

PERSPECTIVE

June 3, 2022



OKFB Ag PAC Chairman Mike Schulz (left) speaks during the state Ag PAC meeting Wednesday, May 25, as the committee decided candidates to support and endorse.



District 7 Ag PAC representative and Ag PAC Treasurer Ryan Pjesky (center) discusses candidates during the state Ag PAC meeting at the OKFB home office.

OKFB Ag PAC endorses 13 candidates ahead of June 28 primary election

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Ag PAC political action committee announced the endorsement of 13 candidates in both state and federal races ahead of Oklahoma's June 28 primary election.

The state Ag PAC board – a group of Farm Bureau members selected by their respective OKFB districts – met May 25 to discuss candidate support and endorsements based on feedback gathered from county and districtwide PAC meetings during the month of May.

The OKFB Ag PAC supports like-minded candidates who value agriculture and rural Oklahoma. While financial support gives monetary aid to a campaign, an endorsement from the OKFB Ag PAC is the highest level of support given to a candidate.

At the meeting, members in attendance elected Jackson County Farm Bureau member Mike Schulz to serve as chairman of the OKFB Ag PAC board. Ryan Pjesky of Alfalfa County was elected as treasurer and Alan Jett of Beaver County was chosen as secretary.

Other members of the Ag PAC board include Brittany Hukill, Caddo County, District 3; Roger Fisher, Cotton County, District 4; Brian Knowles, LeFlore County, District 5; Allen Campbell, Cherokee County, District 6; LeRoy Odell, Pottawatomie County, District 8; and Sue Farmer, Lincoln County, District 9.

The OKFB Ag PAC board will reconvene after the June 28 primary election and again following the primary runoff on Aug. 23 to discuss additional candidate support leading into the Nov. 8 general election.

The PAC is funded through voluntary contributions from OKFB members. To make a contribution to the OKFB Ag PAC and strengthen your voice on election day, contact the OKFB Public Policy Department at (405) 523-2300.*

**Contributions or gifts to the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Ag PAC are not tax deductible as charitable contributions.*

Candidates endorsed by the OKFB Ag PAC

James Lankford – U.S. Senate
Kevin Hern – U.S. House District 1
Frank Lucas – U.S. House District 3
Tom Cole – U.S. House District 4
Stephanie Bice – U.S. House District 5
Kevin Stitt – Governor
John O'Connor – Attorney General
Cindy Byrd – Oklahoma State Auditor
Darcy Jech – Senate District 26
Josh West – House District 5
Kyle Hilbert – House District 29
Kevin Wallace – House District 32
Anthony Moore – House District 57



For the full list of supported and endorsed candidates, visit
okfb.news/agpac22



Legislative update: reviewing medical marijuana legislation during the 2022 legislative session

Oklahoma's medical marijuana industry took the state by storm after the passage of State Question 788 in 2018. With more than 8,000 medical marijuana grows in Oklahoma, the industry has had a significant impact on agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

Concerns around medical marijuana and the impact it has or will have on Oklahoma's agriculture industry were on the top of Farm Bureau members' minds during the 2022 legislative session. From illegal activity to concerns with herbicide spray drift, OKFB sought clarity on potential liabilities and improved communications with medical marijuana growers around them.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau began the 2022 legislative session tracking dozens of medical marijuana bills. While not all were signed into law, OKFB is pleased with those that did and will continue working on behalf of Farm Bureau members as legislation re-emerges in future sessions.

For Farm Bureau members and rural Oklahoma, medical marijuana is an ongoing issue that does not stop with the end of the 2022 legislative session. Throughout the summer and fall, OKFB will continue to work hand-in-hand with its grassroots members during the policy development season to determine the best course of action to ensure farmers and ranchers can continue producing food, fuel and fiber for the world.

HB 3530

Revolving fund for county sheriffs

HB 3530 creates a revolving fund designated for use by county sheriffs to enforce state medical marijuana laws. This bill will help law enforcement tackle illegal activity in rural areas of the state.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

Top medical marijuana bills tracked by OKFB

SB 1261

Spray drift

Sought to limit compensation for crops and plants damaged by unintentional herbicide spray drift to those insurable under the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation program.

Failed to pass the house

SB 1367

Penalties for illegal activities

SB 1367 increases the penalty for illegal sales of medical marijuana by a legal business to an unauthorized person to \$5,000 for first offenses and \$15,000 for second offenses.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

SB 1511

Facility proximity to schools

Prevents any new medical marijuana grow facility from being constructed within 1,000 feet of an existing public or private school.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

SB 1543

OMMA restructuring

Makes the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority a standalone state agency, removing it from the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

SB 1697

Medical marijuana bonds

Would have required all medical marijuana growers applying for a grower license to file a bond with OMMA at a minimum of \$25,000 to help reclaim and restore abandoned grow facilities.

