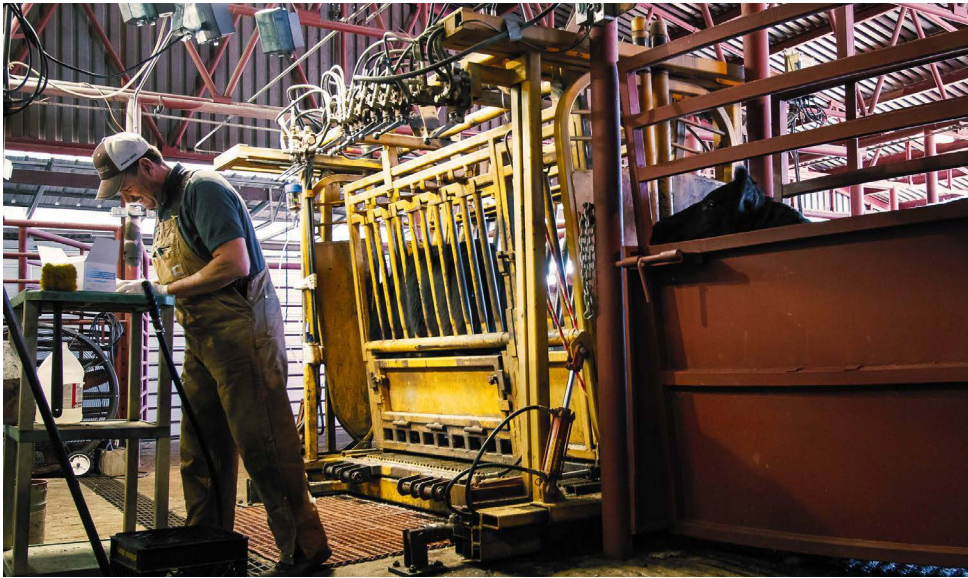


PERSPECTIVE

January 24, 2024



OKFB, foundation for ag announce large-animal vet scholarship

Oklahoma Farm Bureau and the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture have launched a new large-animal veterinarian scholarship in an effort to help create a pipeline of veterinarians who can provide essential services to farmers and ranchers.

One scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$15,000 to a student who is studying veterinary medicine at Oklahoma State University with the intent of working as a large-animal veterinarian in Oklahoma.

“Oklahoma Farm Bureau members are all too aware of the shortage of large animal veterinarians in our state who are essential to providing critical services and helping farmers and ranchers care for their livestock,” said OKFB Foundation for Agriculture President David VonTungeln. “OKFB and our foundation are proud to provide financial support for a student who will soon work in a rural Oklahoma community helping local agriculturalists care for their

animals in the best way possible.”

The large animal veterinarian scholarship program focuses on providing reimbursement for students’ tuition and other educational expenses.

Students who apply will be required to sign a letter of intent to provide large-animal veterinary services or to practice in a veterinary resource shortage area. Also required with the application is biographical and personal statements along with supporting letters from public officials and/or state agencies.

The deadline for scholarship submissions is March 15. To be eligible for the scholarship, the student must be a U.S. citizen, be enrolled at the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine, be eligible for Oklahoma licensure as a veterinarian and intend to practice in a veterinary resource shortage area.

To download the application, please visit the applications page at okfb.news/applications.

OKFB Leadership Conference set for Feb. 18; registration now open online

Oklahoma Farm Bureau will host its annual Leadership Conference for OKFB members Tuesday, Feb. 18, in Oklahoma City at the Embassy Suites Downtown Medical Center.

The one-day conference features updates for Farm Bureau members and a chance to network with fellow OKFB leaders, state legislators and guests.

The conference is scheduled to begin at 12:15 p.m. with a luncheon and welcome. The afternoon will feature hands-on trainings and updates for OKFB members.

OKFB members will have a chance to visit with legislators during the reception beginning at 6 p.m., with a dinner and legislative awards to follow at 7:30 p.m. Legislators will be recognized for their work during the 2024 Oklahoma legislative session during dinner.

Members can register for the event online at okfb.news/leadership25. Hotel rooms are available for the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 18, and can be requested when registering on the OKFB website. Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis at a special room rate of \$137 per night plus a \$9 per night parking fee.

More details will be shared on the OKFB website at okfb.news/leadership25 as they become available.

Businessowners can learn to share their stories with upcoming In the Weeds masterclass series



Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators program invites OKFB members and rural business owners to brush up on their pitch skills and learn to share their story with the upcoming In the Weeds masterclass series.

The "Venture Forward: How to Pitch" In the Weeds session focuses on how local businessowners and entrepreneurs across all industries can hone their storytelling and communications skills to build relationships and secure funding that can help their enterprises grow.

"No matter what sort of business you are in, you need to be able to effectively tell your story if you want to build your business, advance your marketing and secure vital funding," said Amarie Bartel, OKFB rural economic coordinator. "Our Venture Forward session will not only equip businessowners with pitch skills, but it will also focus on the numerous ways that a strong pitch can help attract clients, communicate with stakeholders and increase your visibility in your community."

The session will be targeted to all businessowners located throughout rural Oklahoma communities.

Three event dates remain for

attendees to register and participate at six locations across Oklahoma:

- **January 29 in Alva** at Northwest Tech Center and in **Drumright** at Central Tech Center
- **February 19 in Duncan** at Red River Tech Center and in **Wilburton** at Eastern Oklahoma State College
- **March 12 in Elk City** at Arrowhead Center and in **Ada** at Pontotoc Tech Center

All sessions will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., and dinner will be provided for attendees.

The sessions are free, and registration is online at okfb.news/intheweeds.

