

# Oklahoma

## Country



The Magazine of the  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
• Fall 2020 • Vol. 73 No. 4

## A little slice of chaos

One Farm Bureau family combines their **passion for conservation** with  
a **heart for helping others** through agriculture and education.

### Riding safe

Protecting Oklahomans, one ATV at a time

### Community connections

Experiencing agriculture in the heart of OKC

### Up out of the water

On the road to recovery after last year's floods





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# Oklahoma Country

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## ON THE COVER

The Will family of Morrison sits in the middle of their chaos garden, where they combine a love for conservation with a passion for helping their community. *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 Schwabauer before the last day of the month, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at (405) 523-2325.

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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# Table of Contents

Oklahoma Country

Fall 2020

## Columns

- 06 Presidentially Speaking
- 08 Executive Outlook

## In Every Issue

- 10 Commodity Corner
- 11 Consider the Benefits
- 34 All Around Oklahoma
- 46 Noble News
- 48 Country Gardening
- 50 Country Classifieds

## Featured Content

- 18 2020 Election Guide
- 24 OKFB Annual Business Meeting
- 26 Foundation Report



20

### Riding safe

Through the cooperative efforts of Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Oklahoma 4-H, ATV riders of all ages can participate in a new active-rider course.



28

### Community connections

By Emily Smith

Students in Oklahoma City's northeast side experience agriculture through a unique hands-on approach.



12

### A slice of chaos

By Brianne Schwabauer

One Farm Bureau couple shares their passion for conservation and helping others in their community.



32

### Up out of the water

After facing devastating floods in Muskogee County last year, Brian Sheffield shares how his life and land has changed.





# PRESIDENTIALLY SPEAKING

## Growing together, no matter how we gather

By Rodd Moesel

President, Oklahoma Farm Bureau & Affiliated Companies

I love gathering with our Farm Bureau family.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is a special organization because of the people. Throughout my time as a member, I have met a wide array of folks from across our state and our nation who expanded my horizons, enriched my life and elevated my understanding of agriculture.

As the year 2020 continues to unfold, we have all made changes to our plans, adjusted the way we engage with other people and made sacrifices in the short term that will hopefully get us back to normal as quickly and safely as possible.

One of those sacrifices the OKFB state board of directors made was the decision to cancel our 2020 in-person annual meeting and to hold a virtual business session in its place. The board also voted to pause our grassroots policy development and pick up our policy work again next year.

The decision to cancel our in-person annual meeting, which we have done for decades, and move to a virtual business session was not taken lightly. It was thoughtfully and thoroughly considered.

As we held this year's August Area Meetings, we asked Farm Bureau members for their input on how we should proceed with our annual meeting. Each member of the OKFB state board visited with members in their district and with their county Farm Bureau leaders to determine the best path forward. I have heard from fellow state Farm Bureau presidents from around the nation and learned about their plans for meetings. Our staff have been in contact with our friends at various groups and organizations in Oklahoma to see how they are conducting their gatherings.

When the OKFB state board sat down to consider a path forward, we laid out all of our options on the table, and chose to hold a virtual business session in place of an in-person convention because we felt it was the best option to conduct our organization's required business while providing for the health and safety of our members and staff.

Personally, I will truly miss the opportunity to meet with our fellow Farm Bureau members face-to-face. Gathering as one voice for agriculture and rural Oklahoma is a highlight of my year, and I know my fellow members feel the same way.

While we may be moving from our normal convention format to our online business meeting, the state board decided to use our successful August Area Meeting model to allow regional gatherings of Farm Bureau members. We will be organizing a central place to meet in each of the nine OKFB districts where


members can gather and participate in our virtual business meeting on Thursday, Nov. 5 at 6:30 p.m. More information regarding the virtual business meeting can be found on page 24. We will be observing the best practices and safety protocols to ensure these regional gatherings are done safely while still allowing for some of that famous Farm Bureau fellowship.

Details about our virtual business meeting will be announced on our OKFB website as soon as they become available at [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020).

I want every Farm Bureau member to know that we will continue to work as an organization to advocate for agriculture and rural Oklahoma. The state board has had many discussions with our members, and the general consensus was that our organization's policy positions are strong. For that reason, the board decided to postpone our grassroots policy development process until 2021, when we will pick up where we left off this year. Our staff will continue to monitor any emerging issues, and the state board is committed to providing guidance and direction to ensure our organization continues to stand up for our values. For counties that held their resolutions meeting, please forward those on to our home office so we can see the issues that are on your mind.

We will also make sure that we properly conduct the business of OKFB as we hold in-district caucuses for the three state director races this year, along with the three Women's Leadership Committee seats up for re-election. Our WLC will also hold a virtual caucus to elect their state chairperson, and our Young Farmers & Ranchers will caucus to elect their leaders.

Again, this is a situation that none of us ever imagined we would face. But I am proud of the hard work our Farm Bureau leaders have invested in ensuring that we will have a virtual business meeting so that the important work of Farm Bureau continues on in Oklahoma.

And I am looking forward to seeing you in 2021 in Norman as we gather at next year's convention and carry on our important mission. 

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodd Moesel".





# 2021 AFBF YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS

## COMPETITION AWARDS



The YF&R program helps young members shape their future and American agriculture through leadership development and personal growth opportunities. Three competitions enable members to showcase their leadership experience, communication skills and successful business plans as they compete against the best of the best from each state Farm Bureau.

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PLACE**

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## EXECUTIVE OUTLOOK

### Lessons learned between fields

By Thad Doye

Executive Director, Oklahoma Farm Bureau

**T**here is a lot to love about farming and ranching. It is fulfilling to see our family's crops, cattle and children go into the world to make it better.

For all the wonderful things in agriculture, there is one aspect of farming that I dread every time I know it is approaching: moving farm equipment down county roads. Since the land our family farms is located just a few miles from Lawton, we encounter drivers who have varying levels of skill, patience and what we think of as common sense.

One weekend in late summer as our family moved back into our usual fieldwork, the time came to move our air seeder from place to place. With the equipment folded and hazard lights engaged, I eased my one-ton pickup pulling the 18-foot-wide – folded – seeder from the field onto the road. My son, Chasen, was close behind me in another pickup pulling the seed cart, serving not only as a flagger for our wide-load convoy, but also to help me know when the line of cars trailing us went from “a few” to “too many.”

As we made our way down the road at a blazing 31 miles per hour, I was pretty tense about how drivers would greet this agricultural disruption in the middle of their hurried trips from place to place. After all, we drive these roads plenty, and we know how people usually drive.


But as we met drivers on the road, we were greeted with courtesy as cars slowed down, got over and drivers politely waved as we went by. These small acts of patience and understanding made the whole move easy, and it honestly made my whole weekend better.

Just like I was thinking about moving farm equipment to another field, I know many of us are worried about what is to come as we close out this exceptionally weird year.

While there is a lot that we cannot control, we can all take the time to be helpful, be supportive and be understanding. Oklahomans know what it is like to help each other out in times of need, and while it may not be fire, flood or storms that we face, this pandemic is just another opportunity for us to rally together and lend a hand, a smile or a wave where we can.

If we come together in this odd time of unease and uncertainty, how much better prepared will we be when we can once again blaze forward? I've always loved the fact that Farm Bureau is a place where folks can bring a diverse collection of thoughts and opinions, work through those ideas, and come together at the end to push for a common goal. We stand together, we work together and we will succeed together.

The world right now could use a little bit more of our Farm Bureau mindset. And they could use some more Oklahoma unity. It is our job to put those concepts into practice each and every day. With just a little bit of understanding, patience and kindness, we can do all kinds of things – from moving farm equipment down the road to moving Oklahoma forward into the future.

And when you are driving a rural road and come across a farmer moving equipment from point A to point B, be sure to wave. It will make a difference. 

*Thad Doye*

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETINGS

#### Oklahoma Farm Bureau

To all members of Oklahoma Farm Bureau and all affiliated county Farm Bureaus of Oklahoma Farm Bureau: You are hereby notified that Oklahoma Farm Bureau will convene its regular annual business meeting of the members and the delegate body on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. The 2020 annual business meeting will not be conducted by in-person attendance at one central location, but instead will be conducted over the internet via streaming video available at multiple locations to be announced on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website. Districts 1, 4 and 7 will caucus at locations within their districts at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 5, 2020. The Women's Leadership Committee, Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee and the Financial Review Committee will meet at dates, times and locations to be announced on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website. All affiliated county Farm Bureaus should make certain that your delegates are properly certified in attendance to represent your membership. This meeting will continue until all necessary business is transacted.

– Board of Directors

#### Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company

Notice is hereby given of the annual meeting of the Policyholders of Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company, to be conducted over the internet via streaming video available at multiple locations to be announced on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website. The annual meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. during the Oklahoma Farm Bureau annual meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2020, with a report of the activities of the company during the past fiscal year, together with a report of the financial position of the company. Also, any and all other activities of the company may be presented and considered.

– Board of Directors



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## Oklahoma agriculture powers your fall baking

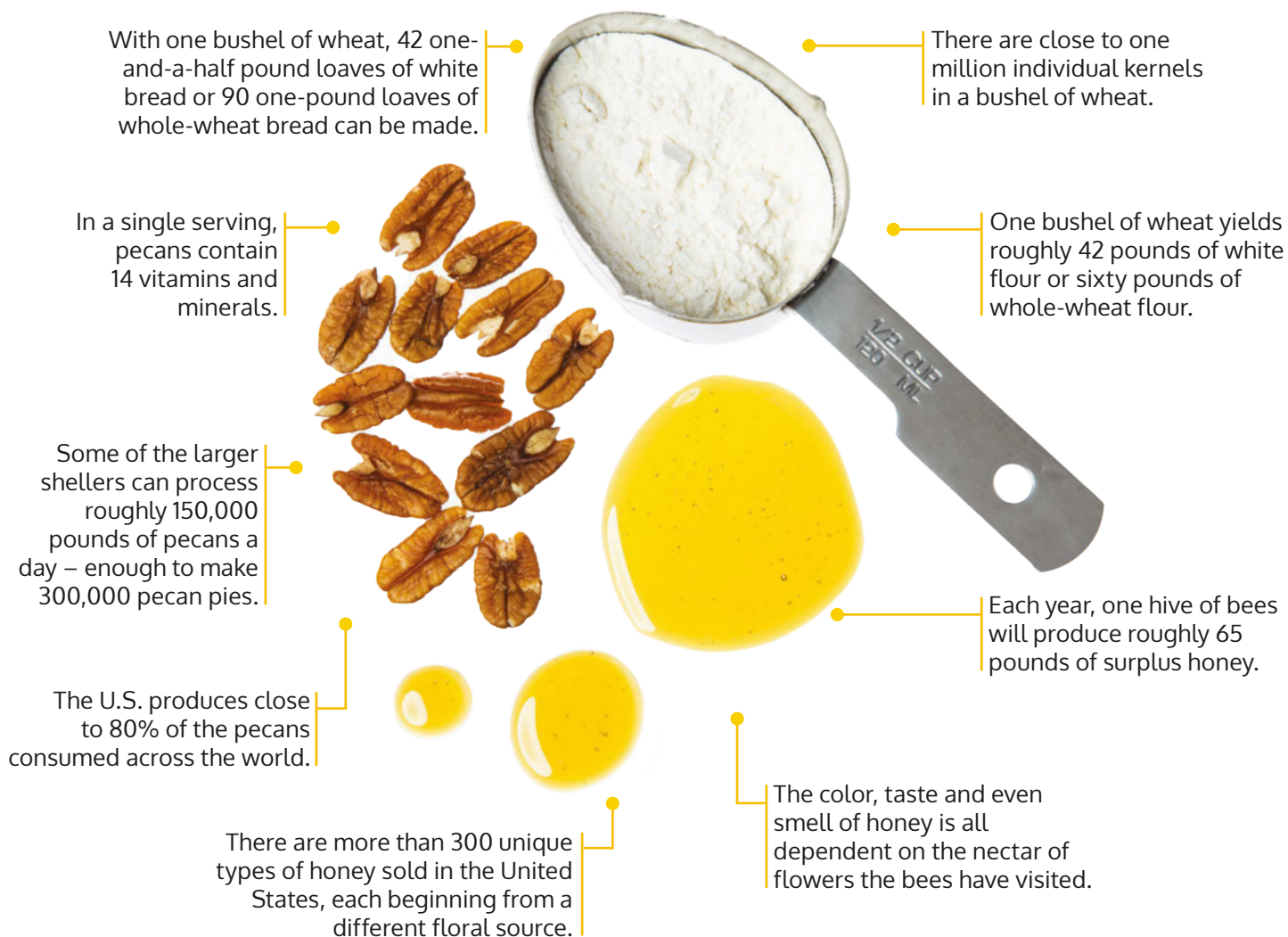
Crafting autumn-inspired treats and goodies in the kitchen is one of the best ways to celebrate the changing of the seasons. As you prepare your favorite fall recipes, make sure to give a nod to the Oklahoma farmers who made these ingredients possible.

