, Youth Safety Day was a three-day event hosted by the OKFB Safety Division at off-site locations, but it lost much of its popularity because of busy summer schedules, Beavers said.

Realizing the importance of the event, the WLC took over the event with hopes to see it grow and bring more safety awareness to rural Oklahoma families.

The WLC hoped to see an attendance of at least 50 students, but met its goal with more than 60 registered participants. The students were selected through an application process.


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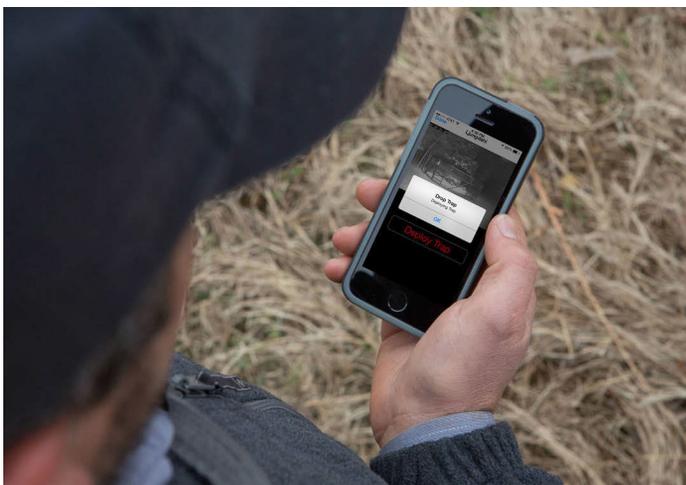


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Invasion

Noble Foundation researchers revolutionize feral hog control.



For decades, farmers, ranchers and land managers across the United States have fought a losing war against feral hogs.

Feral hogs act similarly to a harmful virus invading the human body. They enter an ecosystem, multiply rapidly, destroy valuable cropland and urban areas, endanger native wildlife, spread disease, and pollute waterways. With recordable populations now present in 48 states, feral hogs – also called wild hogs or wild pigs – have a financial impact exceeding more than \$1.5 billion each year.

Feral hogs are an invasive species in the U.S. Early explorers brought domesticated swine with them on global explorations, managing them as free-range livestock. Feral hog populations continued to grow through the decades and embrace a larger footprint. Feral hogs' success can be attributed to several factors, including the animals' ability to adapt to a variety of situations, eat a variety of foods and reproduce rapidly.

"Feral hogs can adapt to any plant community," said Russell Stevens, Noble Foundation wildlife and range consultant, "but they prefer moist bottomlands or riparian areas association with streams and rivers."

The hogs' desire for following riverbeds explains part of their expansion. As water development has spread into more arid regions, along with improved range conditions through better livestock grazing practices, the hogs have followed the availability of land and food.

Feral hogs, like all animals, are susceptible to many infectious and parasitic diseases, but they cause more problems through rooting, wallowing and destruction. Feral hogs compete with native wildlife and domestic livestock, consuming large amounts of mast production like acorns and pecans that wildlife species depend on for winter survival. They also consume and damage forages necessary to livestock and hurt water quality. Small water sources, such as streams and creeks, sustain the most damage through the hogs rooting and wallowing.

Many people experiencing problems with feral hogs are eager to eliminate them, but extermination is difficult. Feral hogs are adaptable and tenacious when it comes to survival. Although total and permanent removal is unlikely, trapping is currently the best method for controlling hog numbers.

"Controlling hogs using trapping isn't a one-time job and



Top: A landowner deploys the BoarBuster feral hog trap from his smart phone. Bottom: The BoarBuster camera gives the owner 24-hour surveillance of the feral hog trap.



you're done," said Josh Gaskamp, Noble Foundation wildlife and range consultant. "Due to their mobility and high reproduction rate, you have to monitor hog populations and implement control techniques periodically."

Cage and corral-type traps are the most prevalent trap designs because they are relatively inexpensive and somewhat portable. Unfortunately, sometimes the feral hogs become trap-shy.

"They are smart animals," Gaskamp said. "Feral hogs balk at the sight of panels at ground level, narrow openings to walk through, or door thresholds to cross."

In addition to the feral hog's keen eye for structures designed to entrap them, they learn from their mistakes and the mistakes of others. Imagine a sounder of 20 hogs continuously visiting a bait source. After a trap is set, five of the 20 hogs walk inside and trigger the trap, leaving 15 hogs uncaptured outside of the trap. They may now be educated to the dangers of the trap, leading to difficulty in trapping these hogs in the future.

In 2010, Noble Foundation researchers began testing traps for feral hogs.

"We did not set out with the intent of building a new trap," Gaskamp said, "but just as experienced trappers continuously modify their techniques to improve trapping success, we built the first BoarBuster trap to capture trap-shy hogs."

The BoarBuster™ trap is revolutionary because of its suspended nature and feature that enables users to view live streaming video. Unlike any other system, BoarBuster uses a rigid trap enclosure operationally elevated above a trap site. This arrangement allows feral hogs to freely enter and exit the trapping area, which reduces trap shyness.

As a critical part of this system, BoarBuster relies upon a newly developed camera system created by Tactical Electronics in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The camera system delivers real-time video of the trap site, providing the viewer a broad view of the trap and any animal activity around the site. The camera informs the user of hog presence at the trap via text or email message, allowing the user to capture the hogs with the touch of a button on a keyboard or smartphone. Watching the live video eliminates accidentally trapping unwanted animals.