The In the Weeds masterclass series is an ongoing program with a total of four sessions held throughout 2025 focusing on helping businessowners connect with resources and develop the deliverables needed to secure funding to help their businesses grow.

Information on the program and details about upcoming sessions can be found on the accelerator program's website at okfb.news/intheweeds.



Register today for OKFB's Generation Bridge winter event in Stillwater, Feb. 15

Oklahoma Farm Bureau will host a winter Generation Bridge event for agriculturalists ages 35-55 Saturday, Feb. 15, at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

The event will kick off at 11 a.m. with a tour of the new Agricultural Hall on the Oklahoma State University campus.

Lunch will be provided at 12 p.m. at the original Hideaway Pizza. During lunch, members will receive a legislative update and outlook from the OKFB public policy team as the 2025 Oklahoma legislative session ramps up.

The event will wrap up with an afternoon basketball game featuring the OSU Cowboys taking on the Texas Tech Red Raiders at 2 p.m. at Gallagher-Iba arena.

Interested participants can complete the online RSVP form at okfb.news/GenerationBridgeWinter25. This event is provided at no cost for Farm Bureau members who wish to attend. For questions or more information about the event, please email Holly Carroll at holly.carroll@okfb.org.

Remaining In the Weeds Masterclass series dates

Three dates remain for attendees to register and participate at six locations across Oklahoma. The dates and locations are listed to the right. All sessions will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., and dinner will be provided for attendees.

For more information on the program and details about upcoming sessions, please visit the accelerator program's website at okfb.news/intheweeds.

January 29

*Alva • Northwest Tech Center
Drumright • Central Tech Center*

February 19

*Duncan • Red River Tech Center
Wilburton • Eastern Oklahoma State College*

March 12

*Elk City • Arrowhead Center
Ada • Pontotoc Tech Center*

OKFB YF&R launch “Fill the Sack” food drive

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee is kicking off the new year by launching their “Fill the Sack” food drive, a community initiative designed to fight hunger in Oklahoma running from Jan. 1 through Feb. 18.

The YF&R committee, alongside local county Farm Bureau members, is committed to making a difference in the lives of Oklahomans. This year, they strive to collect donations to help stock local food banks with the hope of ensuring that every family in need has access to nutritious meals during these challenging times.

Each county Farm Bureau has been mailed two blue OKFB YF&R grocery bags. The committee encourages county board members, county YF&R members and county Women’s Leadership Committee members to fill the blue Farm Bureau bags with non-perishable food items to donate to Oklahomans in need.

All food items and monetary gifts will be collected at the annual OKFB Leadership Conference. If you do not have anyone available to take the food to the conference, someone from the YF&R

committee will gladly pick up the food from your county office. Please contact Director of YF&R Burton Harmon at (405) 523-2300 with questions on how to contribute, to get extra bags or to pick up full bags.

All donations will be given to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma after Leadership Conference. If your county has a local food pantry that you would prefer your donation be given to, please weigh your items, take a photo of your county donating the items and send both to Burton Harmon.

Together, we can make a powerful impact in the fight against hunger in our communities. We would be deeply grateful for your support in this effort. Thank you in advance for your generosity and for helping us make a positive difference in the lives of many Oklahomans.



How to participate in the “Fill the Sack” food drive

- Food Donations – Fill your blue bags with non-perishable food items such as canned goods, pasta, rice and cereal.
- Monetary Contributions – Cash donations will allow the YF&R committee to purchase essential items for distribution.

Salisbury appointed to AFBF YF&R Committee

Tulsa County Farm Bureau member Tommy Salisbury has been appointed to serve on the American Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

Salisbury farms about 3,200 acres of soybeans and milo, has a custom hay baling operation, runs more than 200 cow/calf pairs and 500 yearlings, and owns the Collinsville Livestock auction. He also owns the Collinsville feed store to provide a resource for urban and local 4-H and FFA students.

Throughout his Farm Bureau career, Salisbury has served on the Tulsa County Farm Bureau board, and he and his wife, Chalaynna, have served as the at-large representatives for the state YF&R committee for the last year.

“I saw this as an opportunity to not only make connections and network

throughout the nation, but also to make a difference,” Salisbury said. “I try the hardest I can in Oklahoma to be involved in the legislative process, and I saw this as an opportunity to do it on the national level. I also want to use it as an opportunity to reach out to 4-H and FFA members and share with them what Farm Bureau is, what Farm Bureau does, and how to be involved.”

The AFBF YF&R Committee is made up of 16 positions that represent all regions of the United States. Committee members are responsible for program planning including YF&R competitive events during AFBF’s annual convention, and the Harvest for All program.

Salisbury will serve a two-year term on the AFBF YF&R Committee, beginning after the 2025 AFBF Fusion Conference, held in March in Denver.



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Oklahoma County Farm Bureau donates \$5,000 to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

Oklahoma County Farm Bureau donated \$5,000 to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma Friday, Jan. 3, to provide meals to Oklahomans facing food insecurity.

The donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling Oklahoma County Farm Bureau's impact.

"With this \$5,000 gift, it will double to \$10,000, which will provide 30,000 meals to chronically hungry children, families who are struggling to make ends meet and also seniors living on fixed incomes," said Andrew Shepard, development officer with the regional food bank of Oklahoma. "This will be a huge help to our Oklahoma communities and all 53 counties that we're all part of."

"We have been given so much and blessed so much ourselves, and we appreciate the ability to give back," said Bruce Wilson, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau president.



(L to R) Stephanie Visina, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau administrator; Bruce Wilson, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau president; Andrew Shepard, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma development officer; Lauren Horsley, Oklahoma County Farm Bureau secretary.