

PERSPECTIVE

June 19, 2020

Dicamba decision a devastating blow to cotton, soybean farmers

Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Rodd Moesel released the following statement regarding the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision vacating the registrations of three dicamba herbicides.

“The recent court decision to vacate registration of three dicamba products is a devastating blow to Oklahoma cotton and soybean farmers. Dicamba is a prominent herbicide relied on by farmers to control weeds, improve crop yields

and conserve natural resources.

“Oklahoma farmers, who use these products carefully and responsibly, have been unfairly caught in the middle of a legal battle over approved and registered herbicides. The decision comes at a crucial time after many producers across the state have already purchased dicamba products and planted tens of thousands of acres of dicamba-resistant seed. The decision leaves farmers with agricultural inputs suddenly ruled unusable and crops in the field with no

certainty of how they can be managed.

“We echo the calls of Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur and the American Farm Bureau Federation asking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to provide farmers the critical tools needed to care for their crops. Agricultural producers must be able to use these dicamba products that were purchased or planted before the court issued its decision.”

Oklahoma farmers receive more than \$61 million in CFAP payments to date

More than \$61 million in direct payments have been approved for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program as of Monday, June 8, according to a recent USDA report.

Nearly 7,500 Oklahoma producers have applied for direct payments as of June 8, while \$61,232,667.97 in payments have been approved. Livestock producers comprise nearly 95% of Oklahoma's approved CFAP payments.

Created through the Coronavirus Assistance, Relief and Economic

Security Act and coordinated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, CFAP direct payments are designed to provide relief to eligible farmers and ranchers facing financial losses due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligible farmers and ranchers may apply for CFAP direct payments through county USDA Farm Service Agency offices until Aug. 28, 2020. More information on the CFAP program and the application process may be found at farmers.gov/cfap.

Hard red winter wheat producers

were excluded from the CFAP program, along with some cattle producers who held on to their animals due to market conditions. The American Farm Bureau Federation has called on lawmakers to expand CFAP payments as Congress considers another coronavirus aid package this summer. The organization also outlined the additional needs of agriculture and rural America in a letter to congressional leaders this week.

CFAP payment data will be updated and released by the USDA each Monday at 2 p.m. at farmers.gov/cfap.



OKFB's 2020 Legislative Review

The 2020 Oklahoma legislative session encountered many challenges including a health emergency that forced the state Capitol to close for six weeks, a state revenue failure and numerous gubernatorial vetoes. This year was difficult from start to finish, but Oklahoma Farm Bureau continued to engage lawmakers from around the state on a daily basis about our priority issues.

Despite spending fewer days in session than any legislature

in Oklahoma history, a few bills did successfully complete the process.

The legislation explained below can be a helpful guide for OKFB members as they prepare to discuss policy issues at August Area Meetings and develop grassroots policy throughout the fall.

Below are nine bills of interest that are set to become state law.

HB 1048

Rep. Danny Sterling, Tecumseh, and Sen. Julie Daniels, Bartlesville

Limits the opportunity for groundwater rights to be acquired through eminent domain. Signed by the Gov. Kevin Stitt on March 5.

HB 2008

Rep. Justin Humphrey, Lane, and Sen. David Bullard, Durant

Authorizes the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry to promulgate rules for slaughter facilities and to seek USDA approval of new standards for meat inspection. Signed by the governor on May 20.

HB 3806

Rep. Toni Hasenbeck, Elgin, and Sen. Micheal Bergstrom, Adair

Creates legal definitions for the terms “beef”, “pork”, “livestock” and “meat”. Prohibits a person advertising, offering for sale or selling meat to engage in any misleading or deceptive practices and establishes guidelines. Signed by the governor on May 19.

HB 4018

Rep. Charles McCall, Atoka, and Sen. James Leewright, Bristow

Creates a 12-member Rural Broadband Expansion Council to conduct a study of rural broadband access in Oklahoma. It requires the council to divide the state into geographic areas based on existing broadband capability, cost of service, estimated costs for improving access, likelihood of changes in access in the future, need for change in law and policy impacting the ability to access broadband services at a reasonable price. The council also is directed to study incentives or programs that would improve existing rural broadband access and establish broadband access to areas which currently do not. Vetoed by the

governor on May 19, veto overridden by the Legislature on May 22.

