

Oklahoma

Country



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Oklahoma Farm Bureau
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The legacy we leave

Celebrating nine farm and ranch families who are making their mark through their love for agriculture.

Pressing onward

Highlights from OKFB's 2021 annual meeting

Lincoln to local

Preparing for the 2022 legislative season

Presidentially speaking

New Farm Bureau programs on tap for 2022

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Oklahoma Country

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ON THE COVER

Joe and Sally Wayland continue to ranch the same land their family has for decades and were honored as Oklahoma Farm Bureau's District 1 Farm and Ranch Family of the Year. *Photo by Dustin Mielke.*

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HIDDEN NUMBER WORTH \$50

One member family's Oklahoma Farm Bureau membership number is hidden somewhere in this issue of *Oklahoma Country* and could earn that member family \$50. To claim the cash prize, the member family must find its own hidden membership number and contact Brianne Whitcomb before the last day of the month, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at (405) 523-2325.

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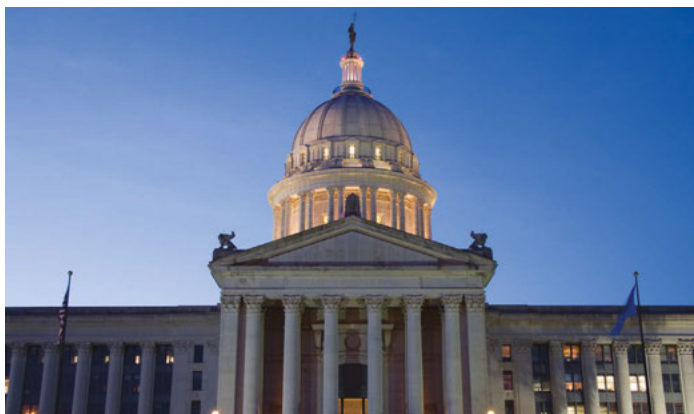
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PRESIDENTIALLY SPEAKING

New programs bring new possibilities

By Rodd Moesel

President, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

As Oklahoma Farm Bureau forges onward into 2022, we can all be proud of not only the achievements our organization earned this past year, but Farm Bureau members can also be excited about the new ways we are working to move our organization forward.

After our successful in-person annual meeting last November, we are ready to begin a new year with our usual calendar of activities to promote agriculture and support rural Oklahoma. From legislative events to leadership programs, OKFB members can plan on participating in our traditional slate of programs and events in 2022.

With new opportunities and challenges for agriculture and our state on the horizon, OKFB is excited to add new programs, events and activities to meet the needs of our members and promote our rural way of life well into the future.

Our new Generation Bridge winter conference, which will be held in Oklahoma City January 28-29, will connect Farm Bureau members ages 35-50 with new ideas, skills and opportunities to grow as leaders in our industry and our organization. We have long considered ways to help our Young Farmers & Ranchers members stay involved with cutting-edge educational and leadership opportunities after age 35, and our inaugural Generation Bridge event will kick off this new program.

We are also helping build a future for agriculture with our recently launched endowment to support Oklahoma State University Ferguson College of Agriculture students selected for congressional internships in Washington, D.C. This exciting new program will help pay for students' living expenses so they can concentrate on learning and communicating about agriculture in our nation's capital. I was proud to present Dr. Kayse Shrum, president of OSU, with a \$125,000 check at our annual meeting, and we are excited to see the impact of this gift.

A new legislative experience for 4-H and FFA juniors and seniors from around Oklahoma will help our rural students understand our state's legislative process through first-person

involvement. This two-day event, which will be held July 12 and 13 in Oklahoma City, will allow these students to conduct the legislative process as they sit in the actual house and senate chambers and meet with state leaders at the state Capitol.

Our members understand the need to attract new investment and businesses in our rural communities. OKFB has launched the Oklahoma Agriculture & Rural Investment Fund, which will be coordinated by Megan Fanning, to meet that need. Our goal is to connect investors with local ventures and endeavors across our state to spur economic activity to keep our communities vibrant. We are excited to raise the first round of funding as we get this new entity up and running.

This will also be our first full year as part of the newly formed Royalty Owner Coalition of Oklahoma. We joined many of our agriculture friends to form the coalition, which will continue the much-needed work of Terry Stowers following his retirement. The coalition will represent the interests of mineral owners, which includes many Farm Bureau members, during the legislative session and throughout the year.

With so many new activities at OKFB, I can only begin to tell you about them. Be sure to stay tuned to our website, social media and publications to learn more about these programs throughout the year.

While each of these new programs is just getting started, the possibilities and impact they will have should make every OKFB member excited about the future of Farm Bureau and the future of Oklahoma.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodd Moesel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "M".



**I know I need life insurance,
but I also need to save for retirement.**

You might think you have to choose between protecting your loved ones with life insurance or saving for your future, but you don't have to.

You can do both, and it's easy when you work with your Farm Bureau agent. Let's talk about life insurance and ensure you're prepared for the future.



Looking on

Oklahoma Farm Bureau's key focal points for the upcoming 2022 Oklahoma Legislative Session

As a Farm Bureau member, staying in tune with what is happening at the Capitol is paramount in protecting Oklahoma farming and ranching and the rural way of life.

With the new legislative session quickly approaching, Oklahoma Farm Bureau is setting its sights on two key focal points: the regulation of medical marijuana and large-animal veterinarian incentives.

Medical **MARIJUANA**

Oklahoma has experienced a surge in medical marijuana operations around the state, and many OKFB members have voiced their concerns on industry regulations and the impact it could have on production agriculture.

Medical marijuana task force

In May 2021, OKFB joined forces with American Farmers and Ranchers, Oklahoma Agribusiness Retailers Association, Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council and Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association to form the Medical Marijuana Impacts on Oklahoma Production Agriculture Task Force, a group devoted to studying the challenges and implications for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers stemming from the medical marijuana industry.

Members of the task force have engaged with legislators

and state agencies to discuss two primary areas of concern for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers.

Marijuana grower license fees

Strengthening compliance and enforcement agencies like the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority and the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs was a major topic for OKFB and fellow members of the task force. This could be achieved by an increased marijuana grower license fee through the aforementioned agencies.

Increased land ownership transparency

Oklahoma Farm Bureau and the task force support increased transparency in ownership of medical marijuana facilities. Current foreign ownership regulations in Oklahoma restrict noncitizens and corporations unauthorized to conduct business in the state from owning land in Oklahoma.

In addition to foreign ownership concerns, landowners adjacent to medical marijuana facilities often struggle to contact and communicate with the neighboring growing facilities ahead of herbicide applications. Even with proper technique, small amounts of herbicide can damage the growing marijuana plants. This has caused many contracted applicators to refuse service to landowners near marijuana operations and prevents some producers from applying herbicide to their own crops.



Ways to GET INVOLVED

County CAPITOL VISITS

Oklahoma Farm Bureau encourages members to work with their county offices to plan visits to the state Capitol throughout the legislative session. While visiting the Capitol, members can meet with state legislators and tour the newly renovated building. Interested counties can work with their field representative and OKFB public policy staff to customize a tour to the members' specific interests.

Weekly Legislative ZOOM CALLS

Join the OKFB public policy division for weekly Zoom calls held at noon every Friday during session. Contact your field representative for additional details.

OKFB AG PAC LEADERSHIP

Seats will soon be open on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Ag PAC political action committee board for districts two, three, five and six. Any member interested in sitting on the PAC board should get in touch with their field representative.

Sign Up for ACTION ALERTS


Stay on top of the latest issues in the Legislature by signing up for OKFB's legislative action alerts. To sign up, visit okfb.news/takeaction or text **"OKFB77" to the number 52886**. Farm Bureau members who sign up will receive a text message when state legislators need to hear from them.

QUESTIONS?

Contact OKFB public policy staff at **(405) 523-2300**.

Large-Animal VETERINARIAN INCENTIVES

The state of Oklahoma is facing a severe shortage of large-animal veterinarians, especially in rural areas. This is a growing concern for many Farm Bureau members raising livestock. The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association and the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine have all voiced similar concerns.

Oklahoma's legislative appropriations committees have forecasted an increase in funds available for the state's budget in the 2023 fiscal year; as a result of these projections, OKFB members recently adopted policy at the 2021 OKFB Annual Meeting supporting funding for a large-animal veterinarian incentive program. 



The scoop on green pastures during winter

During the winter months, large pastures of bright green often dot the landscape across large portions of central and western Oklahoma. But why?

While much of Oklahoma may look rather bleak during the winter months between the wind chill, dreary and overcast days or the dormant native grasses, many people may wonder why there seems to be fields of green ‘grass’ as they drive down the highway.

