

PERSPECTIVE

December 29, 2023

OKFB Foundation for Agriculture awards two rural schools with \$10,000 greenhouse grants

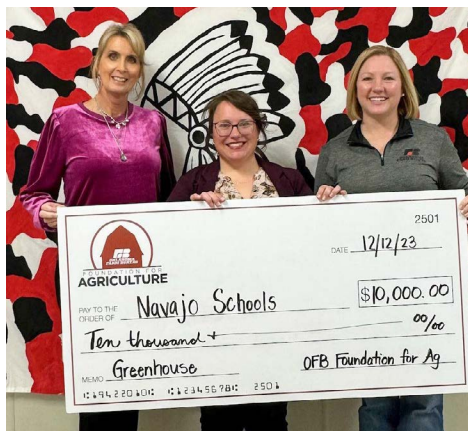
O The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture recently selected Roland Public Schools and Navajo Public Schools to each receive a \$10,000 Growing with the Foundation grant.

The grant program is designed to help students learn about agriculture through assisting schools with the purchase of a teaching greenhouse.

“We are proud to award Roland and Navajo Public Schools with the Growing with the Foundation grant,” said David VonTungeln, OKFB Foundation for Agriculture president. “As our society becomes further removed from the farm, we appreciate the commitment these schools have to teaching their students about where their food comes from.”

Typically awarded to one school per year, this year’s grant was presented to two schools thanks to the generous contributions of OKFB members during fundraising events at the organization’s 82nd annual meeting in early November.

For more information about the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture grant programs, contact Holly Carroll at (405) 523-2300.



OKFB to co-host legislative candidate school Jan. 10

O klahomans interested in running for an Oklahoma legislative seat are invited to attend a one-day candidate school hosted by Oklahoma Farm Bureau, the Oklahoma State Chamber and the Oklahoma Realtor’s Association.

The event will be held Wednesday, Jan. 10, at the Will Rogers Theater

Tasting Room in Oklahoma City from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. A happy hour reception will follow from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

There is a cost of \$100 per candidate to attend the training, which is payable either online via credit card or by check at the event.

Candidate school attendees will learn

the ins and outs of running for a seat in the Oklahoma State Legislature from experienced speakers and presenters.

Interested candidates can register online for the event at okfb.news/CandidateSchool24. For more information, contact Lindsey Sparks with the chamber at 405-272-4430.

Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators 2024 program application open Jan. 1 through March 1

Applications for Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 2024 Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators program year are now open until March 1 for rural Oklahoma and agricultural innovators looking to develop their enterprises and deepen their business understanding.

The Activate Oklahoma rural innovation pipeline provides resources and assistance for innovative rural Oklahoma businesses that have an innovation or product that will bring economic opportunities to rural Oklahoma.

The newly revamped AgCelerate Oklahoma agricultural innovation pipeline is for innovators who have innovations and technologies with an on-farm or production agriculture application that will help diversify opportunities for farmers. The AgCelerate pipeline prepares innovators to apply for the national AgLaunch365 agricultural business accelerator or participate in Activate Oklahoma.

Each innovation pipeline provides innovators with multiple training sessions that begin in April and May

and run through September. The trainings include pipeline-specific boot camps that connect entrepreneurs with Oklahoma-focused business resources and curriculum to grow and expand their businesses. Additional training will follow the initial boot camps to provide a well-rounded experience for innovators.

Graduates of both Activate Oklahoma and AgCelerate Oklahoma will have the opportunity to pitch their ideas for an opportunity to receive equity investment from the program's partnering organizations. Both pipelines also prepare innovators for additional funding opportunities such as grants, loans and creative funding mechanisms.

Applications for both the Activate and AgCelerate pipelines are available on the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website at okfarmbureau.org/AcceleratorApp.

There is no cost to participate in either innovation pipeline, and successful candidates must attend all provided training sessions.

Successful applicants must have significant business operations in Oklahoma and be located in a community with a population of 50,000 or less.

The Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators program is a collaborative rural development effort between Oklahoma Farm Bureau and state and national partners. The program creates economic opportunities for rural Oklahomans and supports Oklahoma agriculture through innovation and business development for rural entrepreneurs.

Partner organizations include AgLaunch Initiative, Ag Ventures Alliance, Oklahoma CareerTech, Oklahoma SBDC, Oklahoma i2E, Oklahoma Center for Advancement of Science and Technology, Oklahoma State University's Food and Agricultural Products Center, Noble Research Institute and Cortado Ventures.

