

PERSPECTIVE

August 25, 2023

OKFB kicks off mental health series with Adrienne DeSutter



More than 50 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members and guests attended the first Cultivating Healthy Minds webinar on Friday, Aug. 11.

How to Have the Conversation, the first in OKFB's three-part mental wellness series, featured Adrienne DeSutter of Sow Hope, Grow Hope. Adrienne works with agriculture organizations and businesses to promote mental health in agriculture.

Part of a family farm herself, Adrienne is no stranger to the struggles farmers and ranchers face. She also knows the resilience of the agriculture community.

"We know that if something were to happen, or if some tragedy or some last-minute issues came up, there would be people around because of the community we have in agriculture," she said.

That same community that comes together to support one other in times of

need does not always do the same when it comes to talking about mental health.

Adrienne emphasized the importance of having conversations about mental health, but noted many shy away from these uncomfortable conversations, even with close friends and family.

"Talking about stress is really uncomfortable," she said.

Adrienne has seen numerous times where the conversation comes far too late – like talking with surviving family at a funeral. She encourages others to have those important conversations before tragedy strikes.

"What if we got a little uncomfortable before a tragedy?" she asked. "What if we got a little uncomfortable and had those conversations before we're in a visitation line, before someone experiences loss, or even before someone has to go through those severe

depressive episodes? What if we made it more normal to have conversations when people just look like they are struggling?"

Farmers and ranchers practice vigilant observation on their operations every day, whether it be noticing early signs of pests in their fields or spotting a sick animal before they display symptoms, and Adrienne believes that same vigilance can be used to notice when family, friends or neighbors are not themselves.

For Adrienne, recognizing something is wrong is only half of the equation – acting on the observation and talking with the person is crucial.

"We have to be the people that are comfortable with getting uncomfortable," she said.

Read more about the first CHM session online at okfb.news/DeSutter.

Connect with OKFB's Cultivating Healthy Minds Program

1

Re-watch our first webinar
okfb.news/CHMSession1
Available on YouTube

2

Find resources online
okfb.news/CHM23
Links from Adrienne

3

Register for our next webinar
okfb.news/CHMSession2
Friday, September 8 at noon

Oklahoma Water Resources Board hosting stakeholder input meetings across the state



Oklahoma Farm Bureau members are encouraged to attend the Oklahoma Water Resources Board's upcoming stakeholder input meetings this month. As the largest user of water in Oklahoma, it is crucial for agriculture to have a voice at the table in these meetings.

The stakeholder meetings center on the impending updates to Oklahoma's Comprehensive Water Plan with discussions on water policy, future water supply and demand, water challenges and more.

Meetings have been ongoing since August 15, and there are still a few remaining meetings for OKFB members to attend, which are listed on the right. The OWRB is planning additional rounds of meetings, which they will announce at a later date. According to the OWRB website, future meetings are planned to be held on a quarterly basis through the end of 2024.

One remaining virtual meeting will be offered on August 31 for participants who are unable to attend an in-person meeting. Links and information on how to attend the virtual meeting can be found online by visiting okfb.news/OWRBmeetings23.

For more information on the stakeholder input meetings and OCWP changes, visit the OWRB website using our special link, okfb.news/OWRBmeetings23.

Remaining OWRB stakeholder input meeting dates

August 29 • Woodward

High Plains Technology Center
3921 34th St.
Woodward, OK 73801

August 30 • Oklahoma City

OSU — Oklahoma City
9900 N. Portland Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

August 31 • Virtual Meeting

Learn how to join online at
okfb.news/OWRBmeetings23

Get more information about the current round of meetings and learn about future meetings online at okfb.news/OWRBmeetings23

Reminder: OKFB to host congressional update featuring Congresswoman Stephanie Bice Aug. 29 in OKC



Oklahoma Farm Bureau will host a congressional update meeting for OKFB members with Congresswoman Stephanie Bice Tuesday, Aug. 29 at the OKFB home office.

OKFB members who live in Oklahoma's Fifth Congressional District are encouraged to attend to learn about legislation and issues Bice is working on in Washington, D.C. The fifth congressional district includes all of Lincoln, Pottawatomie and Seminole counties. She also represents parts of Oklahoma, Canadian and Logan counties.

Lunch will be served at 12:30 p.m., and the congressional update with Bice will begin at 1:30 p.m. OKFB members who plan to attend should RSVP to their field representative as soon as possible.