To some, the lush green pastures may look like grass from a distance, but to livestock producers in the central and western parts of the state, it is much more valuable than that.

Often planted in mid-September, these patches of bright green dotted amongst expanses of brown native grasses are hard red winter wheat pastures.

Because of the very few snow-covered days that could limit grazing compared to more northern states and the unique climate characteristics across the southern

Great Plains, roughly eight million acres of land are dedicated to growing hard red winter wheat across Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas each year.

A valuable source of fresh, high-quality forage during the winter months, some producers make winter wheat a dual-purpose crop.


But what is a dual-purpose crop?

Typically ready to graze on by mid-November, livestock – such as cattle and sheep – will go on to call these pastures home and grow for around 120 to 150 days before being removed just prior to the first hollow stem development.

Simply, the first hollow stem occurs in spring just after the wheat has emerged from dormancy. Once the hollow stem has reached about 5/8-inch tall just below the developing head of the grain, producers

will let the crop continue to grow until it is ready to be harvested, usually around May.

While it may be a valuable source of forage for livestock, it can also be worth a lot to producers. Valued at \$478 million in 2020, hard red winter wheat grain production ranks fifth in value of commodities in the state, but this does not even include the value towards cattle production. Estimated to be worth a whopping \$2.6 billion, the beef industry is by far Oklahoma agriculture’s most valuable sector.

While hard red winter wheat may start off as a delicious meal for some hungry bovine, the final product is extremely versatile and will go on to produce delicious breads, hard rolls and croissants once harvested and milled. 

DID YOU KNOW?

While many plants go dormant or die off during the winter months, hard red winter wheat actually needs the cooler weather. Through a process known as vernalization, a seed must be exposed to temperatures ranging anywhere from 32 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit for at least three to six weeks. Without this exposure to cold weather, the seed head (where the grains are located) could be inconsistent, sparse or have delayed development.



Sources: Oklahoma State University Extension, U.S. Wheat Associates, Michigan State University Extension, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



Medical services when you need it most

No matter if you are facing an emergency or if you are taking precautionary measures, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members have access to multiple medical services all at a discounted rate.

Whether it is a planned medical procedure, routine exam with a local doctor or a medical emergency, the associated costs can be worrisome.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members can now have peace of mind before heading into another doctor's appointment or while picking up another prescription by saving today with one of OKFB's medical benefits.

Air Evac Lifeteam

When living in a rural area and the unimaginable happens, Air Evac Lifeteam is here to help. At a discounted annual membership rate, OKFB members have access to a group of highly trained pilots, paramedics and registered nurses who are standing by 24 hours a day and are ready to fly directly to an OKFB members' residence, farm, field or location of the accident.

Beltone

With eight Beltone Hearing Aid Centers in Oklahoma alone, OKFB members can enjoy a free, no-obligation hearing evaluation, along with a 15% discount toward any hearing aid purchase.

ClearValue

Is your hearing the same as it used to be? No matter if you would simply like a hearing assessment or if you are in need of hearing instruments, ClearValue is here to help OKFB members. Members automatically qualify for free hearing assessments and discounts on any hearing instruments needed, along with a free, one-year supply of batteries.

Life Line Health Screening

Staying proactive with health screenings can make all the difference. Through Life Line Health Screening, members have access to five hospital-grade tests for just \$135. The screening package includes:

- **Carotid Artery/Stroke** – A non-invasive ultrasound screening to detect plaque build-up in the major arteries of the neck, a leading cause of strokes.
- **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)** – An ultrasound screening to detect an enlargement of the abdominal aorta.
- **Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)** – Non-invasive Ankle-

Brachial Index calculation to screen for lower extremity vascular disease, which is a significant risk factor for heart attack and stroke.

- **Atrial Fibrillation** – A limb-lead EKG to screen for a common heart arrhythmia, which increases the risk of a stroke.
- **Osteoporosis** – A bone density screening to the heel.

Primary Vision Care Services

Are you on the hunt for a new vision plan? With Primary Vision Care Services, OKFB members have access to a large network of independent eye doctors within the state, unlimited eye exams and eyeglasses and contact lenses at affordable rates.

QualSight LASIK


Tired of continually misplacing your glasses or frustrated with them fogging up depending on the weather? Forget the inconveniences and check out QualSight LASIK. With more than 800 locations nationwide, OKFB members receive preferred pricing for LASIK vision correction procedures at 40-50% below the national average.

ScriptSave WellRX Premier

The cost of daily prescription medications to keep your body in check can add up quickly. With ScriptSave WellRX Premier, OKFB members can save an average of 65-80% on brand-name and generic prescriptions at more than 65,000 pharmacies nationwide. With no membership fees, deductibles or claim forms to complete, it is easy to begin saving today.

TASC Agriplan health reimbursement plan

Family farmers and other qualified small businesses can now save more than \$5,000 annually on health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket medical, vision and dental expenses not covered by insurance as business expenses. Offering an industry-exclusive Audit Guarantee and money-back guarantee, saving with TASC is as easy as the swipe of a debit card.

For more information on how to take advantage of the discounts associated with these services and other benefits available, visit okfarmbureau.org/benefits. 





*Oklahoma
Farm Bureau
Farm and Ranch
Family Recognition 2021*

the
LEGACY *we leave*

Though they may grow different commodities and live in various regions, Oklahoma farmers and ranchers have one thing in common — family.

Farming and ranching has been a family affair for centuries, and that tradition continues to ring true today.

While many operations do rely on heavy machinery and technological advancements for daily tasks, families remain the lifeblood of the farm, whether it

spans 10 acres or 10,000 acres.

Ask any of these nine farm and ranch families why they do what they do, and a common answer rises to the surface: leaving a legacy. Not a legacy that receives recognition and fame or awards and accolades, but rather a legacy left for future generations.

Join us in celebrating the nine outstanding families — one from each OKFB district — selected for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee's Farm and Ranch Family Recognition 2021.

*Stories by
Hannah Davis*

*Photos by
Dustin Mielke*



the WAYLAND family

The Wayland family roots run deep in the northwest Oklahoma community of Arnett.

Both Joe and Sally Wayland — along with their parents and grandparents — grew up on and around farms and ranches surrounding the Ellis County town.

"We've been here a long time," Joe said.

The family tradition continued on as the Waylands have raised their three girls — Jordan, Peyton and Sarah — on an Angus cow/calf operation that traces its heritage back to both of their families.

The headquarters of the couple's farm today was purchased from Sally's grandfather, while most of the family's land was cared for by Joe's parents and grandparents. The family even lives in Sally's grandparents' house.

The opportunity to raise cattle on pieces of land that his parents and grandparents cared for means the world to Joe.

"I've got a lot of pride in it," Joe said. "I know what my parents went

through to hang onto their land. They liked to starve to death for a lot of years. They finally came through it and had a good operation and a good life."

Most of the operation's original farmland has been planted to native grass, which grows well in the ranch's hard, rocky soil. The family also grows some wheat for hay or to graze out weaned calves.

"I love to see cattle do good from our management," Joe said. "We're trying to raise a good calf that can do his job in the feedlot. So far our cattle have been grading really good and doing a good job."

Retaining ownership of their cattle through the feedlot, the Waylands enjoy the opportunity to see the fruit of their hard work.

"That's the reason we do it," Joe said. "It lets us know we're doing our job to the best of our ability."

Much of the cattle on the rough terrain of the Wayland ranch are worked by horseback on horses raised by the family.

"Raising colts is a long process," he

said. "It's kind of like raising kids. There's a lot of pride in it and a lot of enjoyment in seeing one grow and develop and make a good horse."

Joe and Sally are grateful to provide their three girls with an opportunity to learn about life while caring for cattle, just like their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents.

"(The girls) see a lot about life on a ranch," Sally said. "They're there

when the calves are born, they're there as they grow up, they're there as we sell them. They see the full life cycle. I think that makes them strong. I think that's a good life for them to grow up with."

With a deep passion for their way of life, the Waylands are proud to carry on their ancestors' agricultural legacy in Ellis County.

"We chose ag because that was just our place to be," Sally said. "We didn't ever have any other idea of wanting to do anything else. It's always been a part of our lives."

We didn't ever have any other idea of wanting to do anything else. It's always been a part of our lives.

Sally Wayland





the SEARCEY *family*

As a fourth-generation farmer, Kerald Searcey has a deep appreciation for the soil on his family's farm.

The soil that produced crops for his family since his great-grandfather purchased the land in 1898 is the same soil he cares for today.

His ancestors worked the southwestern Oklahoma ground for more than 100 years, leading Kerald to strive to invest in and improve the soil for the next century.