**A**s the months grow colder and the days grow shorter, it is hard to beat the mouth-watering aroma of a fresh loaf of bread or the sweet smell of cookies straight from the oven.

Whether it be pumpkin spice bread or honey roasted pecans,

the quality of the ingredients in your baked goods can make all the difference.

Below are three ingredients you will more than likely use this fall that are produced right here in our state.

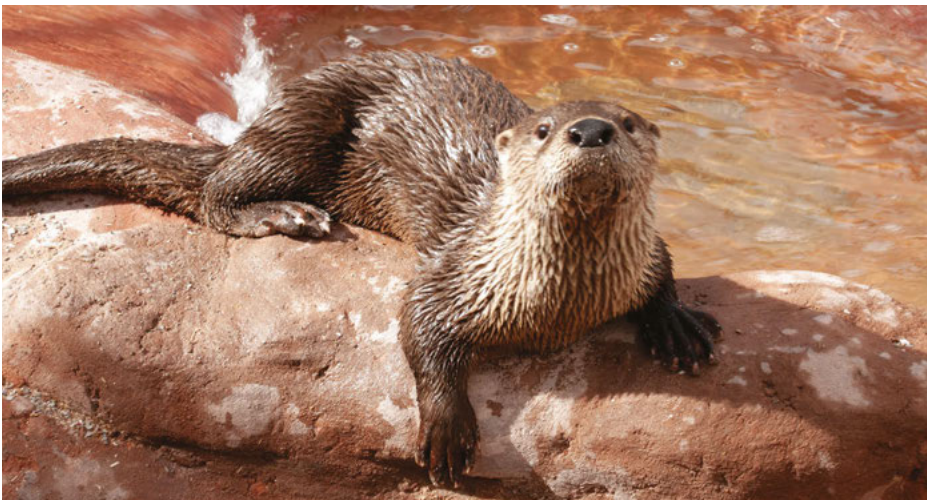


Sources: National Association of Wheat Growers, National Honey Board and National Pecan Shellers Association.



## Newest OKFB member benefit is otterly amazing

Less than a mile from the entrance of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge near Lawton lies a unique facility filled with family fun for all ages.



**F**rom playful otters to swift coyotes, bring your family to the Medicine Park Aquarium & Natural Sciences Center in Medicine Park, Oklahoma, for a day of family fun.

Our newest benefit offers Oklahoma Farm Bureau members **10% off a daily admission** or **10% off your family or individual annual membership**.

This unique ecotourism attraction, located at the base of the Wichita Mountains, is home to more than 90 native and non-native species with a mission of bringing people, science and nature together in a fun and interactive experience for all ages.

Within the 10,000-square-foot facility, visitors can view an electric eel feeding show, see Moby — the largest blue catfish in captivity — and learn about an array of other creatures lurking within Oklahoma's hills, plains, lakes and rivers.

The aquarium also features several non-native exhibits, including the Joyce family octopus, tide pool and touch tank exhibit which allows visitors to explore urchins, horse conches, starfish and other marine creatures.


Visitors can now stroll through the recently opened Bobcat Bungalow and Coyote Corner, made possible with the generous help of the Dollar-Janosko family.

"We've had several people tell us that though they have

seen coyotes all their lives from a distance, they never really appreciated how beautiful they are until they get an up close view of Moriah, our blue-eyed coyote," said Doug Kemper, Medicine Park Aquarium and Natural Sciences executive director. "These new exhibits are a big step forward in developing our native wildlife zoo, which also features a walk-through aviary where visitors can feed and view northern bobwhite quail and our North American river otter habitat."

The center itself sits less than a quarter mile from the entrance of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Adjacent to the center is a six-acre botanical garden featuring many plants native to the area.

As Oklahoma's very first resort town, Medicine Park has been offering visitors hospitality since 1908. Overnight accommodations are plentiful with the Plantation Inn and many cabin rentals to choose from. Visitors can dine and shop while strolling along picturesque Medicine Creek, which feeds Bath Lake, a popular family swimming hole right in the center of town.

To learn more about Medicine Park Aquarium & Natural Sciences Center and other OKFB member benefits, visit [okfarmbureau.org/benefits](http://okfarmbureau.org/benefits). 

# A LITTLE SLICE OF CHAOS

**For some people, giving back is a part of who they are at their core.** Randy and Tammy Will do just that within their chaos garden, located on the outskirts of Morrison, giving back to their community in more ways than one.

Story by: **Brianne Schwabauer**    Photos by: **Dustin Mielke**

**Q**uietly tucked along highway 177 near the quiet town of Morrison, Oklahoma, lies a parcel of land unlike most in Noble County. At first glance, it may not look like much, but as you wade your way through the tall grasses onto this five-acre plot, you will find it is much more than you ever could have imagined.

Filled with a mixture of okra, squash, pumpkins, turnips, watermelons, cucumbers and radishes of all varieties growing amongst one another, it may look a bit chaotic to some, but the produce filling this field is meant for good in more ways than one.

For landowners Randy and Tammy Will, RT Farms today consists of crops fairly typical for most Oklahoma farms and ranches, including beef cattle, alfalfa, corn, soybeans and wheat. Yet the Wills' operation sets them apart from most producers because of their implementation of no-till practices over the last 12 years.

Always keeping an eye out for new methods of conservation, Randy hopes to continually build back their soil health and improve their yields.









Nearly three years ago during a chance encounter with a seed salesman with Green Cover Seed based out of Nebraska addressing attendees of an Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting, Randy opted to take a chance unlike anything he had ever done before: plant five acres of land with an experimental cover crop mixture consisting solely of vegetable seeds.

"In the last four or five years, they (the Natural Resources Conservation Service) have really been focusing on cover crops and building soil through the use of cover crops," Randy said. "The idea was that

they (Green Cover Seed) would mix all vegetable seeds together for use as a cover crop, but also have vegetables to donate to area food banks."

Already active members of their local church, Randy knew there was a large demand for fresh produce at the county food bank housed at their church, as well as at the local senior center, which provides free meals to seniors within the local community.

For anyone attending the state meeting that day and interested in participating in the experiment, the seed company made a tempting offer to

provide enough seed to cover one acre of land for free.

"The first year I said 'OK, sign me up. I'll take some seed,'" Randy said.

Through some negotiations, Randy was able to receive his one-acre worth of seed, along with enough to seed the rest of his five-acre field.

The concept of using vegetable seeds as a cover crop is known as a milpa garden, originating in Mesoamerica centuries ago by the Mayans, who would plant this style of garden shortly after removing a densely wooded area as a means of regenerating the overall soil





health. Some may also recognize this idea as a chaos garden due to the haphazard way in which the seeds are planted and plants intertwine as they grow.

Similar to the three sisters concept popular in many Native American cultures where corn, beans and squash grow amongst one another, the milpa garden mix Randy plants is a combination of more than 40 different seed varieties.

Since taking a leap on this concept three years ago, the Wills rotate their milpa garden each year to a new field with the hope it will serve as a habitat for

beneficial insects to aid nearby crops. It has not always been easy, and they have faced their own unique set of challenges courtesy of Mother Nature, but in time they hope to see the benefits in the overall health of their soil and crops.

The leap Randy took is not one he would have opted to take when he was younger, as he was raised around conventional farming practices and never thought he would stray away from them.

If you were to ask Randy when he was in college if he knew everything about farming, he would have said yes, which is why he received his degree in business and not agriculture.

"I thought I knew everything about agriculture when I was young," Randy said. "You just work the ground deeper and put more fertilizer on it and then plant the seed. I thought that was all there was to know about it."

Eventually, the family began to notice they would have a strong wheat crop, but they would have to wait seven or eight years for there to be another one just like it.

With a young family, Randy knew he needed to pursue an alternative method of farming in order to support his family. He enjoyed what he was doing, but if something did not change soon, the outcome looked bleak.

"We started a rotation of wheat,

double-crop beans, corn and then back to wheat so we would get three crops in two years," Randy said of their introduction to no-till. "Most of the time we started realizing one crop would fail (produce below average), but we had two other crops to carry us on through.

"I think for a lot of farmers, they do what they do because it is what their neighbor does or what their father or grandfather did."

Randy understands that for some producers, no-till may not be an option or even an interest to them as it brings a different set of challenges when compared to conventional practices.

"I probably do look silly to most folks driving down the road," said Randy, smiling at the thought of what his neighbors must think. "Everyone that has driven by the garden just sees this big patch of weeds with beautiful soybeans back behind it."

What most people passing by do not realize is that behind all the tall Johnson grass around the perimeter of the Wills' milpa garden lies a plethora of fresh vegetables for those in need within the community – and nutrient rich soil.

For Tammy, the initial idea of converting to no-till was hard to swallow.

"I always thought that how nice and even your rows were meant you were a better farmer," Tammy said, smiling as

she thinks back to her original skepticism of the idea.

Still not convinced even after Randy began to experiment with no-till practices, Tammy thought the fields looked ugly with the leftover stalks still standing in place.

“He would tell me, ‘just wait,’” Tammy said.

As time went on and the seeds began to germinate, Randy would take Tammy for early evening drives to point out the new soybean plants barely visible amongst the decomposing stalks, eventually turning into strong, healthy soybean plants that would yield a good crop.

After roughly 12 years of practicing no-till, the family feels as if it has been a worthwhile change for them having seen significant increases in the overall health of their soil and positive changes in their crop yields.

“Before we started, the organic matter in our soil was under 2% and now we are up over 3% when we get soil tests back,” Randy said.

Though she may have been skeptical at first, Tammy knows that the decomposition they see each year in their fields is just a part of basic science.

“They (the plants) are getting so much more out of that decomposed material on the top of the soil, and it is just amazing,” Tammy said.

For Tammy, the general concept of no-till could be seen in the science books she uses everyday as an eighth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher in Morrison.

The farm has become a way of life and a focal point for Randy and Tammy – one they love to ensure is leaving a positive impact on the surrounding environment as they share details of the industry with the next generation of potential agriculturalists.

“As a teacher, you are taught to teach the standards that we are instructed to and then I have to figure out how to get agriculture in there,” Tammy said.