Failed to advance out of conference

SB 1704

License revocation process

Allows OMMA to revoke the license – after thorough investigation – of anyone found to be diverting medical marijuana, and may also revoke the license of any business associated with these actions.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

SB 1737

Signage, sensitive crop registry

SB 1737 requires all commercial medical marijuana growers to post signage outside their operation and requires them to register with ODAFF as an environmentally sensitive crop.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

HB 2179

Tiered licensing system

HB 2179 implements a tiered licensing system for medical marijuana operations with seven categories for indoor grows and eight fee tiers for outdoor grows.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

HB 3208

License moratorium

Gives OMMA the authority to establish a moratorium on issuing new medical marijuana business licenses beginning Aug. 1, 2022 and ending Aug. 1, 2024.

Signed by Gov. Stitt

HB 4055

Public utilities reporting

HB 4055 would have required local public utility services to report to OMMA the amount of a commodity – like water or electrical power – they provided to a licensed medical marijuana grower.

Failed to pass the Senate

Nearly \$15,000 donated through OKFB's Community Food Assistance Matching Program

County Farm Bureau organizations along with Oklahoma Farm Bureau donated \$14,735 to community food pantries, food banks and other food assistance programs through the OKFB Community Food Assistance Matching Program during the month of April.

The program connects county Farm Bureaus with their communities through donations to local food assistance programs. OKFB matched county donations up to \$100, doubling the impact of each gift.

The program serves as an opportunity for farmers and ranchers to help members of their local communities through the very products our state's agriculturalists grow and raise.

Thirty-eight county organizations and three county Women's Leadership Committees answered the call to battle food insecurity in their local communities.

View the full list of county Farm Bureaus and WLCs that participated in the program at okfb.news/3GvCzIU.

Fragasso joins OKFB as summer communications intern



Megan Fragasso, an agricultural communications senior at Oklahoma State University, recently joined Oklahoma Farm Bureau as the 2022 communications summer intern.

Fragasso will assist the OKFB communications and public relations department with writing news and feature stories, managing social media, updating the organization's website, developing print products for organizational programs, covering various Farm Bureau events and more.

"Growing up on my family's farm and ranch, I saw their dedication to the industry, and their passion has been ingrained in me," Fragasso said. "I am proud to be able to advocate for agriculture while also growing my skills for the future."

She grew up learning about her family's cattle ranch and viticulture operation in San Luis Obispo, California, and Bigfork, Montana.

Fragasso attended Montana State University before transferring to OSU, where she is majoring in agricultural communications with a minor in agribusiness and agricultural economics. She will graduate in spring 2023, and she plans to work in the communications field for an agricultural organization.



Garfield county Farm Bureau members present a check to RSVP Enid Mobile Meals as part of OKFB's Community Food Assistance Match Program. Both the Garfield County board and WLC donated to the organization, which provides meals, transportation, handyman services and more to seniors in the Enid area.



Kay County Farm Bureau presents a check to the Wheatheart Nutrition Project, which provides midday meals and activities to residents ages 60 and older in 8 counties across north central Oklahoma.



Rogers County Farm Bureau presents their Community Food Assistance Matching Program donation to Safenet Services, which helps survivors of domestic violence through a variety of services.

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FFA REPORTERS CONFERENCE

OKFB to host FFA Reporters Conference July 11 in OKC

Oklahoma Farm Bureau invites chapter FFA reporters to attend the second FFA Reporters Conference Monday, July 11, at the Sheraton Downtown Hotel in Oklahoma City.

The conference will arm students with knowledge of basic communications techniques including social media, photography, videography, graphic design and writing from some of Oklahoma's leading agricultural communications professionals.

Registration is \$25 and covers the full-day conference with breakout sessions, lunch, a t-shirt and fun giveaways. Agricultural education instructors will have the opportunity to participate in optional sessions to learn how to efficiently and effectively help students share the importance of FFA

and agricultural education in their local community.

Because space is limited, the conference will accept students on a first-come, first-served basis, with a maximum of two students per chapter. To sign up, students must register through their agricultural education instructor. Payment via check or purchase order must be submitted no later than Wednesday, June 15, to secure your registration.

FFA advisors or sponsors should make checks or purchase orders payable to Oklahoma Farm Bureau and mail to Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Attn: Rachel Havens, 2501 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

For more information, please contact Rachel Havens at (405) 523-2300.

OKFB WLC sponsors five grant programs for school gardens

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee is proud to sponsor the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry's 2022 Oklahoma Farm to School Garden of the Year contest.

The contest encourages teachers to share the world of horticulture and healthy eating habits with students of all ages. Schools who have an established garden or are creating a garden are encouraged to apply for one of the five grants offered.

The five contest categories include: 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.

The deadline to enter the contest is 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, 2022. Find more details and the link to the application at okfb.news/FarmToSchool22.