"The soil is the livelihood of the farmer," he said. "Everything a farmer does needs to protect that soil."

Kerald, his wife, Donna, and their three children, Schyler, Sawyer and Spencer, raise cattle and grow wheat, cotton, milo, millet, sunflowers, black oats and triticale on their farm in Harmon and Jackson Counties.

The Hollis native always knew he wanted to farm and purchased his first tract of land as a senior in high school.

He later had the opportunity to rent land from his great uncle while also farming alongside his father.
"I just love it," he said.

"Seeing a calf being born or a seed when it germinates, watch it grow and come out of the ground, to seven, eight, nine months later you've got a crop. It's a miracle."

Aiming to help increase organic matter in the farm's soil, Kerald has experimented with a variety of farming techniques over the past several decades.

The family first switched to no-till farming in 2005 and quickly saw improved soil, steady or increased yields, and a reduction in inputs.

"You can't control the weather, you can't control the markets," he said. "You need to control what you can control, which is your inputs."

Over the past couple of years, Kerald has implemented a new program on the family farm using innovative practices including cover crops, no-salt or reduced-salt fertilizers, reduced plant populations, wider row spacing and reduced fertilizer rates.

"If we can improve the soil to make it healthier, it will release more nutrients into that plant to make the fruit of

the plant more healthy," he said. "I think it's working. And I think it's what's going to be (used) in the future."

The practices have not only enhanced the soil on the family's farm, but also have reduced input costs improving their overall bottom line.

"It's helping the land, but it's also being more efficient with your inputs and your money," he said.

A lifelong learner, Kerald

loves a challenge and an

opportunity to try something new to better

his livelihood.

"I like the challenge with different ways of growing crops," he said. "You've got to learn to keep improving because the world's going to leave you behind if you don't."

Each boasting long family heritages in agriculture, Kerald and Donna enjoy life on the farm and hope their children have a chance to do the same.

"I hope my children and grandchildren will still be on the land here to farm and live and enjoy it," he said. "Leave the soil in better shape than how you received, it and I think everything will be better then."

*The soil is the livelihood
of the farmer. Everything
a farmer does needs to
protect that soil.*

Kerald Searcey





the STANDRIDGE family

Carrying on the family tradition in agriculture as the fourth generation on their Grady County farm, Steve and Donna Standridge work diligently to produce superior cattle that represent the Standridge name well.

"I want to be known for selling a quality product of cattle," Steve said. "To me, your name is what you've got to sell at the end of the day. If they're used to buying quality cattle off me over and over again, they're going to be looking for my product at the sale barn. That's important to me."

The couple grows alfalfa, wheat, corn and forage sorghums to be used primarily in their stocker cattle operation and grow yard just outside Chickasha.

"The grow yard is something my father instilled in me to offset and be able to counter what a lot of other producers do," Steve said. "We don't want to buy when everybody else is buying necessarily and sell when everybody else is selling."

Each month, the family buys cattle at around 475 to 525 pounds to be placed in their grow yard

alongside steers from their cow/calf herd, and later markets the cattle at around 775 to 825 pounds. The Standridges purchase and sell sets of cattle every month throughout the year to counter market fluctuations.

"We're just trying to even out the highs and lows," Steve said. "Our overall goal is to achieve profitability and to hit the niche times of the year when maybe not everybody's marketing their cattle."

Certified in the Beef Quality Assurance program, the family uses proven production and management practices to ensure their cattle meet the highest standards of quality. Cattle are sorted into lots to track each group's progress and profitability and develop a plan for hedging.

When it comes time to market the cattle, Steve sorts the cattle into uniform groups based on size and quality to help ensure a premium product at the sale barn.

"Steve is very particular about the kind of cattle he buys," Donna said. "When he buys good cattle, we have a set way of bringing them in and then

when he sells his cattle, they always look really good. They're uniform. It's just a good set of cattle."

As they raise cattle on their Grady County farm to help feed the world, the Standridges cannot imagine spending their days doing anything else.

"What profession is more noble than an ag profession?"

Donna said. "It is hard work, but it's a wholesome life.

I wouldn't trade my life for the world."

"Donna's like,

'You're 66, you can retire,'" Steve said. "And

it's like, 'And do what?' I

enjoy what I do every day. I get up every day and want to meet the new day with a new challenge."

Perhaps most of all, the Standridges cherish the opportunity to share their way of life in agriculture with their children and grandchildren.

"I'm the fourth generation to be farming this farm in this area, so I feel like I'm carrying on the tradition," Steve said. "I don't know if my kids or my grandkids will ever farm, but I want them to have the opportunity to at some point if they want to."

*What profession is
more noble than an ag
profession? It is hard work,
but it's a wholesome life.*

Donna Standridge





the McMILLAN *family*

Sustainable is a word often portrayed as the ideal in agriculture, but many find it hard to define.

But Zeno and Becca McMillan of Johnston County believe sustainability is not just a word; it's an action.

Each and every day, the south-central Oklahoma couple — along with their daughter, Rory — strives to work hand-in-hand with nature to raise cattle and care for the land on their Red Angus and red baldy cow/calf operation.

"(Sustainability) is people like Zeno and I, and Rory, just doing the best management practice for the land that it was intended to have," Becca said.

The fifth-generation ranchers lean into the wisdom taught by their ancestors to steward the land well.

"His grandfather told us, 'Take care of the land and it'll take care of you,'" Becca said. "And that's kind of how we've approached everything out here."

Taking advantage of the natural environment found on their ranch, the family raises cattle using primarily the resources provided to

them by nature.

"You're just a steward of the land for so long," Zeno said. "We try to just use what Mother Nature gave us. It's helped, instead of trying to overdo it and overuse the land."

The McMillans use rotational grazing and conservative stocking rates to protect the native grasses found in rocky areas of their ranch near Mannsville.

The cattle grazing work in tandem with nature to help the grasses reseed for the next year, just like buffalo did on the land in centuries past.

"The livestock out here grazing, they're giving back to Mother Nature what Mother Nature needs to produce grass out there in continuous cycles," Becca said.

In areas of the ranch with loamy soils, the family utilizes introduced grasses.

"They complement each other, that we have them both," Zeno said. "We can rotate around and take up some slack if one's not doing as well as the other."

Serving as a complement to the cattle grazing on native grasses, the

McMillans also incorporate goats in their operation to help naturally manage brush control across the ranch.

"We move the goats around in small areas to just hit that brush hard," Zeno said. "They'll keep it trimmed back. It's really helped the land and that's what it's all about."

Using good management practices on their ranch

At the end of the day, it's leaving it better than how we found it and leaving a legacy for our daughter, Rory.

Becca McMillan

has helped the family endure challenges from nature like drought.

And each year, the McMillans aim to learn and improve from their mistakes.

"Nothing's perfect, but we try to get better every year," Zeno said.

Passionate about their way of life, the McMillans aspire to continue their heritage of stewarding the land in the generations to come.

"At the end of the day, it's leaving it better than how we found it and leaving a legacy for our daughter, Rory," Becca said. "We hope teaching her good management practices is something we'll be able to keep on passing down generation to generation."





the **PENZ** *family*

A deep love for cattle seems to run through the veins of Jeff Penz.

"I love every aspect of the cattle industry," Jeff said. "I live, eat, sleep and breathe cattle."

Jeff and his wife, Paula, raised their children, Derek and Presli, on the family's registered Angus seedstock operation in southeast Oklahoma's Bryan County.

"Jeff is right when he says he eats, sleeps and breathes cattle, because he does," Paula said. "He has just a passion for it."

Knowing the extent of Jeff's love for cattle, Paula's parents offered to give the young couple a few cows in the place of a wedding.

"You can imagine what Jeff picked," she said, laughing.

"I said, 'Well, absolutely, give me the cows,'" Jeff said. "It's the best deal I ever made."

The couple purchased their first registered Angus cattle in 2001 that became the foundation for their herd today. The Penzes began selling bulls the next

year, and the family's cattle were soon in high demand thanks to word of mouth from their customers.

"Folks were showing up right after we weaned the bulls and wanted to be first to be able to pick through the bulls," he said. "When that started, we knew we probably should transition to an auction."

Joining with a nearby producer, the Penzes held their first

President's Day Angus Bull Sale in February 2012. Today, the family markets around 120 Angus bulls at the sale each year to producers locally and in eight to 10 states across the country.

The Penz family's goal in producing quality cattle begins with a focus on developing functional females.

"All good bulls come from good cows," Jeff said. "We keep the very best replacement heifers that we produce and put them back into the herd. Over time, you put pressure on your herd and eliminate the ones that don't perform to the standards to which you set and which your customer demands."