Tammy often incorporates lessons from Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom curriculum while other times she creates her own

with some assistance from Randy. Some of her own lessons have even become of interest for other middle school and high school science teachers throughout the state in the last few years as Tammy has made presentations at the annual AITC summer conference.

Her efforts in creating lesson plans associated with agriculture and her commitment to sharing the science-based concepts of agriculture with her classes have not gone unseen. Early this year, Tammy was named the 2020 Oklahoma AITC Teacher of the Year.

For Tammy, the lesson plans she shares with her students often start right on the farm with first-hand experience.

“He (Randy) is my biggest collaborator and the best chemist and biologist I know,” Tammy said.

Since Randy has his pesticide application license, he knows a thing or two about chemicals, while Tammy has a passion for chemistry and learning about how things work on a molecular level. The couple work together, combining their knowledge so Tammy can take that information into the classroom and share it with her students.

“It is interesting, because it is not only our marriage, but a marriage of our common interests and we are able to learn from each other, and then I get to go share that with others,” Tammy said, of she and Randy’s combined efforts.

Randy and Tammy not only have a positive impact on the environment, but on their entire community. In the first year of planting their chaos garden, more than 70 people of all ages from their local church descended on the field for the first round of harvest, hand-picking roughly 4,500 pounds of fresh vegetables to be donated directly within the community.

While this new endeavor may be of personal interest to them, it is an accurate way of revealing who Randy and Tammy are as people deep down. Yes, it is an opportunity for them to dive deeper into their love of science and learning, but it highlights their passion for giving back to the land, the environment and their community through their small slice of chaos. **AS**







“It is interesting, because it is not only our marriage, but **a marriage of our common interests** and we are able to learn from each other, and then I get to go share that with others.”

—Tammy Will

# Oklahoma Farm Bureau's guide to the **2020 ELECTIONS**

**F**arm Bureau members know that the people elected to serve in public office play a critical role in their day-to-day livelihoods on the farm and ranch. As members prepare to vote this fall, OKFB wants to ensure farmers, ranchers and rural Oklahomans are armed with the information necessary to choose how to cast their ballots this November. Below, read more about the choices on your ballot in the quickly approaching Nov. 3 general elections.

## **Farm Bureau's presidential candidate survey**

To help farmers and ranchers across the country prepare to vote in the 2020 presidential election, American Farm Bureau sent a lengthy questionnaire on leading agriculture and rural issues to President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden. Both candidates responded with their stances on several topics directly affecting America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities, including trade, labor, regulatory reform and sustainability. AFBF has invited candidates from both parties to respond to election questionnaires for more than 40 years. Read through the candidate responses by checking out OKFB's online voter guide at [okfarmbureau.org/vote](http://okfarmbureau.org/vote) or by visiting [FB.org/election2020](http://FB.org/election2020).

## **OKFB's new Ag PAC endorses six congressional candidates**

Oklahoma Farm Bureau this year launched the Ag PAC, the organization's new federal political action committee, to provide farm and ranch members a voice in federal elections.

The Ag PAC board, comprised of farmers and ranchers in each Farm Bureau district, chose to endorse six candidates for Congress including Sen. Jim Inhofe, as well as Rep. Kevin Hern, 1st Congressional District; Rep. Markwayne Mullin, 2nd Congressional District; Rep. Frank Lucas, 3rd Congressional District; Rep. Tom Cole, 4th Congressional District; and state Sen. Stephanie Bice, 5th Congressional District.

The Ag PAC board members gathered input from OKFB grassroots farm and ranch members in their districts to help guide their decisions. The PAC is supported by voluntary contributions from OKFB members.

## **OKFB Ag Fund supports candidates for the state Legislature**

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Ag Fund, the organization's state-level political action committee, endorsed 12 candidates and

financially supported 52 candidates in statewide, state Senate and state House races throughout the 2020 election cycle.

The OKFB Ag Fund board, comprised of farmers and ranchers from each OKFB district, donated a total of \$77,750 to candidates over the course of the election cycle.

Find a list of candidates financially supported and endorsed by the OKFB Ag Fund in the Nov. 3 elections on the next page.

## **OKFB policy on state questions**

In addition to casting ballots for president, Congress and other state and local elections, Oklahoma voters also will decide the fate of two state questions. Below we have outlined each state question and how it coincides with Farm Bureau policy.

### **State Question 805**

*Opposed by Oklahoma Farm Bureau*

State Question 805 originated as an initiative petition that was placed on the ballot after receiving nearly 250,000 signatures of Oklahomans. The measure would amend the Oklahoma Constitution to prevent a person's former non-violent felony convictions from being used to enhance his or her sentence when convicted of a non-violent felony. The state question would not apply to individuals who have ever been convicted of a violent felony, which are defined in a section of state statute.

Supporters of the state question believe the measure is "common-sense criminal justice reform" that will safely reduce the prison population and save Oklahoma taxpayers an estimated \$186 million.

Opponents of SQ 805 have expressed concern that the measure would prevent prosecutors from seeking higher sentences for offenders with a history of criminal activity and restrict the authority of district attorneys, judges and juries by placing guidelines in the state's constitution.

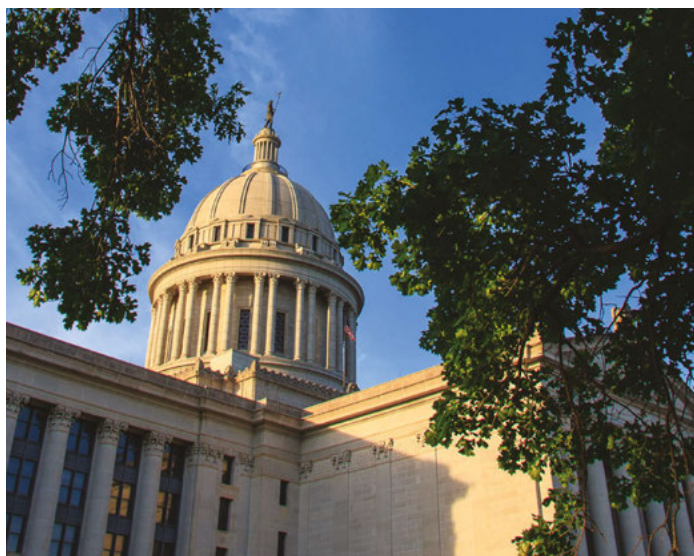
Oklahoma Farm Bureau has joined a coalition opposing the measure, as the organization's grassroots member policy calls for stricter punishment of agricultural crimes and believes that a person convicted of repeated offenses should be punished accordingly.

OKFB policy reads, "We recommend that perpetrators of felonies should be punished no matter the age of the offender and their records should follow them into any other court proceeding."

Read the ballot title and the language that would be added into the Oklahoma Constitution at [okfarmbureau.org/vote](http://okfarmbureau.org/vote).







## State Question 814

*Supported by Oklahoma Farm Bureau*

A measure created by the state Legislature under SJR 27 by Sen. Kim David and Rep. Kevin Wallace, State Question 814 would amend a section of the Oklahoma Constitution that directs the proceeds from the state's settlements with tobacco companies to the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund, or TSET Fund.


Oklahoma receives money each year under a 1998 multistate legal settlement with tobacco companies. Currently, the constitution mandates that 75% of those dollars be placed into the TSET Fund to be used for tobacco prevention programs and other health programs. The remaining 25% of the proceeds are directed to a special fund called the tobacco settlement fund that may be appropriated by the state Legislature.

SQ 814 would reduce the amount of funds directed to TSET from 75% to 25%, directing the remaining 75% to the state Legislature's tobacco settlement fund strictly for the purpose of securing federal matching dollars for the Medicaid expansion program approved by the state's voters with State Question 802 in June.

As of publication, no formal groups have filed to oppose or support SQ 814.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau supports the measure, as it will help fund the newly-passed Medicaid expansion program without forcing deeper cuts to other state services – especially as the state is expected to face a budget deficit following the impacts of the coronavirus.

OKFB does not have policy on the issue. Read the ballot title and the language that would be added into the Oklahoma Constitution at [okfarmbureau.org/vote](http://okfarmbureau.org/vote).

No matter how you decide to vote, remember that your voice is important for the future of our rural way of life. Find more voter resources at [okfarmbureau.org/vote](http://okfarmbureau.org/vote). 

## OKFB Ag Fund-supported candidates

*Listed below are candidates in the Nov. 3 general election who received a financial contribution from the OKFB Ag Fund. Candidates endorsed by the Ag Fund are designated with an asterisk (\*).*

<b>TODD HIETT*</b> Corporation Commissioner	<b>DANNY WILLIAMS</b> HD 28
<b>BLAKE "COWBOY" STEPHENS</b> SD 3	<b>KYLE HILBERT*</b> HD 29
<b>GEORGE BURNS</b> SD 5	<b>AARON MEANS</b> HD 34
<b>DEWAYNE PEMBERTON</b> SD 9	<b>JAY STEAGALL*</b> HD 43
<b>ROB STANDRIDGE</b> SD 15	<b>TODD RUSS*</b> HD 55
<b>SHANE JETT</b> SD 17	<b>DICK LOWE</b> HD 56
<b>CHERYL BABER</b> SD 35	<b>ANTHONY MOORE</b> HD 57
<b>CODY ROGERS</b> SD 37	<b>DANIEL PAE</b> HD 62
<b>DAVE RADER</b> SD 39	<b>RANDE WORTHEN</b> HD 64
<b>JESSICA GARVIN</b> SD 43	<b>TONI HASENBECK</b> HD 65
<b>PAUL ROSINO</b> SD 45	<b>MARGARET ALFONSO</b> HD 79
<b>GREG TREAT*</b> SD 47	<b>MIKE OSBURN</b> HD 81
<b>RICK WEST*</b> HD 3	<b>ERIC ROBERTS</b> HD 83
<b>BOB CULVER</b> HD 4	<b>JON ECHOLS*</b> HD 90
<b>WENDI STEARMAN</b> HD 11	<b>MAX WOLFLEY</b> HD 95
<b>TERRY O'DONNELL</b> HD 23	<b>PRESTON STINSON</b> HD 96
<b>LOGAN PHILLIPS</b> HD 24	<b>MARILYN STARK</b> HD 100
<b>DELL KERBS*</b> HD 26	<b>ROBERT MANGER</b> HD 101





# RIDING

PROTECTING OKLAHOMANS, ONE ATV AT A TIME

# SAFE

STORY BY BRIANNE SCHWABAUER | PHOTOS BY DUSTIN MIELKE

OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH  
OKLAHOMA 4-H TO OFFER A UNIQUE FACILITY GEARED TOWARD  
PREPARING ATV RIDERS OF ALL AGES TO BE SAFE WHILE RIDING.









# ATV SAFETY INSTITUTE'S GOLDEN RULES

- Always wear a Department of Transportation compliant helmet, goggles, long-sleeve shirt, long pants, over-the-ankle boots and gloves.
- Never ride on paved roads — except to cross — when done safely and permitted by law as another vehicle could hit you. ATVs are designed to operate off the highway.
- Never ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Never carry additional passengers on a single-rider ATV, and no more than one passenger on an ATV specifically designed for two people.
- Ride an ATV that is right for your age and size.
- Supervise riders younger than age 16 – ATVs are not toys.
- Ride only on designated trails and at a safe speed.
- Take a hands-on ATV RiderCourse and the free online e-course through the ATV Safety Institute.



**F**rom routine rides such as checking the far pasture during calving season to spending an afternoon with family and friends riding the trails at Little Sahara State Park in Waynoka, all-terrain vehicles have become a commonly used vehicle for both farm and personal use.