SB 801

Sen. John Michael Montgomery, Lawton, and Rep. Marcus McEntire, Duncan

Modifies the authority of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists to administer anesthesia in collaboration with a medical doctor, osteopathic physician, pediatric physician or dentist. Signed by the Governor on May 7.

SB 1276

Sen. Roger Thompson, Okemah, and Rep. Kevin Wallace, Wellston

Increases from 50% up to 75% of the internship and residency training subsidy provided by the Physician Manpower Training Commission be used for the rural and medically underserved areas of the state. Signed by the governor on May 19.

SB 1785

Sen. Chuck Hall, Perry, and Rep. Garry Mize, Edmond

Creates the Oklahoma Farmers Market and Farmers Hub Act, with legal definitions for the terms “farm food”, “farm food producer”, “farmers hub”, “farmers market”, “farm-direct marketer” and “value-added processor”. It requires the market be open at least one day per week and at least four months of the year and conduct direct sales from producers to consumers. Signed by the governor on May 20.

SB 1875

Sen. Dave Rader, Tulsa, and Rep. Terry O'Donnell, Catoosa

Creates the Oil and Gas Water Recycling and Reuse Act. Clarifies that prior to extraction, groundwater – including its constituent elements – is the property of the owner of the surface estate and is

subject to the right of the mineral owner or the oil and gas lessee, to extract the water as is reasonably necessary for the exploration or extraction of hydrocarbons. Signed by the governor on May 19.

Several measures were considered by legislative committees and began to advance, but ultimately failed or were sidelined due to concerns about their impact. As OKFB members prepare to discuss and develop policy in the fall, it's important to note these unsuccessful bills that can often give a window into what will be introduced next session.

HB 1992

Rep. Jadine Nollan, Sand Springs, and Sen. Darrell Weaver, Moore

Would have created the Oklahoma Public Safety Protection District Act. This proposal would have allowed municipalities to conduct an election to consider creation of a new ad valorem tax in order to fund purchases of public safety equipment and vehicles, salaries of municipal law enforcement, fire protection and emergency medical personnel. A controversial and contentious piece of legislation that was first considered in 2019, this bill advanced out of the House of Representatives this year, but never received a hearing in the Senate and failed to advance before the May 15 deadline.

HB 2776

Rep. Lonnie Sims, Jenks, and Sen. Dave Rader, Tulsa

Would have created the Oklahoma Hazard Mitigation Assessment District Act. Similar to HB 1992, this bill would have allowed a county to conduct an election to consider creation of a new ad valorem tax in order to fund hazard

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Eschete, Hughbanks join OKFB as summer interns

Oklahoma Farm Bureau welcomed Cole Eschete and Ridge Hughbanks June 1 as summer interns. During the internships, Eschete will gain further knowledge into each of the organization's departments, while Hughbanks will conduct research to guide OKFB members as they develop policy in the fall.

Eschete's roots in agriculture trace back five generations on his family's ranch in Bokchito, Oklahoma, where he grew up.

"Agriculture has always been a huge part of my life, given that it makes my family's living," Eschete said. "I am most excited to take part in a different aspect of ag through Farm Bureau that reaches across the state and seeing the federation's role in it all."

During his time at OKFB, Hughbanks will conduct research on the feasibility of expanding beef processing and packing facilities in Oklahoma. His work will help inform Farm Bureau members about the structural issues facing the animal protein industry as they develop grassroots policy in the fall.

Hughbanks will also consider ways

that rural Oklahomans can expand business opportunities to serve rural communities around the state.

"I am most excited about learning the intricacies of the beef market and how OKFB can benefit producers all

across the state with its resources and influences," Hughbanks said. "I hope to play a role in what I know will be meaningful change for producers."

Eschete and Hughbanks will graduate from OSU in May 2021.



Cole Eschete
Bokchito, Oklahoma



Ridge Hughbanks
Alva, Oklahoma

OKFB's 2020 Legislative Review *continued*

mitigation or disaster recovery projects. OKFB actively worked with a coalition to oppose this measure and it failed on the House floor by a vote of 33 to 64 on March 9.