Understanding the role his bulls

play in commercial cattle operations, Jeff aims to produce cattle that perform well in any environment.

"We're relied on by the commercial producer to increase their productivity from their product so they can retain more dollars in their pocket," Jeff said. "That's what we're relied on to do and the way we do that is through functional cattle."

*It's more than just
selling a bull. For us, it's
the relationships that we
built with the customers.*

Jeff Penz

Feeling fortunate to have both new and repeat customers every year, Jeff enjoys the connections he has developed with customers over the years.

"It's more than just selling a bull," he said. "For us, it's the relationships that we built with the customers."

Ultimately, the friendships Jeff has formed across the cattle industry are what drives his continuing involvement in agriculture.

"I don't think anybody's in agriculture for the money," he said. "It's never about the money, it's about the ups and downs, the trials and tribulations, the goods and bads, and to share that with one another in the business."





the **ANDERSON** *family*

To whom much is given, much will be required.

Cherishing the wisdom, hard work and sacrifices of those who went before them, Jared and Alisen Anderson of Miami seem to embody those words each day as they strive to feed the world and one day provide their children with the opportunity to do the same.

The Ottawa County couple treasures the privilege of being involved in production agriculture that was given to them by their parents and grandparents.

"You hear stories about my grandpa and my dad, and how much they sacrificed and really took a leap and made all this possible," Jared said. "We understand that you can't just graduate from college and buy property and get started. This is so hard to start and it's getting more difficult. We understand this is a once-in-a-lifetime kind of thing."

Born in Australia after his family moved across the world to farm and ranch, Jared had the unique opportunity to spend much of his early life on a wheat, milo,

cotton, cattle and sheep operation in the land down under. After experiencing a seven-year drought, his family returned to the United States to farm and ranch in northeastern Oklahoma on part of the land that he and Alisen care for today.

Jared has farmed and ranched on his family's operation for more than two decades, and also started his own row crop farm with help from his father and grandfather. He and Alisen — alongside their three children, Grace, Colton and Piper — today grow wheat, corn and soybeans, and also help run the family's cattle ranch.

Raised around her grandparents' livestock and grain farm in northern Indiana, Alisen loved agriculture from an early age and had a deep desire to share it with others as an educator. Her dream became reality as she began her career at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College shortly after finishing her bachelor's degree and marrying Jared. Mere months into her job as an academic adviser, Alisen was named an agriculture instructor at the college.

Ten years later, she still uses her real-world knowledge and experience from the family farm to invest in her students each day in the classroom.

"God told me that this (teaching) is what I needed to do for the rest of my life," she said.

Each grateful for the ability to be a part of the family's legacy, Jared and Alisen are driven every day by the responsibility of passing down their way of life in agriculture to their children.

"Things will get rough, and you'll be like,

'Man, I don't know about this,'"

Jared said. "And then you think, 'Well, Grandpa

gave us the opportunity to do this, and my dad did a lot to help us do this, so we can do this for our kids.'"

After all, the Andersons believe no way of life is better than that which provides food for the world.

"There's nothing greater than being able to say, 'I helped feed people today,'" she said. "And hopefully our kids, if they want, will be able to do the same with our land."

*There's nothing greater
than being able to say, "I
helped feed people today."*

Alisen Anderson





the **BRANDON** *family*

Pride in his family's heritage in agriculture is a driving force for Charlie Brandon as he carries with him each day the responsibility of preserving his family's farm.

Raised in the same house where his grandmother grew up, Charlie learned to farm and ranch alongside his father and grandfather in Kay County.

"I am the fourth generation to have the ability and the luxury — if you'd like to call it that — to farm and ranch on the same ground as my great-grandparents and my grandparents and my parents," he said.

Continuing in the tradition of his ancestors, Charlie and his wife, Lindsey, are raising their three children, Piper, Baylin and Bowen, as the fifth generation on the family's farm near Newkirk.

"It is great to be able to carry on that legacy and take care of those acres and strive to leave them — at the end of my time — in as good of shape or better shape," Charlie said.

The family runs a diverse farm and ranch in north central Oklahoma, growing wheat, corn, milo, soybeans

and oats alongside a hay business and a cow/calf and stocker operation.

Charlie graduated at the top of his class in high school and college, giving him the opportunity to pursue a career in any field of his choosing. But a deep love for agriculture was instilled in his blood from an early age.

"A lot of people told me, 'As smart as you are, you ought to be a doctor, you ought to be a banker,'" he said. "Well that wasn't what I enjoyed doing."

After earning a degree in animal science at Oklahoma State University, Charlie furthered his education by completing the ranch management program at Texas Christian University. The skills and knowledge he gained are now used to expand and improve his family's operation.

"They always say the most dangerous words in any business are, 'We've always done it that way,'" he said. "Bringing those ideas home has allowed us to expand and grow and do what we do today."

Maintaining the family farm certainly is not for the faint of heart, as the

Brandons continually face challenges from ever-increasing input costs and never-ending work around the farm while remaining at the mercy of the weather and markets.

"Everything we do costs a heck of a lot more, but it seems like our margins are still about the same as what they have been for all generations," he said.

"The risk to reward is substantially different now than what it would have been in my grandparents time or my great-grandparents time."

Yet in spite of all the hard work, Charlie and Lindsey remain committed to preserving the family farm in hopes that their children also will have a chance to enjoy the same way of life one day.

"Pride would be best way I would describe why doing what we do out here on the family farm and ranch is worth doing," he said. "To carry on that legacy, a guy basically has to wake up every morning and think about how you want to leave it to the next generation."

They always say the most dangerous words in any business are, "we've always done it that way."

Charlie Brandon





the CHAPMAN *family*

Growing up in rural Oklahoma, Jack and Beverly Chapman of Hughes County learned “to make the best better” at an early age as 4-H members.

Throughout his childhood on the farm, his career in farm lending and hers in education, and their active participation in their rural community, the Chapmans have worked to better every activity, organization and community in which they have been involved.

“That’s something that I’ve always tried my best to do,” Jack said. “Whatever I did or was involved in, I liked to see if I could do it better, make it better.”

Each raised on farms and ranches in southeastern Oklahoma, Jack and Beverly today live on his family’s farm near Calvin.

“I just think living in a small community, a farm area, is the best,” Beverly said. “I just like being out on the farm.”

An FFA member in high school, Jack learned about the opportunities available to him in agriculture from his FFA advisor who encouraged him to consider a degree in

agricultural economics.

“(My ag teacher) was the one who was instrumental in me taking that much of an interest in farming and in ag,” Jack said.

Jack took a course in appraisals as an agricultural economics student at Oklahoma State University and soon became interested in the field as a career.

After earning his

bachelor’s

degree,

he was

hired as an

appraiser for

the federal land

bank, today known as

Farm Credit.

“I couldn’t have picked a better job because I saw all sorts of farming operations and the management of them,” he said.

Jack traveled the eastern half of Oklahoma as an appraiser for 10 years before being named president of the McAlester location of the federal land bank where he worked until his retirement.

While he served farmers and ranchers throughout his career at the federal land bank, Jack also had an opportunity to sustain his family’s farm growing peanuts, rye, corn and soybeans. He worked diligently to develop the

operation by purchasing additional land.

With a deep love for the rural way of life, Jack and Beverly have spent much of their lives actively investing in the people of their community by serving in a variety of organizations.

“We feel that it’s important that we stay involved and help out any way we can,” Beverly said.

Grateful for the organizations’ impact in

their own lives, the

couple are active

supporters

of students

in local

FFA chapters

and 4-H clubs.

Jack is a board

member for the Hughes

County Farm Bureau and

Hughes County Farm Service

Agency, and is a lifetime member

of the Hughes County and Oklahoma

Cattlemen’s Association. Beverly serves

as a board member for the Oklahoma 4-H

Foundation, the Hughes County Home

and Community Education Group, and

the Hughes County Retired Teachers.

“We are a couple that has been blessed in being able to be a part of rural Oklahoma,” Jack said. “Rural people are some of the most honest and reliable people on earth.”



*Rural people are some
of the most honest and
reliable people on earth.*

Jack Chapman





the FIELDS *family*

Born and raised in agriculture, Eddie and Chris Fields of Wynona aspire to make a difference in the world through their role as farmers, ranchers and caretakers of the land.

“One thing I was taught by my grandparents was to make your mark on the world,” Eddie said. “What better way to do that than through agriculture? You are providing food and fiber, you’re taking care of the resources you’ve been blessed with, but you also have an impact on other people.”