With their increased use comes a rise in accidents, resulting in injuries or fatalities. In a split second, the decision you make while driving an ATV can mean the difference between life and death.

Eighteen Oklahomans have been involved in fatal ATV accidents so far this year alone, and many more have suffered injuries, according to OU Medicine Trauma One Injury Prevention.

In an effort to combat the rise of injuries and fatalities among Oklahomans through the use of ATVs, Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Oklahoma 4-H have teamed up to offer an intensive training program – the Oklahoma Farm Bureau/Oklahoma 4-H ATV Training Facility.

Located on more than 25 acres near the Logan County Fairgrounds, ATV riders 10 years old and above can participate in this free program taught by instructors licensed through the ATV Safety Institute.

For those more familiar with riding, the course may serve as a refresher on what you should and should not do while driving an ATV, and for beginning riders, it serves as a valuable experience to help ensure safe


driving practices are followed from the beginning.

In a controlled environment, riders learn basic safety techniques through a variety of exercises that include starting and stopping, gradual and quick turns, traversing hills, emergency stops and swerving, and safely maneuvering an ATV over objects.

Prior to the hands-on instruction, participants must complete an interactive two-hour online course through the ATV Safety Institute to address basic ATV safety principles. Upon completion of the virtual course, it is time to suit up for a three-hour active rider course.

Are you interested in taking the course, but do not own an ATV, goggles, gloves or helmet yet? You can still participate as materials and gear will be provided for students upon their arrival.

If interested in hosting a training event for local FFA or 4-H members, certified ATV Safety Institute instructors who are part of the OKFB staff can travel to your location. Please note that in order to host a training, the group must have access to an area of land 150 feet by 200 feet consisting of dirt, grass, sand or snow and must be free of any obstacles, including other riders.

For more information on participating in or hosting an ATV Safety Institute ATV RiderCourse, contact Burton Harmon with OKFB Safety Services at (405) 523-2300. 

## RIDING GEAR TO KEEP YOU SAFE



LONG-SLEEVE SHIRT



HELMET



GOGGLES



LONG PANTS



GLOVES



OVER-THE-ANKLE BOOTS



**For 2020, Oklahoma Farm Bureau is moving to an online business meeting in place of our annual meeting. Here's how you can join us.**

#### **WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN.**

It has been a year of the unexpected, a year of the unknown and a year of events that none of us ever thought we would see in our lifetimes.

And yet here Farm Bureau members are: still planting, still harvesting, still working, still striving, still ranching, still farming.

In the midst of uncertainty and unease, Oklahoma's farm and ranch families have risen to the occasion to continue the generations-long tradition of growing crops, caring for animals, tending to the land and producing safe and abundant food. This peace of mind and security is a foundation on which our nation is built: that we have the means and the ability to meet the needs of our people.

This year, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members have risen to the occasion not only to continue farming and ranching, but as members of rural communities they have also worked to ensure we make it through today while planning for tomorrow.

As an organization, OKFB has continued its work to support our agricultural families and rural communities. The importance of working together as one voice is as evident as ever.

While Farm Bureau members may not be gathering at our traditional in-person annual meeting, we are excited to have the opportunity to conduct our organization's business in a safe and responsible way.

Our online business meeting on Thursday, November 5 will be streamed online for Farm Bureau members to view. Additionally, nine district gatherings will allow Farm Bureau members who prefer to join with others in a safe and healthy way the opportunity to view our business meeting together.

This may not be the meeting we had all hoped for, but it is yet another way our community is rising to the occasion to get through these times as we press on toward better times.

We hope you can join us November 5 to celebrate a year of agriculture, a year of Farm Bureau and a year of rising to the occasion, no matter the occasion.

***Please note: The Oklahoma Country editorial staff has included the most up-to-date information available at press time. However, schedules, locations and events are subject to change. Please visit our meeting website, [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](https://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020), for the latest details.***



## How to participate in OKFB's 2020 virtual annual business meeting

### Online

Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 2020 online annual business meeting will be streamed on the internet for members to watch at their convenience on their own device.

Viewers can tune into the stream on Thursday, Nov. 5 at 6:30 p.m. to watch the reports and presentations portion of the business session, hear reports about OKFB's activities throughout the year and get updates from guests and fellow Farm Bureau members.

Whether you watch on the tractor with your phone or on the couch in front of your smart TV, you can view the meeting in a way that is convenient.

Details and links for the streaming business meeting will be posted as soon as they are available on our website at [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020).

### Area gatherings

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members can also elect to attend one of nine district meetings to remotely watch the annual business meeting with fellow Farm Bureau members.

Each meeting will follow health protocols, including social distancing, to ensure the health and safety of our members and staff in attendance.

Members in OKFB districts 1, 4, and 7 will gather at 5:30 p.m. on November 5 for their delegates to caucus to elect state board members and district Women's Leadership Committee members. Members in the remaining six districts will meet to watch the reports and presentations of the online business meeting, which begin at 6:30 p.m.

For details and information on these in-person gatherings, visit [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020).

## Schedule of events and activities

Below is a tentative schedule of our annual business meeting activities, along with our other year-end events. *Please note: the schedule below was current as of press time. For the latest information, visit [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020).*

### District Caucus Meetings

November 5, 2020 • 5:30 p.m.  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau Districts 1, 4 and 7  
Locations TBA

Oklahoma Farm Bureau delegates in districts 1, 4 and 7 will gather at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 5 to elect OKFB state board members and Women's Leadership Committee members to represent their districts.

Locations for these caucus meetings will be announced at [okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020) as soon as they are available.

Following the caucus meetings, members in attendance can view the virtual business meeting stream at 6:30 p.m.

### Virtual business meeting online stream

November 5, 2020 • 6:30 p.m.  
Virtual event with available in-person gatherings

The virtual business meeting agenda will include:

- Reports from the OKFB Ag Fund, the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture and OKFB Insurance
- Approval of the Financial Review Committee report and the minutes of the previous meeting
- Announcement of newly elected state board members, WLC committee members and YF&R committee members
- OKFB Presidential Address from Rodd Moesel
- Greetings from special guests

### YF&R caucus

The OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers will hold their annual caucus on Saturday, Oct. 24 at 5 p.m.

For details, contact Zac Swartz at (405) 523-2300.

### WLC business meeting

The OKFB Women's Leadership Committee's virtual business meeting will be Thursday, Nov. 5 at 12 p.m.

For details, contact Marcia Irvin at (405) 523-2300.

Get the latest information and details about our online business meeting and year-end activities on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website at

**[okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020](http://okfarmbureau.org/meeting2020)**



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**The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture supports our state's family farmers and ranchers and provides opportunities to connect all Oklahomans with their food and fiber.**

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**T**he Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture was founded in 2011 with a focus on educating Oklahomans about the important role agriculture plays in our everyday lives. We strive to educate consumers about their food and connect them with the people who grow and raise it. We are also proud to support Oklahomans in need, with a focus on using agriculture and our state's bounty to provide hope for our fellow citizens. Together, we can ensure a bright future for Oklahoma agriculture and all Oklahomans.

From promoting and assisting beginning farmers and ranchers to educating youth in agricultural pursuits, the

Foundation creates agricultural awareness. Providing information to consumers about how and why America enjoys an abundant, safe and affordable food supply chain is critical to changing the current public perception of agriculture.

By educating our youth and encouraging careers in various sectors of agriculture, the industry will produce a new generation of agricultural advocates. By educating adults, consumers will know how their food and fiber is produced while understanding agriculture's contribution to society.

Without our members, none of this would be possible.

From 2019-2020, more than **730** pigs were donated through the Pork for Packs program, resulting in

**1,172,800**

protein sticks distributed to hungry children across the state.

Vegetable and flower seeds were distributed to all

**77**

Oklahoma counties.



# How is the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture involved?

## Investing in urban farms to promote agricultural education in all cities

Working alongside our urban neighbors and communities, we strive to serve as a resource to ensure a sustainable food source is available for future generations in all communities.



## Creating solutions to reduce food insecurity for the states' youngest citizens

Each year, the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture partners with 4-H and FFA members from across the state to provide the needed protein to supplement children's diets when school lunch programs are unavailable.



## Providing accurate representation of agriculture for the youngest citizens

By ensuring accurate agriculture books are placed in the hands of teachers and librarians throughout the state, students are being made aware of the general concepts within production agriculture in a fun and engaging way.



## Recognizing those who preserve our natural resources for generations to come

Through the Sand County Foundation, one Oklahoman is honored each year with the Leopold Conservation Award for their efforts in preserving the land and resources for generations to come.



## How can you help?

By using the enclosed envelope, your donation to the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture can help continue their efforts educating the public about their food and fiber while supporting out state's agriculturalists.

**For more information, visit [okfbfoundationforagriculture.org](http://okfbfoundationforagriculture.org)  
or contact Holly Carroll at [holly.carroll@agsgiving.org](mailto:holly.carroll@agsgiving.org).**

# 97

schools have received accurate agriculture books to share with students.

More than

# 380

books have been donated to teachers through the Foundation.

# 1

Kubota BX1870 tractor donated to aid agricultural education on an urban farm.





# COMMUNITY CONNECT

*A nonprofit dedicated to working alongside some of the youngest residents of Oklahoma City's northeast side strives to combat the challenges they face within their community.*

**F**or the average Oklahoman, buying groceries is probably more of an inconvenience than a privilege. In a state known for its deep roots in producing food, it is incomprehensible that our own residents would struggle to find and purchase healthy and nutritious food.

However, numerous parts of Oklahoma are considered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be a “food desert,” an area in which fresh or affordable high-quality food is not easily accessible. But residents in a particular food desert in northeast Oklahoma City – many of whom rely on public transportation – live at a great disadvantage when working to maintain a healthy diet, simply because of the particular ZIP code in which they reside.

Yet quietly tucked in the middle of the community lies RestoreOKC, a nonprofit community development ministry that serves as a place of acceptance, value and belonging for residents within the local community.

Located near Interstate 35 and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in Oklahoma’s capital city, RestoreOKC invites the surrounding community’s residents to take advantage of the numerous fresh food resources available that can be found in its market, community garden and greenhouse.

“Many people don’t know the difference between a grocery store and a convenience store,” said DeCapreal McNeal, a 17-year-old RestoreOKC intern. “At a convenience store, the most you can

get is milk and cans of corn.”

A typical trip to the grocery store when taking the bus – a primary source of transportation within the community – takes around three hours round trip, and often-times the schedule is inconsistent and unreliable.

“One of our neighbors, before our market was open, purchased a loaf of bread for six dollars and once she got home, she realized the bread was moldy,” said Ann Miller, Restore Farms director. “She took the bread back to the store and because a few of the pieces weren’t moldy, they wouldn’t give her a refund.”