HB 3666

Rep. Chris Kannady, Oklahoma City, and Sen. Kim David, Porter

Would have required the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry to establish rules mandating buffer zones where industrial hemp crops could not be grown and limit the number of applications for industrial hemp grower licenses. This proposal was approved by the House of Representatives, but never received a hearing in the Senate and failed to advance before the May 15 deadline.

SB 1232

Sen. Julie Daniels, Bartlesville

Would have reduced the amount of interest an oil or gas producer is

required to pay mineral owners when royalty payments are not made in a timely manner and extended the time period allowed for the first royalty payment from six months to one year. This bill advanced out of the Senate Energy Committee, but never received a hearing in a subsequent committee and failed a Feb. 27 deadline.

SB 1714

Sen. Adam Pugh, Edmond, and Rep. Garry Mize, Edmond

Would have changed the name of the Home Bakery Act of 2013 to the Homemade Food Freedom Act and exempted certain homemade food products from all licensing and inspection requirements of the State Department of Health and of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. This proposal actually passed both the House and Senate once, but due to a last minute House amendment, would have been

required to pass the Senate again, causing the bill to ultimately fail a deadline on May 15.

OKFB members are encouraged to attend an August Area Meeting, the kickoff of the organization's grassroots policy development process. Stay tuned for the upcoming announcement of dates and details.

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

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June 30 primary election quickly approaching

As the June 30 primary election approaches, below is a list of candidates supported or endorsed by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Ag Fund to help guide rural voters' decisions.

Oklahoma Senate candidates receiving financial support from the Ag Fund include **Justin Jackson**, SD 5; **Larry Boggs**, SD 7*; **Dewayne Pemberton**, SD 9; **Greg McCortney**, SD 13; **Rob Standridge**, SD 15; **Roland Pederson**, SD 19*; **Zack Taylor**, SD 28; **Dave Rader**, SD 39; **Paul Scott**, SD 43; **Paul Rosino**, SD 45; and **Greg Treat**, SD 47*.

Oklahoma House candidates receiving a financial contribution from the Ag Fund include **Eddy Dempsey**, HD 1; **Jim Grego**, HD 17*; **David Smith**, HD 18; **Sherrie Conley**, HD 20; **Terry O'Donnell**, HD 23; **Logan Phillips**, HD 24; **Ronny Johns**, HD 25; **Dell Kerbs**, HD 26*; **Kyle Hilbert**, HD 29*; **Garry Mize**, HD 31; **John Talley**, HD 33; **Aaron Means**, HD 34; **Chad Caldwell**, HD 40*; **Cynthia Roe**, HD 42; **Jay Steagall**, HD 43*; **Gerrid Kendrix**, HD 52; **Todd Russ**, HD 55*; **Dick Lowe**, HD 56; **Anthony Moore**, HD 57; **Mike Dobrinski**, HD 59; **Kenton Patzkowsky**, HD 61*; **Daniel Pae**, HD 62; **Rande Worthen**, HD 64; **Toni Hasenbeck**, HD 65; **Eric Roberts**, HD 83; **Jon Echols**, HD 90*; **Ajay Pittman**, HD 99; **Marilyn Stark**, HD 100; and **Robert Manger**, HD 101.

Rick West, HD 3, received an endorsement only.

For more information about the OKFB Ag Fund, visit okfarmbureau.org or contact the OKFB Public Policy staff at (405) 523-2300.

*Candidates who earned an endorsement from the OKFB Ag Fund are marked with an asterisk.

OK teachers learn first-hand about OKFB safety program

During the Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom's summer tour, teachers from across the state made a stop June 11 at the Oklahoma Farm Bureau home office in Oklahoma City.

The educators had the opportunity to learn about OKFB's safety programs available to schools including fire safety and DUI prevention. We love getting to play a small role in providing resources to Oklahoma teachers to help students across the state understand the importance of agriculture.



A teacher participating in the summer tour had a chance to try out OKFB's DUI prevention carts for herself. The DUI carts and other resources are available to schools across the state. For more information on how you can schedule a safety program for an upcoming event, contact Burton Harmon at (405) 523-2300.