"The BoarBuster is the most advanced animal trapping system out there today," said Harlan Starr, a private land manager,

owner of Chattokee Lodge LLC and Chattokee Farms LLC in Alabama, and administrator of a BoarBuster test site. "The live streaming video cameras make BoarBuster so simple to use. I no longer have to sit out there late at night in the freezing cold trying to catch feral hogs.

"I receive an email, log on, watch what's happening and spring the trap when I want. I have caught feral hogs while eating dinner, even at a ball game. It is a remarkable piece of technology," Starr said.

The scientific research conducted with BoarBuster shows its unmatched ability to provide feral hog population control. Feral hog populations must be reduced by 70 percent annually to achieve effective control. From years of testing and evaluation on Noble Foundation properties and 10 locations across the United States, the BoarBuster trap system catches 88 percent of targeted hog populations. On average, conventional feral hog traps capture 49 percent or less of such hog populations.

"The BoarBuster trap demonstrates how the Noble Foundation and agricultural research provides tangible solutions to the real-world problems facing farmers, ranchers and consumers affected by this problem," said Jeff Moen, Noble Foundation director of business development. "Feral hog populations have been expanding their zone of destruction for years. Our wildlife researchers identified and created a solution to the problem.

"With the help of two partners, we brought that vision into reality and forever changed how land owners and managers control feral hogs," Moen said.

In February, the Noble Foundation signed a commercialization agreement with W-W Livestock Systems in Thomas, Oklahoma, to bring the BoarBuster trap system to consumers across the United States.

"This trap is easy to transport and set up. Most people can start catching hogs within 24 hours of assembling it," said Marc Popejoy, general manager for W-W Livestock Systems. "Its technology gives the user total control, and most importantly, it works. Feral hogs should be scared."

For more information, including videos of BoarBuster in action, go to www.BoarBuster.com. 

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1941 Ford 9 N. Needs tires and starter repair. \$700. 580-220-4002.

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21' Bayliner, Cuddy cabin boat, Chevy 302 V8 motor. Lots of accessories, tandem axel trailer. 580-747-1936.

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Two new headlights for '97 model Cadillac Deville. Still in case. \$240 for both. 580-513-4906 or 405-645-2500.

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1986 F150. New rear tires. Salvage. 405-433-2586.

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2 3/8 - 2 7/8 structural pipe 0.85¢ - \$1.50 per ft. 4 1/2, 5 1/2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12" pipe. Sucker rods. 6 ft. / 1/4" Fiberglass post. 400 guns. www.branchauction.com. 405-627-3920.

2005, 1300 VTX Honda with extras, like new, \$5000. 2009 Palomino Gazelle 19' 1/2" T.T. Used very little, \$9000. Call 580-920-3947.

For sale: 3 colored televisions. 19" Zenith, 27" RCA, 35" Mitsubishi. All in working order. Make offer. 405-643-5149.

Turkey, Quail, Chukar and Pheasant chicks and eggs. Call 580-263-0014 or 580-795-7089.

For Sale: A Maxx Strength weights and a XS 2000 Logic System health walker. Call after 5 p.m. 405-348-2881.

Shawnee Resthaven Cemetery twin plots, masonic garden \$1600 for both. Clothes all sizes 25¢ each. 405-598-1202.

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For sale: 80 acres east side of Waurika Lake. Lake view, 2 ponds, 50 acres in wheat pasture. Corral hay lot, all weather road. \$2000 per acre. Harry England, 580-512-8493.

Lot #680 Oakridge near Lake Texoma. \$3500 or trade for tractor implements. 405-615-0267.

WANTED

Want to purchase oil and gas mineral rights, producing or non-producing. 580-223-0353 or 800-687-5882.

Want to buy 40, 60 or 160 acres of land on Nuyaka Creek in Okfuskee County. Heavily wooded okay. 580-532-6359

Wanted: N.O.S. parts for a JD RWA disc, mainly spools and scrapers, also need parts for a JD #30 combine. 918-366-2403.

Wanted: Bois d' arc (Osage Orange, Hedgeapple) fence posts. 806-653-2268.

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Strawberry Fluff

From the kitchen of: Beverly Delmedico, Muskogee County

Ingredients

8-oz. package cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup sugar
10-oz. package frozen strawberries, thawed
2 bananas, sliced
1 large can pineapple chunks
1 9-oz. container whipped topping
1/2 cup pecans

Preparation/Cooking

Blend cream cheese and sugar. In a separate bowl, combine strawberries, bananas, pineapple chunks and pecans. Fold in whipped topping, then fold in cream cheese and sugar mixture. Place in container and freeze approximately 30 minutes before serving.

Cake Mix Oatmeal Cookies

From the kitchen of: Mignon Bolay, Noble County

Ingredients

1 package yellow cake mix
2 cups quick cooking oats, uncooked
1 cup sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
2 large eggs
1 cup chopped pecans
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Preparation/Cooking

Combine first three ingredients in a large bowl. In separate bowl, combine oil and eggs; add to dry ingredients, stirring well. Stir in pecans and vanilla. Drop dough by rounded teaspoon two inches apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes or until light brown. Remove and cool on racks.

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 Hannah.Nemecek@okfb.org or mail a hard copy to Oklahoma Country Recipes, 2501 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

A couple is sitting on a large log in a grassy field, looking out at a sunset. The man is wearing a purple t-shirt and the woman is wearing a pink top. The background is filled with trees and a bright sky.

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