Innovators interested in applying for Activate Oklahoma or AgCelerate Oklahoma can apply using one easy application beginning January 1 through March 1 on the OKFB website:

okfarmbureau.org/AcceleratorApp

OKFB hosts booth, members-only lunch at Tulsa Farm Show

Oklahoma Farm Bureau shared the Oklahoma Farm Bureau story with farmers, ranchers and members of Oklahoma's agriculture community at the Tulsa Farm Show held Dec. 7-9 at Expo Square. OKFB showcased the organization's activities and benefits at the OKFB booth during the entire event. A special luncheon for OKFB members was provided on Friday, Dec. 8, featuring Wes Nofire, Oklahoma's Native American Liaison along with staff members from Oklahoma's congressional delegation.



Oklahoma Native American Liaison Wes Nofire shares his perspective on collaboration between the state and native American tribes during a special members-only lunch at the Tulsa Farm Show on Friday, Dec. 8.



Emma Alexander, field representative for Congressman Frank Lucas (left) visits with Tulsa County Farm Bureau member Chad Selman about national issues affecting agriculture following the OKFB luncheon at the Tulsa Farm Show.



Justin Whitmore, OKFB director of field services and north central field representative, shares the benefits of a Farm Bureau membership with a Tulsa Farm Show attendee. OKFB connected with numerous Oklahomans during the show.

OKFB hosts Ag Defense Fundraiser in Tulsa

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members gathered at the Mayo Hotel in Tulsa Saturday, Dec. 9, for the OKFB Ag Defense Fundraiser.

The event featured a dinner and a conversation between North Carolina Pork Council CEO Roy Lee Lindsey and author Ray Starling, whose book “Farmers Versus Foodies” discusses the influences on and changes developing in agriculture and our nation’s food value chain. Starling appeared remotely by video conference due a last-minute family emergency, but Farm Bureau members still had the opportunity to learn from his perspective gained through years of working in the legal and public policy arenas of the food and agriculture industries.

The event brought together nearly 90 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members for an evening of food, fun and discussion about agriculture.

Proceeds raised from the Ag Defense Fundraiser will help support Oklahoma Farm Bureau’s ongoing efforts to preserve Oklahoma’s agriculture industry from outside challenges that seek to limit the ability of Oklahoma family farmers and ranchers to produce safe, affordable and abundant food.



Generation Bridge winter conference held in Broken Arrow

Agriculturalists ages 35-55 gathered in Broken Arrow Dec. 7-9 for the 2023 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Generation Bridge Winter Conference.

The event served as an opportunity for mid-career agricultural leaders to gather and deepen their understanding of agriculture and Farm Bureau while building connections with fellow ag professionals.

Attendees had the opportunity to learn from a panel of county and state Farm Bureau leaders to collect ideas to foster local involvement and activities at the county Farm Bureau level.

Updates on the nation’s livestock sector and agricultural policy were provided by Oklahoma State University’s Extension Specialist for Livestock Marketing Derrell Peel and Extension Specialist for Agriculture and Food Policy Amy Hagerman.



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OKFB praises attorney general for defending wage determination process

Oklahoma Farm Bureau applauds Attorney General Gentner Drummond for his efforts to uphold Oklahoma's constitutional process to determine fair wages through his opposition to Initiative Petition 446, which would be put to a vote of the people as State Question 832.

Drummond filed a brief with the Oklahoma Supreme Court on Thursday, Dec. 14, in support of the OKFB Legal Foundation's challenge to Initiative Petition 446, which would establish the state question to raise minimum wage.

Drummond sided with the OKFB Legal Foundation in the brief, calling the measure "an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority" with intent to delegate legislative power to a federal entity, a practice prohibited by the Oklahoma Constitution.

State Question 832 would increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2029 and annually increase it starting in 2030. The increase would be based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban

Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, a projection that inaccurately reflects much of Oklahoma.

"Oklahoma Farm Bureau members regularly visit with their state legislators about important agricultural and rural issues, including fair wages," said Steve Thompson, OKFB vice president of public policy. "State Question 832 takes away the state legislature's responsibility to set minimum wage and places it in the hands of a federal government agency. We appreciate Attorney General Drummond for upholding the processes already in place by the Oklahoma Constitution."

The OKFB Legal Foundation weighed in on State Question 832 in late November, joining the State Chamber of Oklahoma in a formal protest against the issue. OKFB's grassroots policy, which is voted upon by Farm Bureau members, opposes increasing minimum wage through initiative petitions or referendums.



Attending 2024 AFBF Convention in Salt Lake City? Check out the latest schedule online!

If you are planning on joining fellow Farm Bureau members from around the nation at the 2024 American Farm Bureau Convention Jan. 19-24 in Salt Lake City, be sure to check out AFBF's convention website for all the details and information.

See the full schedule, learn about featured speakers, learn about the trade show vendors, view topics for workshop sessions and more at AFBF's convention website:

<https://annualconvention.fb.org/>