The Osage County couple have raised their three daughters, Tailor, Jacie and Tristan, on the family ranch. The Fields family is involved in nearly every aspect of the beef industry, with a commercial cow/calf operation, a stocker yearling operation, a backgrounding yard, a purebred show cattle operation and a direct-to-consumer beef business.

A third-generation rancher, Eddie grew up learning to value the soil, water and natural resources on the ranch. His grandparents first purchased part of the land, an old cotton farm ridden with soil erosion, in 1952.

They worked diligently alongside the local conservation district to regenerate the land by building levees, terraces and ponds, eventually turning the sandstone native pastures into lush grazing for cattle with little and big bluestem, Indian and switchgrass.

Eddie and his family today have worked to continue improving the land by introducing rye grass, clovers and fescue into their Bermuda grass pastures and by building or repairing ponds to take advantage of heavy rainfall.

“You take care of the land and the resources, it’ll take care of you,” he said. “My dad instilled that in me.”

With the goal of providing quality beef products to customers while also sharing the work of Oklahoma ranchers, the Fields family has sold beef directly to consumers for more than 15 years. The onset of the pandemic provided an opportunity for the family to expand their customer base.

“So many Americans now want to be able to put a face to the product that they’re buying and consuming,” he

said. “They can call me, ask me questions. I think that gives them comfort in knowing they can trust us on what they’re buying.”

As a fourth-grade teacher in Cleveland, Chris also does her part to share agriculture by frequently incorporating agriculture into her classroom lessons each week.

“A lot of the kids don’t come from an ag background,” Chris said. “I try to instill in them that agriculture is very important. Everything that we eat every day, the clothes that they wear, everything they do has to come from ag somewhere.”

The Fields family aims to leave their legacy in Osage County by stewarding well the land, livestock and natural resources in their care — and doing their part to share it with others.

“I love agriculture,” Eddie said. “I love working with God’s creation and the livestock and the land and the natural resources He’s blessed us with, and trying to preserve it for the next generation of farmers and ranchers.”

*One thing I was taught by my
grandparents was to make
your mark on the world. What
better way to do that than
through agriculture?*

Eddie Fields





PRESSING Q

*A recap of the awards and recognition presented during
Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 80th annual meeting
in Norman, Oklahoma.*

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During a fun-filled and action-packed weekend, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members from across the state gathered Nov. 5-7 for the organization's 80th annual meeting, an opportunity to fellowship with one another, but also to attend breakout sessions and continue to move the organization into the future through changes in organizational policy.

Members also had the chance to elect several leaders, including OKFB President Rodd Moesel, who

was elected to serve his third two-year term. District two members opted to re-elect Monte Tucker of Roger Mills County to the state board, while Michael Clark of Le Flore County was elected to represent district five and Mike Leverett of McClain County was elected to serve district eight.

Additional members elected to represent their district include:

NWARD

21 Annual Meeting

Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee

Logan and Brittany Hukill

Chairmen – Caddo County

Will and Leslie Lewis

Vice-Chairmen – Okmulgee County

Chris and Ashley Hoskins

Secretary – Rogers County

Chism Sander

District One – Dewey County

Gaven and Taylor Harting

District Two – Jackson County

Cody and Kara Goodknight

District Four – Comanche County

Jared and Bay Engler

District Five – McCurtain County

Jaden Brunnemer

District Seven – Woods County

LC and Jaclyn Darling

District Eight – Coal County

Austin Jackson

At-Large – Payne County

Newlin Humphrey

Collegiate – Payne County

Women's Leadership Committee

Paula Sawatzky

District Two – Custer County

Arlene LeMaster

District Five – Le Flore County

Jan Long

District Eight – Pontotoc County

Okmulgee County named top county

Okmulgee County Farm Bureau was honored with the John I. Taylor Award – considered Oklahoma Farm Bureau’s highest award – during OKFB’s 80th annual meeting for excelling in the program areas of public policy, service to members, public relations, membership, Women’s Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee in 2021.

“We have been very fortunate to have an active YF&R and WLC and been active within our community,” said Jim Meek, Okmulgee County Farm Bureau president. “We have been working to share agriculture within our community to build a brighter future for those who want to be involved.”

Throughout 2021, Okmulgee County Farm Bureau focused on member engagement at each of their events after a year with no events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The county YF&R hosted a pancake breakfast during the spring livestock show featuring a membership table to promote and grow the organization. The county organization stepped up to share the story of agriculture by sponsoring the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture commodity trailer, inviting

community leaders and legislators to meetings including their Legislative Forum, and sharing agriculture issues and information on their county Facebook page.

“We have gotten back into the schools to do some fire safety and other safety programs with those students,” Meek said. “As we move forward, we are looking at how we can improve on what we have already done.”



OKFB President Rodd Moesel (right) and OKFB Executive Director Thad Doye (left) present Okmulgee County Farm Bureau President Jim Meek with the John I. Taylor Award.

Comanche County wins OKFB Lewis H. Munn Award

Comanche County Farm Bureau was awarded the Lewis H. Munn Award during OKFB’s 80th annual meeting for their efforts in public relations. Known as the Farm Bureau Builders Award, this award is presented each year to the county that conducts the strongest program in a chosen area.

“This gives us another challenge to keep moving forward,” said Kerry Givens, Comanche County Farm Bureau president. “We are very proud to win this prestigious award.”

Comanche County Farm Bureau and the county Women’s Leadership Committee teamed up for the Cache Area Summer in the Street Celebration in May 2021 to inform and educate the public about agriculture. By providing vegetable seeds, the organization shared with attendees how to care for plants while using the event to share Farm Bureau with the community. During the Comanche

County Junior Livestock Show, the county ensured 4-H exhibitors received photos from the show for free with a \$2,500 sponsorship.

“Comanche County Farm Bureau can do an even better job at public

relations within our community by collaborating with organizations and venues in the area,” Givens said. “We are trying to bring people in to understand the impact of agriculture across the county.”



Comanche County Farm Bureau President Kerry Givens (left) accepts the Lewis H. Munn Award from OKFB President Rodd Moesel (right).

AWARDS

County Farm Bureaus honored for excellence

Each year during the Oklahoma Farm Bureau annual meeting, county Farm Bureaus are recognized for their efforts to not only further agriculture, but also rural Oklahoma.

OKFB recognized county Farm Bureaus that have excelled in program areas such as membership, public policy, local affairs, service to members, Women's Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers with a Presidential Star Award.

OKFB also recognized 39 county Farm Bureaus for reaching their membership quotas: Adair, Beaver, Beckham, Cherokee, Choctaw, Cleveland, Comanche, Cotton, Creek, Custer, Delaware, Ellis, Garvin, Greer, Harmon, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnston, Latimer, Lincoln, Love, McClain, McCurtain, Major, Marshall, Nowata, Okmulgee, Ottawa, Payne, Pushmataha, Roger Mills, Rogers, Stephens, Texas, Tillman, Wagoner, Washington, Woods and Woodward County Farm Bureaus.

Six Star

Caddo County
Comanche County
Okmulgee County
Payne County
Washita County

Five Star

Creek County
Cherokee County
Garfield County
Kay County
Kingfisher County
LeFlore County
Major County
Nowata County
Okfuskee County
Ottawa County
Pontotoc County
Rogers County
Washington County
Woodward County

Four Star

Alfalfa County
Custer County
Grant County
Lincoln County
Noble County
Pottawatomie County
Seminole County
Stephens County
Texas County

Three Star

Choctaw County
Cotton County
Greer County
Kiowa County
Latimer County
Muskogee County
Sequoyah County
Tulsa County



From left to right, representatives of Payne, Okmulgee, Comanche, Caddo and Washita Counties are recognized as six-star counties for 2021.

OKFB presents district administrator of the year

Each playing a vital role within their county organization, one county Farm Bureau administrator from each district was recognized during Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 80th annual meeting.

Having a direct impact on the success of their county organization and helping to share the Farm Bureau message, the 2021 Administrator of the Year award recipients, by district, are:

District One

Diana Routon
Woodward County

District Two

Tina Bell
Jackson County

District Three

Toni Bender
Kingfisher County

District Four

Stephanie Branstetter
Stephens County

District Five

Laura Mitchell
Pittsburg County

District Six

Melissa Barnes
Sequoyah County

District Seven

Cassandra Martin
Alfalfa County

District Eight

Sandee Boyd
Hughes County

District Nine

Taylor Benson
Payne County

Comanche County couple honored with 2021 YF&R Achievement Award

River and Elizabeth Mitchell were named the 2021 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award recipients, which recognizes young producers who have excelled on their farm or ranch and have honed their leadership abilities through Farm Bureau and other activities and organizations.