Basic necessities such as bread, eggs and milk are sometimes available at local convenience stores, but not everyone can





# IONS

Story by **Emily Smith**  
Photos by **Dustin Mielke**

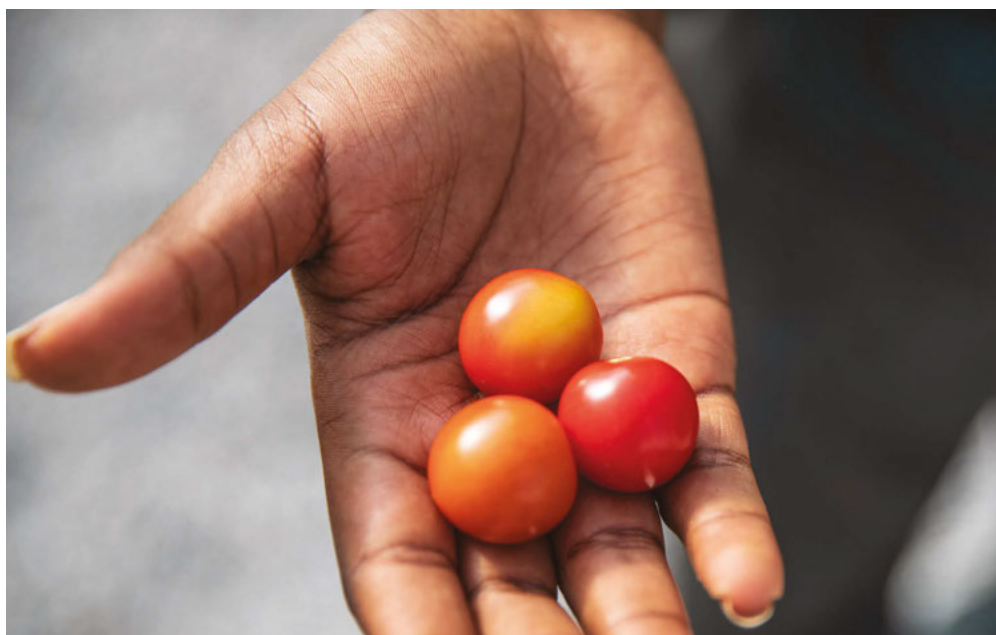
go in them. McNeal shared a personal experience about when he was working at a local convenience store. He had to turn away an eight-year-old girl who came to buy milk and eggs for her grandmother because he was instructed to do so. This instance is just one of many that have taken place due to the lack of food sources in the area.

“If you’re going to end poverty, you can’t just think about food,” Miller said. “You also have to think about shelter, work and education.”

RestoreOKC addresses these needs by focusing on four areas: Restore Homes, Restore Schools, Restore Jobs and Restore Farms. These programs meet the needs of the community members around



**Gregory Griffith**  
*Restore Farms intern*



**Keymonti Hammon**  
*Restore Farms intern*



them in a number of ways, ranging from the student interns pruning overgrown shrubs at homes in the neighborhood to providing employment opportunities for women in the community through their cleaning service.

Before RestoreOKC's partnership with a local elementary school, it was considered failing at every level due to poor test scores, low attendance and teacher retention. After a few years of RestoreOKC's investment by providing the teachers with school supplies, snacks and support, the school saw teacher retention rates rise from 5% to 50% as well as a sudden increase in the student's overall test scores.

In addition to supplying food and assistance to their neighbors, RestoreOKC strives to provide valuable employment and training opportunities for middle school and high school students through the Restore Farms internship program.

"Our goal is that we want these guys to figure out what they are passionate about so we can work alongside them and help them find the connections and resources to be able to go onto college," Miller said.

Through their internship at Restore Farms, a student intern's day starts in the morning by visiting the surrounding local schools to weed the flower beds, harvest vegetables and manage the landscape. Upon completion of their duties at the schools, the interns go back to RestoreOKC and begin rotating time between the community garden, landscaping and the greenhouse.

"Working here has given me the chance to give back to the community I grew up in," said Keymonti Hammon, a 15-year-old RestoreOKC intern.

The interns explained the challenges for community members when trying to purchase food from a grocery store. The nearest grocery store that sells fresh produce, other than RestoreOKC, is more than 12 miles away.

"The secondary goal of RestoreOKC is to end the food desert," said Gregory Griffith, 14-year-old RestoreOKC intern. "A food desert is a place where not many grocery stores are around that have fresh fruits and vegetables or if they do, they are a very high price."

While RestoreOKC gives local students the chance to help combat the challenges facing their community, the nonprofit

also prepares the students for their future careers by giving them various opportunities and unique experiences to discover their passion.

Upon completion of their employment at RestoreOKC and graduation of high school, the students are offered scholarship opportunities through Langston University where they have the option to pursue a degree as well as earn up to four certificates of completion through the internship.

"My plan is to become a culinary chef because I love cooking," Hammon said. "Today, we visited an herbalist and she taught us about how we could start our own kitchen garden, the dos and don'ts, and how things should be placed."


Additionally, the students are utilizing the opportunities at RestoreOKC to explore their options and prepare for their future collegiate careers.

"Before I go to college, I want to learn as much about what I want to do so once I go to college I will be prepared and don't change my mind about what I want to do," McNeal said. "I want to go to OSU because they have a big agricultural program that I want to be involved in."

As a way to aid RestoreOKC's efforts to end the food desert in eastern Oklahoma City, the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture partnered with Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma to purchase a Kubota tractor.

The tractor will be used on a five-acre tract of land to complete a number of necessary tasks, such as moving mulch and preparing the community garden for planting. The foundation saw this opportunity as a way to accomplish its mission by providing a way for the residents of northeast Oklahoma City to gain a better understanding of where their food comes from and the importance of balanced nutrition.

Overall, RestoreOKC is so much more than a place where community members can purchase a few groceries in northeast Oklahoma City; it serves as a safe haven that strives to ensure each and every person who walks through its doors feels accepted, a sense of community and has the ability to access the food that everyone deserves.

To learn more about RestoreOKC, Restore Farms and how you can be involved, visit [restoreokc.org](http://restoreokc.org). 

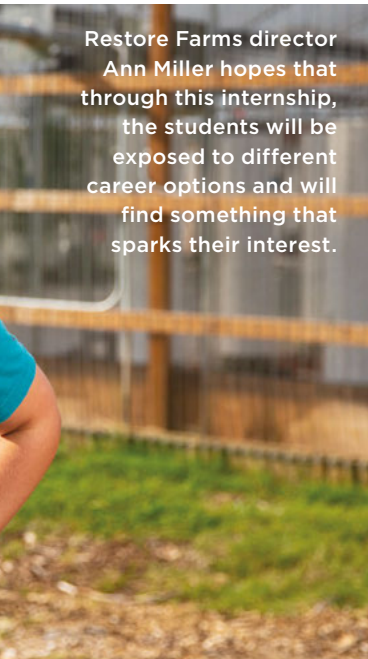




Parked inside the Restore Farms greenhouse is the Kubota tractor purchased in partnership with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture and Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma.



Restore Farms director Ann Miller hopes that through this internship, the students will be exposed to different career options and will find something that sparks their interest.



Keymonti Hammon (left) and Gregory Griffith (right) inspect a tomato plant growing within Restore Farms greenhouse in northeast Oklahoma City.



# UP OUT OF THE WATER

WE TRAVEL BACK TO THE FARM OF MUSKOGEE COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEMBER BRIAN SHEFFIELD TO SEE HOW HE CONTINUES TO RECOVER A YEAR AFTER CATASTROPHIC FLOODS INUNDATED HIS FIELDS AND RESHAPED HIS LIVELIHOOD.

**A** little over a year after 16 feet of flood water from the nearby Arkansas River covered Brian Sheffield's Muskogee County farm, crops were once again growing in his river bottom fields, grass was being mowed on the roadside and Sheffield found himself hoping for rain.

"It's feast or famine or flood or drought," Sheffield said of farming in Oklahoma. "There's not usually a middle ground. You just got to roll with each one the best you can and make the best of it."

The flood waters that began rising on May 21, 2019, eventually left Sheffield's farm covered by water for two weeks. When the waters receded enough to get back into the area in early June 2019, Sheffield's home had been washed away, his farm equipment was scattered and his fields were strewn with debris.

Fast forward to the summer of 2020, and you would be hard-pressed to imagine the catastrophe that had taken place just a year before.

As the heat of the summer sun beat down on Sheffield's soybean crop in need of moisture in July 2020, the fact that his fields were once again producing

a crop was a testament to a year's worth of fixing, cleaning, moving and plain old hard work since the floodwaters receded.

But Sheffield was not at it alone.

"A lot of work," Sheffield said of what it has taken to get back in the field. "A lot of teamwork. A lot of neighbors helping out neighbors, helping each other out where we can. It definitely hasn't been a one-person job, you know. It's taken different groups of people to help put stuff back together."

All that work allowed Sheffield to plant soybeans, sweet corn, watermelon, cantaloupe and a few tomatoes for the 2020 season. The crops were planted into fields that had to be cleared of debris, sand and everything else the floodwaters brought in a year ago.

"It's changing for the better," Sheffield said. "Everything is getting better – the ground is getting back into shape, kind of getting equipment back rolling – just slowly putting pieces back together."

Sheffield is still faced with repairs to get all his farm equipment operational. However, it is not just fixing equipment that has taken time and money – the effects





of his shop sitting underneath the floodwaters has added another wrinkle of difficulty.

"It sounds like a minor thing, but even a bunch of little tools, hardware, parts – you usually have a pretty good chunk of money in parts – two weeks under water is kind of hard on them," he said.

While motorists on nearby Highway 62 may think that things are back to normal with roads and bridges repaired and businesses back open, Sheffield said his road to full recovery – whatever that may look like – still stretches out in front of him.

There is one thing, though, that he believes will help him get back to normal.

"Time. We just need time," Sheffield said.

"I've been asked a lot, 'Do you have everything running?' Well, no, and things won't be back to normal – you can probably come talk to me a year from today and we'll still be working on stuff and fixing stuff. It's just going to take time to get everything back the way it should be. It's just a lot to fix."

While it would be easy to get lost in the long list of things that still need to be done around the farm to

make a full recovery from the flood, Sheffield said that is precisely part of what keeps him moving forward.

"There's not really any downtime," he said. "There's always something to do, and that's usually when I work the best: when I have a ton of stuff on my plate."

"You don't really have to think about it a whole lot. You can look left, right or straight ahead and you'll find something to work on, something that needs done, something that needs fixed."

Through all the fixing he's been doing in the year since the flood, and even as he faces more challenges to get back to where he wants his farm to be, Sheffield's optimism for agriculture still shines through.

"If something bad happens, you might as well try to find some good out of it because you can't really change it," Sheffield said. "What's done is done."

"We'll get there." **FB**

*Find our original story with Brian Sheffield in the Summer 2019 issue of Oklahoma Country on the Publications page of our website at [okfarmbureau.org](http://okfarmbureau.org).*

## OKFB members discuss agricultural issues and policy solutions at August Area Meetings



District Two



District Five



District Eight



District Nine

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members gathered in each of the nine OKFB districts for the organization's annual August Area Meetings to discuss issues facing agriculture and possible Farm Bureau policy solutions.

Eleven meetings, including an online virtual meeting, were held across the state during the month of August, providing OKFB members with the opportunity to discuss policy solutions and ask questions about topics of concern pertaining to agriculture and the rural way of life on a local, state and national level.

Issues addressed during the series of meetings included the Supreme Court decision in the *McGirt v. Oklahoma* case, the beef supply chain, water issues, and access to rural broadband and infrastructure.

The meetings also provided OKFB members with a variety

of updates on Farm Bureau programs including Women's Leadership Committee, the Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, the Ag Fund political action committee, and more. Members also heard from Farm Bureau staff about the variety of activities with which the organization is involved.

The area meetings serve as the traditional start to OKFB's grassroots policy development season. Farm Bureau members are encouraged to take discussion back to their home counties to develop policy for consideration during OKFB's policy resolutions session which has been postponed until 2021.

Due to the cancellation of OKFB's 2020 resolutions committee meeting and the cancellation of the in-person 2020 convention, counties are encouraged to send resolutions to the organization's public policy department to understand the challenges and opportunities facing Farm Bureau members.





## YF&R shotgun shoot raises more than \$22,000 for OKFB Foundation for Agriculture



OKFB member Will Cabbage and his son, William, join the fun together at Quail Ridge Sporting Clays in McLoud.



