

PERSPECTIVE

January 14, 2022

REMINDER: Register for upcoming Generation Bridge Conference

Deadline: January 15

There is still time left to register for Oklahoma Farm Bureau's first-ever Generation Bridge Winter Conference January 28-29 in Oklahoma City.

Geared for members ages 35-50, attendees can network with fellow agriculturalists, grow their professional and leadership skills and learn more about the industry.

For more information, visit okfb.news/BridgeConf22.

YF&R scholarship applications available

Deadline: February 1

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers will be awarding nine high school seniors and one collegiate Farm Bureau member with a \$1,000 scholarship. Visit okfarmbureau.org/applications for more details.

OKFB still accepting donations for Kansas farmers and ranchers

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

Donations can be mailed to OKFB Foundation for Agriculture, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or can be made online at okfbfoundationforagriculture.org/donate.

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

★ 2022 ★ Candidate School

 **OKLAHOMA
FARM BUREAU**

OKFB to co-host 2022 candidate school

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is set to co-host the 2022 Candidate School alongside the Oklahoma State Chamber and the Oklahoma Association of Realtors.

The event is for anyone interested in running for a state house or senate seat. Participants will learn about the nuts and bolts of campaigning before the 2022 election cycle. The Candidate School will be offered as a two-part event. Spouses are invited to attend the second session on Feb. 16 at no additional cost.

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a question and answer session with lobbyists, hear from elected officials, and more.

To view the full schedule of events for the two sessions, visit okfb.news/CandSchool2022.

SESSION ONE

Friday, Jan. 14

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum

Attire: business casual

SESSION TWO

Wednesday, Feb. 16

1:30 – 5 p.m.

State Capitol Building

Attire: business professional

STATE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS RECEPTION (optional event - additional ticket required)

Wednesday, Feb. 16

5 – 7 p.m.

Oklahoma History Center

Attire: business professional

The cost to attend is \$100 per candidate, with an additional paid ticket required for the February 16 reception. **RSVP to Evan Handy at evan@okstatechamber.com.**

OKFB to host leadership conference Feb. 15

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is set to host the OKFB Leadership Conference Feb. 15 at the Embassy Suites in Oklahoma City.

The one-day conference will serve as an opportunity for OKFB members to receive updates on state and federal agriculture policy updates, Oklahoma's growing marijuana industry, the farm bill, the latest news for 2022 campaigns, the state budget, and a wrap-up from the American Farm Bureau annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

Members will have an opportunity to visit with state leaders and lawmakers during a reception Tuesday evening.

For more information about the conference, please contact OKFB Vice President of Public Policy Steve Thompson at (405) 523-2300.



OKFB president Rodd Moesel addresses attendees of the 2020 Leadership Conference.

OKFB YF&R legislative leadership day scheduled for Feb. 16

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members ages 18-35 are invited to Oklahoma City Feb. 16 to attend the OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers Legislative Leadership Day.

A chance for YF&R members to meet personally with members of the state legislature and learn more about the latest issues being discussed at the state Capitol, attendees will begin the day with a legislative briefing by OKFB public policy staff.

Attendees are encouraged to attend the OKFB Leadership Conference Feb. 15 in Oklahoma City, which includes a reception that evening. In attendance will be OKFB leaders and state legislators.

For more information about the event, contact Zac Swartz at (405) 523-2300.



Attendees of the 2020 OKFB Y&R Legislative Leadership Day met with legislators from their districts to learn more about key pieces of legislation.

OKFB travels to Atlanta for AFBF annual meeting



During the opening session of the 2022 American Farm Bureau annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Rodd Moesel helped kick things off with fellow state Farm Bureau presidents by proudly waving their state flags across the stage.

More details from the AFBF annual meeting will be covered in the next issue of *Perspective*.

Four easy ways to stay up-to-date during the upcoming legislative session

With the 2022 legislative session just around the corner, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members across the state can easily stay up-to-date with the latest news and information straight from the state Capitol in one of four easy ways.

No matter if you hope to walk the halls of the capitol to speak directly with legislators or would prefer to learn the latest news from the convenience of a tractor cab, there is something for everyone.

County Capitol visits

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

Weekly legislative Zoom calls

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

OKFB Ag PAC leadership

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

Sign up for action alerts

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



Analyzing the Biden-Harris meat and poultry supply chain action plan

The Biden administration recently met with farmers, ranchers and other stakeholders to discuss the administration's new plan for a fairer, more competitive meat and poultry supply chain. The action plan has received mixed reviews from agriculture groups across the nation. As an organization heavy with cattle producers, Oklahoma Farm Bureau is appreciative of the Biden administration's attention and recognition of the issues at hand but cannot support the plan in its entirety.

Independent processing

The action plan focuses heavily on the meat and poultry industry's market concentration. Four major companies hold a monopoly on the meat-packing industry – a challenge the industry has faced for more than three decades. While the industry is heavily influenced by these major companies, many farmers and ranchers rely on them to sell their livestock.

OKFB does recognize meat packers and processors of all sizes are necessary to ensure an abundant and affordable food supply and appreciates the administration's plan to support the growth of independent meat processors. This gives producers options when processing their animals and expands job opportunities in rural America.

However, economic pressure has forced many small and midsize processors to close their doors over the last several decades. New facilities as a result of this plan may face the same fate. In addition to economic challenges, new processing facilities could place a strain on an already tight labor market. The plan's promised \$32 million to expand existing meat processing facilities is encouraging, as investing in established businesses that have already weathered a number of storms could be a more sustainable alternative to encouraging the creation of new facilities.

The Biden administration's plan to reduce the cost of overtime and holiday inspection fees is great news for livestock producers. The availability and cost of meat inspectors historically has been a challenge for small and local processing facilities. The \$100-million fee reduction will significantly reduce the processing facilities' financial burden and could give more livestock producers the option to choose these local facilities when processing their animals.

"Product of the USA" labeling

Current labeling regulations leave loopholes and room for interpretation when it comes to the definition of "product of the USA." There is indeed room for regulatory improvement, but the Biden administration's plan for improvement is equally as vague. Until more details are released and the plan is put in action, it is difficult to know whether the proposed measures will be an improvement on current regulations.

Cattle market transparency

While moving toward increased price transparency in the cattle market is a positive change, OKFB policy does not support a government mandate on how meat packers buy cattle as it would also limit how producers sell their cattle.

In conclusion

When it comes to livestock markets, OKFB members have historically adopted policy that aligns most closely with a free-market system. While the Biden-Harris administration's plan includes several steps in the right direction, markets do not always respond well to governmental manipulation. OKFB expects the issue will be significantly discussed and debated at the upcoming American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting.

**PUBLISHED BY
OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU**

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Application available for AFBF's women's communications boot camp

Each year, American Farm Bureau hosts a unique four-day boot camp for Farm Bureau women across the country focusing on communicating and sharing the story of agriculture in a variety of ways.

To date, 223 women have graduated from AFBF's Women's Communications Boot Camp and these skilled alumni continue to provide Farm Bureau with a passionate and persuasive group of advocates who connect with influencers on the local, state and national levels.

During the four-day event, participants will receive

training on advocacy, public speaking, communicating with elected officials, social media strategy, targeted messaging and working with various media outlets.

Two sessions of the Communications Boot Camp will be held in Washington, D.C., in 2022 and applications are currently being accepted for the spring session, which will run March 22-25.

For more information on the communications boot camp or to apply, visit okfb.news/AFBFbootcamp22. Applications are due **January 17**.