"We are honored to receive this award," River said. "We are just one ranching family within the industry, and we are looking forward to what the next year has to offer."

The Mitchells run a cow/calf herd and stocker operation at their Comanche County ranch, along with operating the Great West Carriage Company near Chickasha.

As Achievement Award winners, the Mitchells received a John Deere Gator XUV courtesy of Willis Re and an expense-paid trip to Atlanta, Georgia, for the 2022 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in January. The Mitchells competed on

a national level for the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement

Award during the AFBF Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.



River and Elizabeth Mitchell (center) are presented with their OKFB YF&R Achievement Award on stage during the OKFB annual meeting from (left to right) Kara and Cody Goodknight, 2021 OKFB YF&R chairmen; Rodd Moesel, OKFB president; and Zac Swartz, OKFB YF&R coordinator.

Okmulgee County members win YF&R Excellence Award

Will and Leslie Lewis were honored with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award, which recognizes young producers who do not derive the majority of their income from an agricultural operation.

"We started our operation less than six years ago, so this award really means a lot to us," Leslie said. "We are thankful for Farm Bureau to allow us to take on leadership roles and be involved in our community."

Together, the Lewis family operates a commercial cow/calf operation in Okmulgee County while Leslie serves as an Okmulgee County Extension educator and Will as a service technician with Tecta America Oklahoma.

As the Excellence in Agriculture Award winner, the Lewis family received a Can-Am Outlander 450 ATV, courtesy of Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma and earned a trip to the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in January in Atlanta, Georgia, where they competed for the AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award.



Will and Leslie Lewis (third and fourth from right) receive their OKFB YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Award during the OKFB annual meeting by (left to right) Kara and Cody Goodknight, 2021 OKFB YF&R Chairmen; John Grunewald, president and CEO of Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma; Patrick Zeka, president and CEO of Oklahoma AgCredit; Rodd Moesel, OKFB president; and Zac Swartz, OKFB YF&R coordinator.

Payne County honored as top county YF&R program



Members of Payne County Farm Farmers and Ranchers are presented with the Charles L. Roff by (left to right) Kara and Cody Goodknight, 2021 OKFB YF&R chairmen; Rodd Moesel, OKFB president; and Zac Swartz, OKFB YF&R coordinator.

Payne County Young Farmers and Ranchers was named the Charles L. Roff Award recipient during Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 80th annual meeting in Norman.

Each year, one county YF&R committee is selected for their efforts to not only strengthen the Farm Bureau organization, but to improve their local community.

The committee hosted the inaugural Payne County Palooza Cattle Showmanship Clinic, where county 4-H members learned what it takes to care of and show cattle, many of which were first-time showmen.

As the state's top YF&R committee, the county was presented with a traveling plaque in recognition

for their outstanding committee involvement.

"We are really proud of our committee for all of the hard work they have done this past year," said Shelby Leonard, Payne County YF&R chair. "We are continuing to work hard to ensure people in the community know the story of agriculture."

OKFB names YF&R discussion meet winners

More than a dozen participants ranging from high school to 35 competed in one of three discussion meets held in conjunction with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau annual meeting.

Tim Taylor of Okmulgee County Farm Bureau was named the winner of the 2021 Young Farmers and Ranchers Discussion Meet, Roy Stovall of Payne County was named the 2021 Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet winner and Blake Janssen of Amber-Pocasset was named the High School Discussion Meet winner.

In each of the three discussion meets, participants were judged on their ability to offer constructive input, cooperation and communication while analyzing agricultural problems and developing solutions.

As the state YF&R discussion meet winner, Taylor received a John Deere Z335E ZTrak Lawn Mower, sponsored by P&K Equipment and competed in the national discussion meet contest during the 2022 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

Stovall, the collegiate winner, received an all-expense-paid trip to compete at the 2022 American Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference Feb. 25-28 in

Louisville, Kentucky.

High school discussion meet participants were awarded scholarships towards their education. Blake Janssen of Amber-Pocasset, the high school winner, received a \$1,500 scholarship, Lyndsie Vickers of Alva placed second to receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Third-place Kalen Groves of Beggs received a \$500 scholarship, and Jenna Maier of Alva and Justice Miller of Hinton each received a \$250 scholarship for placing fourth.



Tim Taylor (center) accepts his OKFB YF&R Discussion Meet Award at the OKFB annual meeting from (left to right) Kara and Cody Goodknight, 2021 OKFB YF&R chairmen; Scott Eisenhower, P&K Equipment General Manager; Rodd Moesel, OKFB president; and Thad Doye, OKFB executive director.

OKFB Foundation donates agriculture books to 12 Oklahoma schools

Twelve Oklahoma educators from across the state were each awarded a basket of agriculture books for their schools during Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 80th Annual Meeting Nov. 5 in Norman.

The OKFB Foundation for Agriculture, in partnership with the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee, sponsored this year's Bushels for Books program, which takes donated bushels of any commodity crop, as well as monetary donations from farmers and ranchers, and provides bushel baskets of accurate agriculture books to Oklahoma educators.

"Our youngest consumers typically do not know what it takes to grow their food and fiber," said David VonTungeln, OKFB Foundation for Agriculture president.

"We are proud to provide educators the opportunity to share the accurate agriculture story."

Applications were accepted from teachers and librarians across the state, and winners were selected by the OKFB WLC state committee. The books cover various agriculture topics and were selected from the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's accurate agriculture book list.

"Agriculture is around us each and every day," said Mignon Bolay, OKFB WLC chair. "We hope these accurate agriculture books will open students' eyes to the world around them as their teachers and librarians use these tools in the classroom."

Educators who received books included:

Kristy Ehlers

*BlueSTEM AgriLearning Center
El Reno*

Andrea Andrade

*Bridge Creek Intermediate School
Blanchard*

Delores Cox

*Buffalo Valley Public School
Talihina*

Katie Fox

*Creekwood Elementary School
Broken Arrow*

Rita Harwick

*Enid High School
Enid*

Traci Ellison

*Mooreland Elementary
Mooreland*

Marisa Simon

*St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School
Edmond*

Jeri Bordine

*Sentinel Elementary
Sentinel*

Katie Brassfield

*Union City Intermediate School
Union City*

Chris Crager

*Tenkiller Public Schools
Welling*

Diane Hall

*Wellston Elementary School
Wellston*

Lauren Parrish

*Wilson Elementary School
Wilson*

For more information on the Bushels for Books program, visit OKFBFoundationForAgriculture.org/Bushel-For-Books.

Dr. Coon honored with Distinguished Service award

Dr. Thomas Coon, vice president, dean and director of the Oklahoma State University Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, was presented with the Distinguished Service to Oklahoma Farm Bureau Award Friday, Nov. 5 during the organization's 80th annual meeting in Norman.

Each year, the award is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to agriculture and the Farm Bureau organization.

"The OSU Ferguson College of Agriculture has seen many exciting changes within the past few years, and Dr. Coon has the future of agriculture including farmers and ranchers at the forefront of the New Frontiers movement," said Rodd

Moesel, OKFB president. "Oklahoma agriculture has benefitted greatly from Dr. Coon's vision, leadership and

commitment to our industry and our rural way of life."



OKFB President Rodd Moesel (left) and OSU President Dr. Kayse Shrum (right) present Dr. Tom Coon, center, with the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award Nov. 5.

Perkins-Tryon student earns scholarship for work with AITC

Kara Miner, a senior at Perkins-Tryon High School, was awarded a \$1,000 college scholarship through the Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture Ag in the Classroom Scholarship Challenge by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Friday, Nov. 5 at the organization's annual meeting in Norman.

To help children in the Perkins-Tryon community learn more about farming and ranching, Miner created agriculture education lessons for kindergarten and third grade classes at the school.

The kindergarten students were introduced to agriculture by learning about different livestock species that can be found on the farm through worksheets and an interactive activity.

Each class also had the opportunity for a hands-on livestock experience as Miner brought a sheep from her herd to use in the lessons.

For more information about OYLA and other youth programs, visit okfarmbureau.org/yfr.



OKFB Women's Leadership Committee Chair Mignon Bolay (left) presents Kara Miner with a \$1,000 scholarship for her work sharing agriculture.

Jones honored with OKFB Journalist of the Year award

Storme Jones, a News9 reporter, was recognized with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Journalist of the Year Award Nov. 6 during the organization's 80th annual meeting in Norman.

The award honors a working member of the news media for accurate and regular reports about Farm Bureau news, agricultural and rural issues.

"We are grateful for Storme's willingness to share the agriculture story with the Oklahoma City metropolitan area," said Rodd Moesel,

OKFB president. "We are grateful for his active interest in seeking and reporting agriculture stories that connect our state's farmers and ranchers with consumers."