Kay Hightower, a member of the Women's Leadership Committee team, takes aim at the second annual YF&R shotgun shoot Aug. 29.



More than \$22,000 in proceeds were raised from the event, which will be donated to the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture to help support farmers and ranchers in the state and provide opportunities to connect Oklahomans with their food and fiber.

**T**he Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee raised \$22,750 to benefit the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture during its second-annual shotgun shoot held Saturday, Aug. 29.

More than 30 teams from around the state competed in the second-annual event held at Quail Ridge Sporting Clays in McLoud, Oklahoma.

"From educating children across our state to caring for our rural communities in times of need, the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture does incredible work that benefits all Oklahomans," said Brittany

Hukill, OKFB YF&R vice chair. "The state YF&R committee is proud to be able to provide a fun opportunity for Farm Bureau members and friends to support a great cause."

Shooters from the Navajo FFA chapter were named the top team for the red course, while the Chelsea FFA team – sponsored by Rogers County Farm Bureau – placed first in the green course. The top individual shooters were Brian Kelley and Breegan Barnett.

Title sponsors for the event included John Vance Auto Group, Manheim and Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance.

Platinum sponsors included BancFirst, Comanche County Farm Bureau, Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, Pottawatomie County Farm Bureau, Rogers County Farm Bureau and Woodward County Farm Bureau.

Gold sponsors included American Ag Insurance Company, Clinton Livestock Auction, Jackson County Farm Bureau, Lincoln County Farm Bureau, Oklahoma Cotton Council, Oklahoma Youth Expo, Payne County Farm Bureau and Southwest Center Pivots.

# YF&R members gather in OKC for summer conference

**M**ore than 60 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members, ages 18-35, gathered for the annual Young Farmers and Ranchers summer conference held July 10-12 in Oklahoma City.

"This year's summer conference was a great way for our YF&R members to gather and connect, especially during a challenging time for all of us," said Nocona Cook, OKFB YF&R chair. "The conference allowed us to learn more about the issues facing agriculture and how we can be involved and prepared to lead our industry into the future."

Conference participants had the opportunity to tour local agricultural facilities in the Oklahoma City metro area. American Plant Products and Services, owned by OKFB President Rodd Moesel, serves as a wholesale plant product company that provides

greenhouse construction as well as horticulture necessities to universities and commercial entities nationwide.

Members also toured the Oklahoma National Stockyards with general manager Kelli Payne where she informed the members about the stockyards' history, her extensive interest and involvement in the cattle industry, and the recent impact of COVID-19 on the cattle market.

The attendees also heard from a variety of speakers during the conference. Michael Kelsey from the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association and Roy Lee Lindsey from the Oklahoma Pork Council discussed current issues in agriculture including how the state's pork and beef sectors have been affected by the global pandemic. Oklahoma's State Veterinarian Dr. Rod Hall provided an update on active

animal viruses in the state as well as what the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry is doing to prepare for potential future industry challenges.

In addition to the information shared with members about Oklahoma agriculture, attendees also heard from author and motivational speaker V. J. Smith about the importance of gratitude. The conference closed Sunday morning with a message from Brad Clay, a minister and founder of Final Descent Outdoors.

The conference served as a way for young farmers and ranchers across the state to connect with fellow agriculturalists while learning more about the opportunities available in Farm Bureau and YF&R.



More than 60 YF&R members from across the state gather in Oklahoma City July 10-12 for the YF&R summer conference.



OKFB President Rodd Moesel (right) shares about his horticulture business, American Plant Products and Services, during the YF&R summer conference.



Michael Kelsey (right) of the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association participates in a panel discussion about current issues in agriculture with OKFB Senior Director of Public Policy Steve Thompson (middle) and Roy Lee Lindsey of the Oklahoma Pork Council.



## Custer County opens new satellite office in Weatherford

Custer County Farm Bureau officially opened the doors of its new satellite office in Weatherford on July 29.

Now located at 1402 N. Washington, across the street from Weatherford High School, the new office will replace the old location at 510 E. Main.

After breaking ground on the site Sept. 10, 2019, the Custer County Farm Bureau board members and insurance agents worked closely to create a space to better serve their members and the community. The new larger office space and parking lot features a designated board meeting room and covered outdoor area that can be used several ways, Custer County Farm Bureau President Lawrence Sawatzky said.

"We have always had an office here in Weatherford, but with this new building, we hope to better serve our community through a variety of ways including defensive driving courses and hosting county member events," Sawatzky said. "In the past, we have done great things, but I want to keep pushing us to do better for our members."



Members of the Weatherford community gather in front of the new Custer County Farm Bureau satellite office July 29.

## WLC awards four nurse's training scholarships

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee has recently awarded four \$500 scholarships to nursing students from across the state.

Recipients of the scholarship include **Kaitlyn Kilan**, Medford; **Samuel Langley**, Pauls Valley; **Myranda Oliva**, Moore; and **Michelle Tripp**, Braman.

Recipients of the scholarships will attend universities including East Central University, Northern Oklahoma College, Western Governors University and Oklahoma City University.

Members of the WLC recognize the significant role nurses play in ensuring a high quality of life for all Oklahomans, especially those in rural areas. With the cost of education rising yearly, the committee is proud to provide these four students with scholarships to aid in their pursuit of a career in nursing.

"The members of our committee understand the challenges students often face when financing their education," said Mignon Bolay, OKFB WLC chair. "It is our hope that through this scholarship, we can help them achieve their goal of serving the residents of our rural communities."

The WLC awards scholarships annually to students pursuing a nursing degree at an accredited college, university or trade school. The students also must be an OKFB member or be a member of a Farm Bureau-member family.

The OKFB WLC promotes the importance of family and health, safety and crime prevention, state and national agricultural issues, voter awareness and citizenship, Agriculture in the Classroom and much more. To learn more about the WLC program, visit [okfarmbureau.org/women](http://okfarmbureau.org/women).

## OKFB launches new federal PAC, endorses six congressional candidates

Oklahoma Farm Bureau launched the Ag PAC, the organization's new federal political action committee, by endorsing six candidates for Congress in the Nov. 3 general election.

The OKFB Ag PAC chose to endorse Sen. Jim Inhofe, as well as Rep. Kevin Hern, 1st Congressional District; Rep. Markwayne Mullin, 2nd Congressional District; Rep. Frank Lucas, 3rd Congressional District; Rep. Tom Cole, 4th Congressional District; and state Sen. Stephanie Bice, 5th Congressional

District in the upcoming election.

The endorsements were voted upon by the Ag PAC board, which is comprised of farmers and ranchers in each Farm Bureau district, using input from OKFB grassroots farm and ranch members to help guide their decisions.

"The purpose of our PAC is to support the election of candidates that are going to be helpful in furthering the goals and objectives of Oklahoma farmers and ranchers," said Keeff Felty, OKFB Ag PAC chair and Jackson County

farmer. "We as a committee believe the candidates the Ag PAC has endorsed have the best interests of agriculture and rural Oklahoma in mind."

The Ag PAC was launched in 2020 to provide the organization's farm and ranch members a voice in federal elections, made possible by voluntary contributions from OKFB members.

The OKFB Ag Fund, the organization's state-level political action committee, will continue to support candidates during the Nov. 3 general election.

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## OKFB WLC chair reads accurate ag book for Read an Accurate Ag Book Week

In celebration of Read an Accurate Ag Book Week held Sept. 8-11, 2020, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Chair Mignon Bolay read *Full of Beans: Henry Ford Grows a Car* while on her family's farm near Perry, Oklahoma.

Written by Peggy Thomas and published by Calkins Creek, the book inspires readers of all ages to think innovatively – even to build a car made of soybeans.

The OKFB WLC has provided each county Farm Bureau office throughout the state with their own copy of the book for educators, parents or families to read. Contact your county Farm Bureau for more information.

To purchase your copy of the book, visit [agfoundation.org](http://agfoundation.org).





## Two Oklahoma educators awarded AFBF Foundation grants

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture has awarded two Oklahoma educators with a White-Reinhardt Resource grant.

Dusti McCartney of Willard Grade Center in Ada and Debra Wood of Orvis Risner Elementary in Edmond were two of 70 educators across the country presented with a \$100 credit to the AFBF Foundation for Agriculture store.

The purpose of these grants is to provide funds to educators to purchase accurate agricultural literacy materials from the AFBF Foundation for Agriculture store for use in their classrooms. By providing this grant, AFBFA hopes to help students gain access to more accurate information about agriculture.

The White-Reinhardt Fund for Education is a special project of the Foundation in cooperation with the AFB Women's Leadership Committee. It was established to honor two former chairs of that committee, Berta White and Linda Reinhardt, who were leaders in the national effort to improve agricultural literacy.

Learn more about the AFBF Foundation for Agriculture at [agfoundation.org](http://agfoundation.org).



## Payne County hosts bucket calf competition for local youth

Payne County Farm Bureau hosted its 2020 Bucket Calf Competition recently at the Payne County Expo Center, giving 20 local children a chance to learn how to raise, feed, care for and

show an animal.

After caring for their animals all summer, the kids were able to show off their hard work at the competition.



## OKFB issues statement on SCOTUS decision in McGirt case

In a 5 to 4 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court on July 9 ruled that Congress never officially terminated the Muscogee (Creek) Nation reservation in McGirt v. Oklahoma case.

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Legal Foundation participated in an amicus curiae in support of the state of Oklahoma's position in the case, expressing concerns that the existence of reservations could impact regulations, taxation and property rights for non-tribal members in the area.

"Though Oklahoma Farm Bureau is concerned by the potential implications of the court's ruling on landowners throughout eastern Oklahoma, we are hopeful and confident that Oklahoma and its tribes can successfully form a jurisdictional framework that protects and supports the economy, public safety and private property rights for all Oklahomans," OKFB President Rodd Moesel said in a statement. "We appreciate the efforts of Attorney General Mike Hunter and Solicitor General Mithun Mansinghani on behalf of Oklahoma, and remain committed to working alongside state and tribal leaders to forge a better path forward for the future of our state."

For more information about the case, please contact OKFB Public Policy at (405) 523-2300.



## Tillman County WLC hosts annual shred-away day

Members of the Tillman County Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee hosted their annual Shred-Away Day Aug. 7 at the county office. The annual event serves as an opportunity for county members to properly dispose of documents such as old bank and credit card statements, canceled checks and other important documents containing sensitive information.



Tillman County Farm Bureau WLC member Dana Atkins helps a member properly dispose of her confidential documents.



Pictured left to right are Tillman County Farm Bureau Secretary Frances Rammage, Women's Leadership Committee Chair Micah Treadwell, WLC member Dana Atkins, Shred-Away Representative Beau Meshell and WLC member Kay Atkins.

## OKFB praises USDA's additional assistance for farmers and ranchers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Sept. 18 released the details for its second round of relief payments for farmers and ranchers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

Producers may apply for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2, or CFAP 2, at USDA's Farm Service Agency county offices beginning Monday, Sept. 21 through Dec. 11, 2020. 02879300

The new round of payments will support row crops – including all classes of wheat – along with livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture and many additional commodities. Find a full list of eligible commodities and more details on the USDA website.

"We at Oklahoma Farm Bureau appreciate the administration's efforts to support our nation's farmers and ranchers through a second round of coronavirus relief payments, and are especially pleased to see hard red winter wheat has been included in this round," said Rodd Moesel, OKFB president. "While the global pandemic continues to cause great uncertainty for our state's agriculture community, the assurance of additional relief brings Oklahoma farmers and ranchers a much-needed sense of confidence and certainty to allow them to continue producing a stable food supply for our nation and our world."