OKFB Foundation for Ag mini grant applications due Sept. 1

Applications for the first cycle of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's Mini Grant Program are due Friday, Sept. 1.

A total of 10 \$500 grants will be awarded to 4-H clubs, FFA chapters, teachers and county Farm Bureaus to establish educational programs for school-aged children or adults in the interest of promoting agricultural literacy across the state.

Other upcoming grant deadlines include the Growing with the Foundation grants, due Oct. 1, and the Community Harvest Grant Program, due Nov. 1.

More information about the grant programs and applications are available on the foundation's website at okfb.news/foundgrants23.

OKFB WLC awards three scholarships to nursing students

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee has awarded three \$500 scholarships to students from Farm Bureau member families who are pursuing a career in nursing through their annual Nurse's Training Scholarship program.

The scholarships were awarded to Jadin Wilkinson of Buffalo, Victoria Geraldts of Mangum and Lavender Cisneros of Watonga.

"Our Women's Leadership committee is proud to help these three Farm Bureau members earn their nursing degrees," said Mignon Bolay, OKFB WLC chair. "Our Farm Bureau members understand how important it is to have access to quality healthcare for all Oklahomans, and we are proud of our members who serve their fellow Oklahomans in clinics and hospitals around our state."

Wilkinson is a Harper County Farm Bureau member studying at Northwestern Oklahoma State

University working toward a career as a registered nurse.

Geraldts is a Greer County Farm Bureau member studying at Oral Roberts University with plans to work in intensive care.

Cisneros is a Blaine County Farm Bureau member studying nursing at the University of Central Oklahoma with plans to become a registered nurse to work as a nurse practitioner.

The OKFB WLC provides their annual nurse's training scholarships to help Farm Bureau members complete their education in nursing so they can provide much-needed healthcare services to fellow Oklahomans. Applicants must be enrolled half-time or more in a nurse's training program at an accredited college, university, technical school or trade school.

For more information on the OKFB WLC and their activities, visit okfarmbureau.org/women.

Reminder: Farm to School Garden of the Year contest deadline is Sept. 8

Applications for the 2023 Oklahoma Farm to School Garden of the Year Contest are open until Friday, Sept. 8 at 11:50 p.m.

The contest is sponsored by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry.

All public or private Pre-K through 12 schools, early childhood education facilities and alternative learning environments are encouraged to apply.

Applications can be found online at okfarmtoschool.com. Winning schools will be selected at the end of September and the contest results will be announced at the beginning of October.

Acceptable gardens range from indoor herb gardens in classroom windowsills to outdoor raised beds to greenhouses to in-ground farms.

There are five categories to be awarded, including: best overall school garden, best education-based school garden, best harvest partnership school garden, best community collaboration school garden, and best start-up school garden proposal.

To learn more and to apply for the contest, visit www.okfarmtoschool.com.

Westwood returns to OKFB as senior public policy consultant

Oklahoma Farm Bureau has named Kinsey Westwood senior public policy consultant in the organization's public policy division.

Westwood will help implement OKFB's member-driven grassroots advocacy efforts to support Oklahoma's agriculture community. She will assist with the organization's public policy efforts on the state and national levels in addition to planning and implementing a variety of advocacy-related programs.

"I am honored to be back home at Oklahoma Farm Bureau, serving my first love: agriculture and the community that encompasses it," Westwood said.

Westwood returns to OKFB, where she worked in the public policy division from 2011-2012, after a wide and varied career in the public policy sphere. She worked most recently at the State Chamber of Oklahoma where she served as vice president of government affairs.

Westwood is a graduate of Oklahoma State University where she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in agricultural communications. She earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law. Westwood lives in Piedmont with her two daughters.



Kinsey Westwood

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OKFB kicks off grassroots policy development process with August Area Meetings



District 1 — Woodward



District 5 — McAlester



District 8 — Byars



District 7 — Enid

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members from around the state have been gathering to discuss the top issues on their minds as OKFB begins its annual grassroots policymaking process.

Already, Farm Bureau members have discussed a wide array of issues facing agriculture and rural Oklahoma including the upcoming farm bill, renewable energy contracts and challenges, the ongoing discussion regarding the U.S. Supreme Court's McGirt case decision, federal agency regulations, extension service funding and more.

Remaining August Area Meeting dates for OKFB's 2023 policy development season are:

District 3
Aug. 28 at 6 p.m. • El Reno

District 4 - East
Aug. 28 at 6 p.m. • Ardmore

District 4 - West
Aug. 29 at 6 p.m. • Lawton