The Oklahoma City-based broadcast journalist was chosen for the award for his excitement to report on agriculture issues. Jones reported numerous pieces highlighting issues facing Oklahoma farmers and ranchers such as the unprecedented winter weather, wheat harvest and more. 



ALL AROUND OKLAHOMA

OKFB launches \$125,000 endowment to support OSU students in Washington, D.C.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently launched a \$125,000 endowment with the OSU Foundation for Oklahoma State University students interning in Washington, D.C.

The endowment will assist selected students in OSU's Ferguson College of Agriculture with housing and other expenses incurred as part of their Washington, D.C.-based internship.

"Our goal is to start a tradition and custom of having agricultural policy students in D.C.," said Rodd Moesel, OKFB president. "This endowment is the first step in helping more students spend time in D.C. with congressional leaders and groups that support agriculture and our rural way of life."

The endowment is geared toward students seeking internships with U.S.

Senate or House of Representatives staff, agricultural committees or policy groups in Washington, D.C.

"Serving our elected officials in Washington, D.C., and getting a first-hand look at how policymaking works is a high point for the students selected for these internships," said Thomas G. Coon, vice president and dean of the Ferguson College of Agriculture at OSU. "Our students study hard in their core classes and are extremely competitive at landing internships."

Coon expressed his gratitude for the impact a gift like this from OKFB will have on current and future Ferguson College of Agriculture students.

"We appreciate the work of Oklahoma Farm Bureau and our other partners in developing opportunities to help our

graduates be more prepared and more competitive in the workplace," he said.

The selection process will be administered by the Ferguson College of Agriculture with the first interns slated to be selected in the spring of 2023.

Moesel said the ultimate goal for the endowment is to fund an entire house dedicated to OSU interns in Washington.

"States like Texas and Georgia have similar programs where their D.C. interns are housed in facilities funded by endowments like this," Moesel said. "Our hope is with increased fundraising, we can one day fund an OSU intern house in Washington, D.C."

Interested students should contact the Ferguson College of Agriculture's Academic Programs Office for information.



OKFB President Rodd Moesel (right) presents a check to OSU President Dr. Kayse Shrum for \$125,000 to establish an endowment for OSU students interning in Washington, D.C., Nov. 5 during the state convention.



Thompson named vice president of public policy

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently named Steve Thompson as the vice president of public policy.

Thompson will lead the OKFB public policy team as they work to implement the organization's grassroots policy in Oklahoma and in Washington, D.C.

"I'm grateful for this new leadership role and the opportunity to continue engaging with Farm Bureau members from around the state," Thompson said. "Our Public Policy team is well-positioned to uphold the OKFB tradition of vigorous advocacy for agriculture and rural Oklahoma. Although we face many challenges, I am very optimistic about the organization's ability to positively impact the future of our state."

Thompson will also serve as the interim executive director of the Royalty Owner Coalition of Oklahoma.

Prior to joining OKFB, Thompson served as director of government relations and ag programs for American Farmers and Ranchers. Thompson also worked for nine years at the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, first as legislative liaison, then as associate commissioner. He studied agricultural education and agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University.

Thompson also serves as a livestock show superintendent at the Oklahoma Youth Expo and Tulsa State Fair. He received the okPork Ambassador Award from the Oklahoma Pork Council in 2019, the Distinguished Service Award from the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association in 2007 and the Honorary State FFA Degree in 2018. He and his wife Jana have one son, Will, and reside in Yukon.



Steve Thompson

OKFB Foundation accepting donations for Kentucky producers affected by tornadoes

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is accepting donations for Kentucky farmers and ranchers impacted by tornadoes that struck the state Dec. 10.

Four tornadoes touched down in Kentucky with one traveling over 200 miles destroying and damaging houses and farms and leaving roads impassible.

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said the storms are the most devastating tornado event in the state's history along with declaring a state of emergency.

The foundation encourages county organizations to donate to the cause, and the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture will match the donation up to \$100.

All donations collected by the

foundation will be sent to Kentucky Farm Bureau to assist their efforts in aiding Farm Bureau members in need through their KFB for Kentucky Relief Fund.

Donations can be mailed to OKFB Foundation for Agriculture, 2501 N Stiles,

Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or can be made online at okfbfoundationforagriculture.org/donate.

For more information, contact Holly Carroll at (405) 523-2300.



OKFB reaches membership quota

Recently recognized by American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall as one of 20 state organizations that grew their membership in 2021, 39 counties across the state met or exceeded their membership quota.



Havens joins OKFB communications department

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently named Rachel Havens as the organization's assistant director of media relations and advocacy communications.

Havens will work in the communications and public relations department to develop and grow relationships with news media statewide to expand the organization's reach in promoting the interest and work of OKFB members and Oklahoma agriculture. She will also work to promote the organization's advocacy efforts for OKFB's grassroots members.

"Although I didn't grow up in production agriculture, this industry is largely responsible for shaping me into the person I am today," Havens said. "Serving in this role is an incredible opportunity to give back to Oklahoma agriculture and – most importantly – the families and individuals who center their livelihoods around it."

Havens will work closely with OKFB's public policy team to coordinate communications and disseminate information to OKFB members, the media and the public.

Havens previously served as a marketing coordinator for the Oklahoma

State University Student Union. Hailing from Stillwater, Oklahoma, she received her bachelor's degree in animal science and her master's degree in agricultural communications from OSU. Havens currently resides in Oklahoma City with her husband, Brandon.



Rachel Havens

Fanning joins OKFB as economic development coordinator

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently named Megan Fanning as the economic development coordinator.

Fanning will work to connect new agricultural enterprises across the state with funding sources to help further develop rural Oklahoma.

"Most of us have been impacted by rural communities, whether we grew up in them or have grown a passion for them," said Fanning. "We always say agriculture is the lifeblood of Oklahoma, and I hope that this position will help invigorate that and keep people in our rural communities."

Fanning will assist with investments in new or expanding businesses with an opportunity to change their industries and create jobs in rural Oklahoma.

Fanning began her career at BancFirst in credit analysis and lending. Originally from Morrison, Oklahoma, Fanning received a bachelor's degree in agribusiness with a minor in finance from Oklahoma State University.



Megan Fanning

OKFB hosts inaugural Evening of Impact for Ag PAC

Oklahoma Farm Bureau hosted the first-ever Evening of Impact fundraising dinner benefitting the OKFB Ag PAC political action committee Friday, Dec. 3, at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will go on to help the OKFB Ag PAC support political candidates in state and federal elections who value the rural way of life and support the interests of farmers and ranchers.

"It's critical that we get good people (in Washington, D.C.) who understand agriculture, our industry and business, and how we approach production and what is necessary to get it all to come together and be a success," said Keef Felty, OKFB Ag PAC chairman.

The evening was highlighted by special guest Congresswoman Stephanie Bice. She visited with the 60 OKFB members and guests in attendance, shared her experiences in Washington, D.C., and discussed life as a new member of the House of Representatives.

Pat McFerron, president of Cole Hargrave Snodgrass and Associates and founder of CMA Strategies, spoke with attendees on current and past polling trends while local artist Zonly Looman showcased his talents as he painted a bison – the Oklahoma state animal – on-site throughout the evening. The final artwork was auctioned off at the conclusion of the event and the proceeds of the painting went to the OKFB Ag PAC.

The OKFB Ag PAC is supported solely by individual contributions, which come primarily from Farm Bureau members who elect to make voluntary contributions when renewing their membership dues. Members can donate at any time by mailing a check to the Ag PAC. For more information, visit okfarmbureau.org/advocacy/agpac/.



OKFB President Rodd Moesel speaks with Rep. Stephanie Bice during the Evening of Impact fundraiser.

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OKFB member appointed to AFBF YF&R committee

American Farm Bureau recently appointed Ottawa County Farm Bureau member Alisen Anderson to serve as a member of the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

Anderson will serve a two-year term beginning in February 2022. She will serve on the 16-member committee to assist in the coordination of YF&R events, competitive events, Harvest for All program and more.

"We are honored to have Alisen selected to serve on the YF&R committee and represent Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers," said Rodd Moesel, Oklahoma Farm Bureau president. "She continues to be a great asset for our state, and we cannot wait to see the impact she will make on the state and national organization."

Anderson, alongside her husband, Jared, owns and operates Anders Farms near Miami, where they grow corn, wheat and soybeans. They also manage and operate their family ranch of 500 commercial cattle as they raise their three children, Grace, Colton and Piper.