Farmers and ranchers can learn more about CFAP 2 and how to apply at [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

## Comanche County member shares benefits of USMCA with KSWO

Adam Bohl, a fifth-generation Chattanooga farmer and Comanche County Farm Bureau member, recently explained the impact of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement on farmers and ranchers in a story with KSWO 7 News in Lawton.

The trade deal, which went into effect on July 1, is expected to increase U.S. agricultural exports by \$2 billion.

"Some of the improvements are Canada and Mexico will treat all imports from the U.S., and grade them on the same scale system as they would domestically," Bohl said in the story. "Canada previously had graded imported wheat differently than they did domestically."

For the full story, visit [okfb.news/bohlusmca](https://okfb.news/bohlusmca).







## Managing stress in farm country

Americans from all walks of life are struggling to cope with an array of issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fear and anxiety about this new disease and what could happen is sometimes overwhelming and can cause strong emotions in adults and children.

But long before the pandemic hit the U.S., farmers and ranchers were struggling. Years of falling commodity prices, natural disasters, declining farm income and trade disputes with China hit rural America hard, and not just financially. Farmers' mental health is at risk, too.

Fortunately, America's food producers have proven to be a resilient bunch. Across the country, they continue to adopt new ways to manage stress and cope with the difficult situations they're facing. A few examples are below.

In Oklahoma, Bryan Vincent and Gary

Williams are part of an informal group that meets on a regular basis to share their burdens.

"It's way past farming," said Vincent, a local crop consultant. "It's a chance to meet with like-minded people. It's a chance for us to let some things out. We laugh, we may cry together, we may be disgusted together. We share our emotions, whether good, bad."

Gathering with trusted friends has given them the chance to talk about what's happening in their lives, both good and bad.

"I would encourage anybody – any group of farmers, friends, whatever – to form a group" to meet regularly, said Williams, a farmer. "Not just in bad times; I think you should do that regardless, even in good times. Share your victories and triumphs with one another, support one another."

### RFD-TV Special on Farm Stress and Farmer Mental Health

As part of the AFBF's ongoing effort to raise awareness, reduce stigma and share resources related to mental health, the organization partnered with RFD-TV to produce a one-hour episode of "Rural America Live" on farm stress and farmer mental health.

The episode features AFBF President Zippy Duvall, Farm Credit Council President Todd Van Hoose and National Farmers Union President Rob Larew, as well as two university Extension specialists, a rural pastor and the author of "Stress-Free You!"

To view the RFD-TV special, visit [okfb.news/farmstress20](https://okfb.news/farmstress20).

# OKFB applauds \$29 million investment in high-speed broadband in rural Oklahoma

Oklahoma Farm Bureau welcomes the USDA's recent investment of more than \$29 million toward expanding broadband service in unserved and underserved rural areas in Oklahoma.

The investment is part of the \$100 million in grant funding made available for the ReConnect Pilot Program through the CARES Act.

"Though rural Oklahomans have suffered from a lack of reliable broadband access for years, the ongoing global pandemic has heightened the inequalities that exist in internet connectivity among rural, suburban and urban Oklahomans as much of the world has moved online for distance learning, telecommuting and health care services," said Rodd Moesel, OKFB president. "Expanding access to high-speed internet throughout rural areas

of our state has been a priority for Oklahoma Farm Bureau members for many years. Today's announcement by the USDA is a great step toward bringing more rural residents online, and we look forward to seeing more investments of this nature in the future."

Pioneer Telephone Cooperative will receive a \$24.2 million grant to deploy a fiber-to-the-premises, or FTTP, network to connect 4,480 people, 595 farms, 44 businesses and two fire stations to high-speed broadband internet in Blaine, Dewey, Ellis and Kingfisher counties.

A \$5.4 million grant will be provided to Cimarron Telephone Company to deploy a FTTP network to connect 746 people, 107 farms and three businesses to high-speed broadband internet in Pawnee and Osage counties.

"I am so proud of our rural communities who have been working

day in and day out, just like they always do, producing the food and fiber America depends on," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue in a USDA release. "We need them more than ever during these trying times, and expanding access to this critical infrastructure will help ensure rural America prospers for years to come."

USDA received 11 Round Two ReConnect Program applications that are eligible for the \$100 million Congress allocated to the program through the CARES Act. More investments made possible with these resources will be announced in the coming weeks.

Learn more about the USDA ReConnect program at [usda.gov/reconnect](https://usda.gov/reconnect).

## AFBF breaks down what CFAP 2.0 means for producers

On Sept. 18, the Trump administration announced details of the new \$14-billion-dollar Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, or CFAP 2, that will provide direct payments to farmers and ranchers to partially offset COVID-19-related losses for producers. This follows an estimated \$10 billion in support provided to cattle, hog, dairy, non-specialty crop, specialty crop and other producers to help offset COVID-19 related losses experienced through mid-April 2020.

Sign-up for CFAP 2 runs Sept. 21 through Dec. 11 through USDA's Farm Service Agency county offices.

CFAP 2 payments are broken into three categories: price trigger commodities, flat-rate commodities and sales commodities. In order to qualify for a payment under the price trigger commodity category, the commodity must have suffered a 5%-or-greater national price decline based on a comparison of the average prices for the weeks of Jan. 13-17, 2020, and July 27-31, 2020. Flat-rate crops either do not meet the 5%-or-greater national

price decline trigger noted above or do not have data available to calculate a price change. These row crops without price information will be eligible for a \$15-per-acre base payment. Sales commodities include specialty crops, aquaculture and other commodities not included in the price trigger and flat-rate categories. For sales commodities, payment calculations will be based on a producer's 2019 sales.

Of the \$14 billion dollars in CFAP 2 support, USDA's cost-benefit analysis estimates corn producers will receive \$3.5 billion, or 25% of the total CFAP 2 resources. Following corn, beef cattle producers are expected to receive \$2.8 billion, or 20% of CFAP 2 funding. Dairy farmers are expected to receive \$2 billion, or 14% of the available support. Hog producers are estimated to receive \$1.7 billion or 12% of

**Figure 1. Estimated CFAP2 Outlays By Commodity Category**



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Source: USDA FSA, Farm Bureau Calculations



CFAP 2. Soybean producers are estimated to receive \$1.4 billion, or 10% of the funds. Wheat, flat-rate crops, eggs and other commodities are expected to receive \$2.5 billion, or 18% of the CFAP 2 support.

### CFAP 2 for Crops

Row crops eligible for CFAP 2 include: alfalfa, amaranth grain, barley, buckwheat, canola, corn, extra long staple cotton, upland cotton, crambe (colewort), einkorn, emmer, flax, guar, hemp, indigo industrial rice, kenaf, khorasan, millet, mustard, oats, peanuts, quinoa, rapeseed, rice, sweet rice, wild rice, rye, safflower, sesame, sorghum, soybeans, speltz, sugar beets, sugarcane, sunflowers, teff, triticale and all classes of wheat. Hay, except alfalfa, and crops intended for grazing are ineligible for CFAP 2.

Payments for eligible row crops included in the price trigger payment category will be equal to the greater of:

Eligible acres of the crop multiplied by a rate of \$15 per acre; OR  
Eligible acres of the crop multiplied by a nationwide crop marketing percentage, multiplied by a crop-specific payment rate, and then by the producer's weighted 2020 actual production history approved yield. If the APH is not available, 85% of the weighted 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage-County Option benchmark yield for that crop will be used.

Crop Payment: Max [Eligible Acres X \$15/acre], [Eligible Acres X marketing % X CCC Rate X (2020 APH OR 85% ARC-CO Yield)]

Essentially, there is a \$15-per-acre floor for price-trigger row crops. Figure 2 highlights the effective payment rate for select row crops, defined as the crop marketing percentage multiplied by the crop-specific payment rate.

Payments for eligible row crops included in the flat-rate payment category will be equal to eligible acres of the crop multiplied by a rate of \$15 per acre. Eligible acres include the producer's share of the determined acres, or reported acres if determined acres are not present, excluding prevented planting and experimental acres. Row crops eligible for CFAP2 in the flat-rate payment category include: alfalfa, amaranth grain, buckwheat,

canola, extra long staple cotton, crambe (colewort), einkorn, emmer, flax, guar, hemp, indigo industrial rice, kenaf, khorasan, millet, mustard, oats, peanuts, quinoa, rapeseed, rice, sweet rice, wild rice, rye, safflower, sesame, speltz, sugar beets, sugarcane, teff, and triticale.

### CFAP 2 for Livestock, Dairy and Poultry

Livestock eligible for CFAP 2 include:

beef cattle, hogs and pigs, and lambs and sheep. Producers of these livestock are eligible for payments categorized as price trigger commodities. Specialty livestock are also considered eligible for payments under CFAP 2, but under the sales commodity category discussed later in this article.

For the full article from American Farm Bureau on what CFAP 2 means for producers, visit [okfb.news/CFAP2](http://okfb.news/CFAP2).

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## Randazzo retires from OKFB Insurance after 42 years

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance employee Merry Randazzo has announced her retirement after 42 years with the company.

Below is a copy of her retirement letter addressed to Gary Buckner, executive vice president and general manager of Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance.

Dear Gary,

It is with very mixed emotions that I announce my retirement from Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance, effective Oct. 2, 2020. It is truly amazing how quickly the time has passed, almost faster than the blink of an eye.

When I first came to work for the insurance company, I was a stay-at-home mom, eager to find a job that would allow me to earn enough money to provide extras for my children. After I started working for OKFB Insurance, I began to be very interested in what insurance really is and why it is so important in everyday life. I found I

did not want just a job; I wanted to be able to help people recover from the economic losses caused by accidents and weather that can devastate individuals and communities. And so, I began my career with OKFB Insurance. Today, my husband Joe and I are extremely proud of our three children, 11 grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. I have no doubt that OKFB Insurance has left an indelible mark on my life and family.

I have had many roles at OKFB Insurance that have provided a myriad of experiences and perspectives. I worked in my local county office in an agency capacity as well as my current and longest tenure in the claims department. I have also been privileged to witness numerous changes at OKFB Insurance. I have seen colleagues and dear friends come and go; new technologies constantly emerge, making work more efficient; and I have watched as the company weathered two economic downturns.

Most importantly, I have been privileged to watch an insurance company grow and transform into an organization filled with mission-minded Oklahomans who believe in the Golden Rule and in serving our members to the very best of our abilities.

As employees in the claims department, we have a chance to touch people's lives when they are seemingly at their lowest moments. When someone becomes an OKFB member and purchases insurance with OKFB, I believe that we make a promise to protect their family and livelihoods within the confines of the agreement. We work hard to be true to that promise and many of those moments have been very rewarding for me both professionally and personally. When storms ravage a community, we are the local boots-on-the-ground and many times able to process claims and deliver checks before the larger out-of-state carriers arrive on the scene. I am very



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Insurance home for over 42 years. I especially want to thank you, Gary, and all those with whom I have worked so closely through these recent turbulent years for providing unwavering encouragement and for expressing faith in me. As always, if I can ever be of assistance, please feel free to call on me. I am also very thankful for have worked for a company where believers can share with other believers; it is another aspect that makes this company so special to me. In closing, I will leave you with

scripture as I have so often done in the past. Two verses I depend upon and have tried to use as my standard and I believe, worth sharing.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28 NIV

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." Colossians 3:23 NIV. **FB**

## Managing pastures before and during drought

Pasture managers may dread droughts. However, with proper planning and preparation, they can minimize the damage and keep operations running smoothly.