"This opportunity to serve on the committee is one of the greatest honors in my personal and professional life," Anderson said. "I am excited to give back to fellow farmers and ranchers who are feeding our world. I am thankful OKFB and AFBF granting me this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of service."



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OKFB Legal Foundation supports AFBF and NPPC's Supreme Court petition regarding California's prop 12

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Legal Foundation has joined forces with agriculture groups and business organizations from around the country to submit a group amicus curiae – or “friend of the court” – brief supporting the American Farm Bureau Federation and National Pork Producers Council's Supreme Court petition to hear their appeal of California's Proposition 12.

Proposition 12 aims to set housing requirements for farm animals raised for food products sold within California. Several agriculture groups across the nation argue that the requirements are not only more costly, but less efficient, not scientifically based and do not consider best animal husbandry practices.

The ballot initiative was passed by California voters in 2018, and is being implemented in two phases, with the first phase implemented in 2020 and the second phase taking effect in 2022.

The OKFB Legal Foundation and other friends of the court discuss two primary reasons for the Supreme Court to hear the petition: economic consequences and the violation of interstate commerce.

Economic consequences

Few pork producers in the United States currently meet California's standards with proposition 12. Compliance with this law would require any producer selling their products in California to abide by these regulations, regardless of their operation's geographical location.

The brief expresses the potential this has to create enormous economic consequences felt by both producers and consumers. Consumers purchasing pork products would see an increase in prices on grocery store shelves due to the producer-incurred cost of changing their operation's infrastructure, while failure to comply with the set regulations would deny producers access to California's market entirely.

Interstate commerce

Partners in the brief argue requiring out-of-state producers to comply with a California law in order to conduct business

within the state imposes extraterritorial requirements that impede interstate commerce and go against the idea of horizontal federalism, or the freedom to move goods from state to state.

The OKFB Legal Foundation exists to protect Oklahoma farmers and ranchers and their ability to raise crops and

livestock in the best manner they know. The foundation is proud to stand with the North Carolina Pork Council, the North Carolina Chamber Legal Institute, the North Carolina, Arizona, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Tennessee and Texas Farm Bureaus and other organizations on this important issue.



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Jackson County Farm Bureau members share story of cotton harvest with OETA

Jackson County Farm Bureau members Matt Muller and Mike Schulz recently shared several highlights from the 2021 cotton harvest in an OETA story.

Cotton, Oklahoma's fourth-largest export, was harvested across the state in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving.

"Every once in a blue moon, things (demand, prices and production) will line up," Muller said. "This year, prices are at a 10-year high, which is good."

Both Muller and Schulz explained the cotton industry fluctuates from year to year and is extremely dependent on both the world economy and the perfect weather conditions.

In regards to the volume produced in Oklahoma, only Texas and Georgia rank higher than the Sooner state.

"This year we will harvest somewhere in the neighborhood of 550,000 acres statewide, which is up considerably in the last decade and will equate to just short of a million bales of cotton," Schulz said.

Based on pricing at the time, Schulz estimated that between \$450 and \$500 million worth of cotton would be harvested in Oklahoma for 2021 alone.


To view the full interview, visit okfb.news/3GD5g6q.

OKFB Foundation, partners donate utility vehicle to Restore Farms

In partnership with BankFirst, Oklahoma AgCredit, CoBank and Oklahoma County Farm Bureau, the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture donated a John Deere Gator Utility Vehicle to Restore Farms November 9 at their location in Oklahoma City. 00219377

Part of the RestoreOKC initiative, Restore Farms is an urban farm and

garden working closely with the residents of northeast Oklahoma City. Featuring a community garden, orchard, greenhouse and livestock, the location serves as a building block of renewed community for local residents of all ages.

In addition to the utility vehicle, a \$1,000 donation was made to cover registration and other costs associated. 







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The basics of winter bird feeding

By Trisha Gedon
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service



With four different categories of feed for birds: seeds, suet, fruit and sugar water, each can attract a unique variety of birds to any landscape. *Photo by Todd Johnson.*

There is a nip in the air, which may leave some Oklahomans wanting to curl up on the couch with a warm blanket and a mug of hot chocolate. Despite the cool weather, however, this time of year is perfect for bird watching from the comfort of home.

By providing the right food and feeders, plenty of birds will soon take solace in backyards across the state, said David Hillock, Oklahoma State University Extension consumer horticulturist.

"Gardening enthusiasts who enjoy the

beauty of the landscape can continue to do so throughout the winter months by watching the birds that call your landscape home," Hillock said. "Bird watching is a fun and educational pastime that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. The various species of birds are not only fun to watch, but they add color to the dreary days we experience during the winter."

During the summer months, birds often feast on a variety of things including berries, bugs and flower nectar, but nourishment can be hard to find in the

winter months. Placing feeders out will help these feathered creatures make it through the cold season and they will likely stick close by in the summer.

Prior to placing birdfeeders out that have been stored during the warmer months, Hillock suggests giving them a good cleaning by washing them in soapy water and rinsing in a 10% bleach solution. Periodically cleaning the birdfeeders during the winter months is also essential as diseases can grow in wet and moldy seeds, as well as in bird



droppings. Prior to refilling birdfeeders, ensure it is completely dry before adding fresh seed.

With four primary food categories for birds: seeds, suet, fruit and sugar water, it can be a challenge to figure out which will work best.

The best overall choice for birdseed is the small black-oil sunflower seed or the striped sunflower seed. Species including sparrow, finch, cardinal, towhee, grosbeak, bunting, junco, blackbird, chickadee, titmouse, dove and blue jay will feast on these seeds. Their thin shell is easy for birds of all sizes to crack open while the high oil content is beneficial. Suet is a great option for woodpeckers, nuthatches, chickadees, titmice, brown creepers and wrens because of its high energy content. For those interested in having seed available during the summer months, try to avoid using suet as the high temperature can cause it to turn rancid.

“Sugar water is a food group specific for hummingbirds, although orioles and a few other species may sample the mixture, too,” Hillock said. “The best solution is 80% water to 20% sugar and there is no need to add red dye to the mixture.”

The various types of bird food will require different types of feeders, including platform, hopper and tube feeders. Fruit feeders loaded with wedges of oranges, grapes, apples and bananas will attract orioles, bluebirds, mockingbirds, towhees, woodpeckers, tanagers, brown

thrashes, catbirds, cardinals, grosbeaks and robins. In addition to a wide variety of birds enjoying fruit feeds, many may also encounter an increase in squirrel visitors.



Even on dreary winter days, male cardinals can add a splash of color anywhere. *Photo by Todd Johnson.*

“Another way to encourage a variety of birds to your landscape is to offer your feathered friends a variety of food items in different locations and levels in your yard,” Hillock said. “This arrangement closely resembles native foraging opportunities. Some birds are ground feeders, while others are more comfortable feeding off seed heads or in a tree canopy.”

While food is important for survival, so is water as birds not only need it to stay hydrated, but to remain clean. Feathers that are clean can better insulate against harsh weather, so a clean birdbath filled with fresh water is essential.

Hillock said there are several ways in which homeowners can easily provide water for birds in the landscape.

“A water source can be as easy as a plant saucer or as elaborate as a small pond,” he said. “It all depends on how much work you want to put into it and how much space you have. However, the most common is a birdbath, which is available in a variety of sizes, styles and price ranges.”

One thing to keep in mind if using an immersible water heater in the water source is to set it to turn off when the water reaches 40 degrees.

More information on attracting birds to the landscape can be found in the OSU Extension publication *Landscaping and Gardening for Birds*.

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KELLY HURT
OWNER BROKER
(580)-421-7512
KELLY@LANDDOCTORS.COM

- Grew up on family farm with beef, timber, dairy and row crop operations
- B.S. Geology
- Ph.D. Environmental Science/Forestry
- Raising a fifth generation of family on the same farm
- Founder of Land Doctors Real Estate and Construction



CHRISSY BANKS
SALES ASSOCIATE
(765)-220-2489
CHRISSY@LANDDOCTORS.COM

- Grew up on a 2500-acre corn, soybean and wheat farm
- B.S. Ag Economics/Farm Management,
- Has owned and operated farms with cattle, horse, crop and agritourism operations.
- Current owner of Banks Valley Guest Ranch and Banks Registered Polled Herefords

Because of our backgrounds, we are sensitive to the fact that there is emotion involved in the sale of ranches that have been in the same family for multiple generations. We take a high level of care and responsibility in the sale of these legacy properties. Contact us today to schedule a free consultation or visit www.LandDoctors.com to see the Land Doctors difference for yourself.

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Donations to our foundations and the OKFB Ag PAC are just another way we can all help support agriculture from fields and pastures all the way to our nation's capital.

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