By Hugh Aljoe

Noble Research Institute Director of producer relations

**"Periods of favorable rainfall conditions make everyone a better manager. Periods of drought conditions distinguish the better managers from the rest."**

**M**any philosophical statements come to mind when I'm considering pasture management during drought. One of my favorites of all time came from Mr. Wayne Hamilton, one of my range science professors at Texas A&M during my college years: "The time to start planning for a drought is when it is raining." He followed that statement up immediately with: "And the time to start planning for a rain is during a drought."

The bottom line is pasture management requires planning, and there is no substitute for planning ahead. Planning ahead has two aspects: a management plan for "typical" conditions and contingency plans, which should include a drought plan.

### THINK AHEAD

The best means to prepare pastures

for drought is good long-term pasture management before the drought. The fact is that well-managed pastures are more resilient during stress and recover more rapidly after stress.

In application, this means pastures are managed for adequate long-term residual and litter cover, soil fertility for introduced and cropped pastures is maintained at proper levels for expected production, pastures routinely receive adequate growing season rest and recovery, and stocking rate does not exceed carrying capacity. If these are performed well during favorable moisture conditions, the pastures will be in good condition when unfavorable conditions occur.

In today's world, drought conditions in a region are usually forecast and certainly easily monitored as conditions change. The drought monitor is an excellent tool to track

soil moisture conditions. In addition, monthly average rainfall is tracked by county, and in Oklahoma the Mesonet system is positioned across the state and available to the public. Weather and climate tools such as these allow producers to stay informed about regional weather conditions, which helps with the planning process; therefore, informed producers should not be caught off-guard as drought materializes.

### PREPARE FOR THE WORST

Drought preparation should include an appropriate contingency plan that involves strategies and activities that can be executed in an orderly fashion as adverse conditions persist. You should prepare inventories of cattle by class, stored forages and standing forage to be grazed as well as assessments of livestock water quantity and quality. It



As a producer, taking the proper precautionary steps in preparing your pastures will only help in the long run. Pastures that have been well-managed are known to be more resilient during and after stress.





is also important to determine the period of time in which the herd could be maintained as is if drought conditions continue as well as the length of time the herd could be retained as the stocking rate is incrementally reduced.

### YOU MUST ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

- What do I need to do to get to the next season of anticipated rainfall?
- What do I need to do in order to reach the next spring growing season?
- How can I accomplish this while limiting the long-term damage to the pastures caused by grazing livestock?

### TAKE ACTION

Once drought settles on a region, you need to begin implementing your drought plans. Your first thoughts should be on assessing the available and projected forage production for projected time periods, developing a destocking plan to allow for a planned marketing strategy for existing livestock should forage demand exceed projected forage supply, and determining the critical dates by which management decisions need to be made.

### TYPICALLY DESTOCKING STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- Early weaning of calves.
- Marketing of growing cattle.
- Marketing of open and problem (poor udders, eye and feet issues, poor disposition) cows.
- Marketing of less uniform and poorer-performing cows with the intent of maintaining the most productive and uniform cows as the core herd.

Relocating the core herd to other regions of the country that are not under drought conditions is also an option. Rarely is feeding through an extended drought a wise economic decision, but it is an option. However, early identification and purchase of required hay supplies in bulk before drought is fully realized is usually much more cost-effective than waiting until hay prices become inflated.

The second item of business is to assess livestock water supplies. Pastures with unreliable or less dependable water supplies should be grazed early while water is not limited in quantity or quality. You should maintain adequate residuals in all pastures, especially the native grass pastures, where recovery is longer and more difficult to achieve than in introduced pastures. If pastures are to be grazed harder or shorter or used as a “sacrifice area,” target introduced pastures such as bermudagrass, which – with fertility, weed management and moisture – can recover quickly. Avoid overutilization of native pastures.

Third, manage the grazing by rotating the remaining cattle through pastures, monitoring closely the projected

number of grazing days (weeks) ahead of the herd and the recovery rate of the pastures. If grazing expectations are not being met without overutilizing the pastures (grazing into the desired residual), destocking protocols should be further implemented. Avoid “throwing open” all the gates. Manage the grazing, recovery and residuals in the pastures throughout the duration.


If drought conditions manifest during the peak rainfall periods of spring and early fall, early and timely implementation of management practices are of greater importance to meet projected production goals. You should apply fertilizer, especially nitrogen fertilizer, early at an adequate but conservative rate. You should perform establishment practices early in the season, and only on the amount of acres that can be well-prepared ahead of planting. Apply herbicide only if the target weeds are actively growing and not drought-stressed, usually early in the season. Make weed control a priority over fertility on introduced pasture if one must be chosen over the other.

A good management practice during drought is to plow and maintain fire guards/breaks along fence lines around the perimeter of your property and pastures (including hay storage traps and barns), especially along the south borders that adjoin county roads. With prevailing southerly winds, the south boundaries are the most likely to be threatened with wildfires. This is a means to protect forage supplies in pastures during times when they are of the most value to your operation. In addition, regular planned use of prescribed fire on native pastures helps reduce buildup of plant material for wildfires to consume, aiding in suppression.

### HAVE A SAFETY NET

Finally, participating in the USDA Risk Management Agency’s Pasture, Rangeland, Forage insurance program can provide assistance during droughts. The PRF insurance program is designed to provide coverage on your pasture, rangelands and grazed forage crops, giving producers the ability to cover replacement feed costs when a loss of forage or harvest is experienced because of lack of precipitation, not just during extreme drought.

Sign-up for the program is annually and occurs in the fall preceding the year of coverage. PRF insurance is supplied by local and regional independent insurance agencies and is well worth considering if you are a producer with grazing livestock and hay. It may not alleviate drought conditions, but it can make them easier to live through.

However, keep in mind that the best drought insurance for pastures is good long-term pasture management before and during the drought. 

## Garden activities still take place in the fall

By Trisha Gedon  
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service



**A**vid gardeners are enjoying a respite from the heat of an Oklahoma summer and are looking forward to winding down a busy gardening season. It is the time of year when some are ready to throw in the trowel.

However, gardening activities do not come to a screeching halt with cooler temperatures, said David Hillock, Oklahoma State University Extension consumer horticulturist.

"The autumn season brings a bit of a slower pace to the garden, but there still are things that can and should be done," Hillock said. "Some easy clean-up chores, bulb planting, turf fertilizing and preparing for the spring gardening season will keep gardeners busy for several more weeks."

October is a great time to get spring-flowering bulbs in the ground. Hillock said to be sure to place them in a spot with good drainage and plenty of sunlight. Planting depth should be two times the bulb's diameter. Also, dig and store tender bulbs and tubers in a cool, dry place. Other landscape additions now ready for planting include pansies, kale and cabbage. OSU Extension offers a fact sheet outlining a landscape schedule for the entire year.

Fall lawn maintenance should include fertilizing cool-season lawns. He

said seeding of cool-season grasses for perennial lawns can continue through mid-October. In addition, it is the time for controlling broadleaf weeds in well-established warm- or cool-season grasses with a post-emergent broadleaf weed killer. Mow and edge neatly before the first killing frost.

"If you had a vegetable patch this summer, and you do not plan to grow a fall garden, pull everything out of the soil so there are not any decaying plants left behind," Hillock said. "Old plants can harbor pests and diseases, which will cause problems later on. Once the garden has been cleaned up, a cover crop may be planted."

Cool-season cover crops will survive through the winter. They are planted in the fall, from mid-September until the end of October, and left over the winter to provide protection from soil erosion. In late winter and early spring, just before planting the new garden, they can be tilled under, providing organic matter and releasing nutrients as they decompose.

The scenery when leaves begin to change in the fall brings about vivid colors in the landscape. Those leaves, however, can get in the home's rain gutters and cause issues. Hillock suggests cleaning the gutters on a





When mowing fallen leaves, the chopped leaves return valuable organic matter and nutrients to the soil.

regular basis to help avoid water problems and to keep the downspouts clean. Homeowners may opt to install screening to block debris from entering the gutters, which will enable the water to continue to drain.

“The screens definitely help keep debris out of the gutters, but you still need to check them for periodic cleaning,” he said. “And, while on the topic of leaves, raking, bagging and hauling them to the dump is not environmentally friendly and takes up valuable landfill space. Instead, rake them into perennial beds to use as winter mulch. Leaves help stifle weeds, retain moisture and enrich the soil.”

Leaves also can be added to a compost bin. For many homeowners, the easiest solution is to simply mow them. The chopped leaves return valuable organic matter and nutrients to the soil.


Later in the fall, fertilize cool-season grasses again. Homeowners also may want to consider a soil test to correct nutrient deficiencies before winter sets in.

Hillock said that between November and March is the best time to prune most trees and shrubs, unless they are spring flowering plants, which should not be pruned until after they bloom in the spring.

As autumn rolls into early winter, keep in mind trees and shrubs need moisture. If the soil is dry, irrigate all the plantings in the landscape at least 24 hours before a predicted hard freeze.

Cleanup chores include washing and storing flowerpots. Scour the pots with a stiff-bristled brush and mild soap and rinse. Stack them in the garden shed or garage so they will be ready for spring planting.

Gardeners are well aware of the importance of a garden hose as a landscape tool, Hillock said. Drain the water from all hoses and store them out of the elements. Also, remember to turn off all outdoor water sources to prevent frozen pipes.

“Proper storage of your gardening tools during the off season is a must,” he said. “Clean shovels, rakes, hoes, lopping shears and other equipment. A light coating of oil on the metal parts will help keep rust at bay while in storage. Drain the gasoline from power tools or use a fuel stabilizer before winter storage. These steps will help ensure your garden tools are in tip-top shape when spring gardening season rolls around. Everyone is excited to get back outdoors, and rusty equipment and power tools that won’t start certainly can put a damper on a gardener’s enthusiasm in the spring.” 

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## COUNTRY CLASSIFIEDS

Each OKFB member family is limited to one free classified ad per issue. No call-in ads will be accepted. The length of the ad cannot exceed the number of lines on this form. Ads run one time. We reserve the right not to publish submitted ads. Return to Country Classifieds, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

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*Deadline for the next issue is Dec. 4, 2020.  
The winter issue will publish in mid-January 2021.*





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Fresh roasted peanuts and peanut brittle. Spanish, cocktail honey roasted and hunters mix. (580) 515-5821.  
[www.gooberhouse.com](http://www.gooberhouse.com).

Roll-top desk, \$25. Double clothes racks (make offer). Lots of new stuff from sale clothes. (405) 598-1202.

Wide wooden wheel farm wagon with two board grain box and spring seat. (405) 368-4600.

Trailer mounted meat smoker. First original made by Oklahoma Joe. Propane starter. \$4,000. No texts. (918) 344-1268.

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Used pasture renovator. (405) 380-8618.

Header trailer for cleaner, combine 18 ft. cleaner. (405) 263-7205.

Need someone to do hand-quilting. My quilter had a stroke. All I do is make quilt tops. Please help me. (918) 869-1700 or (918) 869-3222.

## AUTOMOTIVE

'58 Pontiac, four door sedan, good parts car. 1972 two-door hardtop Lemans, make offer on one or both. (405) 642-1740.

2004 Ford F350 flatbed truck w/ gin poles and tool boxes, \$5,500. Call Jeff at (918) 693-4300.

1959 Cushman Truckster. \$12,500 or best offer. (918) 706-8028.

1964 Airstream Land Yacht. 23 foot, single axle. \$9,500. (405) 863-9196. 



## MEETING NOTICE

All Cleveland County Farm Bureau members are invited to attend the county annual meeting.

**Nov. 17 | 6:30 p.m.**  
Cleveland County Farm Bureau  
800 SW 134th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73170

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