

# PERSPECTIVE

June 30, 2023

## County Farm Bureau presidents attend AFBF Advocacy Fly-In



Members met with Rep. Frank Lucas and gained more insight into the planning of the 2023 farm bill.



Sen. Markwayne Mullin provided legislative updates and answered questions about agriculture-related issues.

**T**wo Oklahoma Farm Bureau members traveled to Washington, D.C., for the American Farm Bureau Federation Advocacy Fly-In on June 12-13. Daylin Hash from Bryan County and Jake Calvert from Cleveland County learned the importance of serving as a voice for agricultural issues. They also heard updates from AFBF staff about the 2023 Farm Bill progress and Waters of the United States regulations.

On Tuesday, June 13, members visited Capitol Hill to meet with Oklahoma legislators to advocate for agriculture and rural Oklahoma. They met with Sen. Markwayne Mullin, Reps. Frank Lucas and Josh Brecheen and staff members for Reps. Stephanie Bice and Tom Cole.



## OKFB hosts inaugural Activate Oklahoma Rural Innovation Pipeline bootcamp

**E**ntrepreneurs from six Oklahoma-based companies spent three days diving into business concepts and learning more about resources available from program partners to help their ideas and businesses grow to positively impact rural Oklahoma. These bootcamp participants will continue to receive mentorship and assistance from program partners in the coming months as their businesses develop and grow. Learn more about the Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program at [okfarmbureau.org/accelerator](https://okfarmbureau.org/accelerator).

# 2023 Legislative Review

**T**he first regular session of the 59th Oklahoma legislature adjourned sine die on Friday, May 26, and the halls of the state Capitol have once again grown quiet.

Throughout the nearly four-month legislative session, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members and staff worked hard to make the voice of rural Oklahoma heard at 23rd and Lincoln. In a session overtaken largely by education funding discussions, OKFB members still saw success in several key agricultural areas.

## **Landowner advocacy**

OKFB was pleased to see the passage of HB 1962 by Rep. Carl Newton and Sen. Darcy Jech. This bill allows persons between the ages of 14-17 who live on or work for a farm in Oklahoma to apply for a farm permit to operate Class D motor vehicles. Teenagers with this special permit will be allowed to drive to and from the farm, drive to conduct farm-related business and drive to school.

Farm Bureau members were quick to take action and encourage their legislators to vote “yes” on HB 2053 by Rep. David Hardin and Sen. Brent Howard in late May when the Senate-amended bill returned to the House and eventually back to the Senate for secondary votes.

HB 2053 clarifies who qualifies as an interested party in a groundwater permit application protest. Those appealing a groundwater permit based solely on the industry or entity applying to use the water are no longer considered an interested party, and such claims would be considered frivolous – opening the protestor up to court sanctions.

## **Oklahoma's future**

Farm Bureau members placed a high priority on the future of rural Oklahoma and sought increased funding and expansion for the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine and the Oklahoma Emergency Drought Commission this year.

Rep. Kevin Wallace and Sen. Chris Kidd worked to create the Oklahoma State University Veterinary Medicine Authority Act through HB 2863. This would ensure the OSU veterinary medicine program has a dependable source of funding and a more efficient

and effective way to carry out its mission and purpose through an authority similar to that of the medical schools at OSU and the University of Oklahoma.

Through HB 2863, the OSU veterinary medicine program will receive \$79 million for capital improvements and a recurring \$14 million for operations. HB 2863 made its way through both chambers but was vetoed by Gov. Kevin Stitt. The veto was overridden by the legislature on May 25.

The Oklahoma Emergency Drought Commission grew as a result of HB 1847 by Rep. John Kane and Sen. Grant Green. This measure adds two new members to the commission – one appointed by the Speaker of the House and one appointed by the Senate President Pro Tempore. The expansion of the commission now permits two commission members to meet and discuss ideas outside of official meetings without violating the Open Meetings Act.

Additionally, the Emergency Drought Commission received \$17 million to address previously unapproved applications as well as \$20 million for future projects.

Farm Bureau members saw the passage of SB 488 by Sen. Brent Howard and Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky. This measure requires the Oklahoma Wheat Commission to assess a fee upon all wheat sold by Oklahoma producers through commercial channels. The bill will effectively remove the current two-cent-per-bushel checkoff assessment from Oklahoma Statute and allow the OWC to determine the amount in the future.

## **Medical marijuana**

The beginning of March brought about the race to legalize recreational marijuana through State Question 820, and OKFB members stood adamantly opposed to the measure with specific policy against recreational marijuana. OKFB partnered with other state businesses and entities to form a coalition against SQ 820 and hosted a press conference at the OKFB home office in early March. The state question failed in all 77 counties after the March 7 vote, leaving medical purposes as the only legal use of marijuana in Oklahoma.

The state Capitol continued to see medical marijuana legislation

throughout the legislative session, including HB 2095 by Rep. Jon Echols and Sen. Lonnie Paxton. HB 2095 authorizes the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority to permanently revoke the license of any medical marijuana business that intentionally fails to pay excise tax on their sales. Additionally, it authorizes OMMA to enter into cooperative agreements with the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and Oklahoma Attorney General to investigate and enforce violations of the law.

HB 2095 also grants the powers and authority of a peace officer to OBN, OSBI and OAG when enforcing medical marijuana laws, makes it unlawful for a medical marijuana grower to employ undocumented immigrants and limits medical marijuana grower licenses to one per property.

Since the legalization of medical marijuana in 2018, foreign ownership of land has been a top-of-mind concern for Farm Bureau members as the initial lack of regulation on the medical marijuana industry brought a storm of fly-by-night and illegal marijuana activity to rural Oklahoma. OKFB members were pleased to see the passage of SB 212 by Sen. David Bullard and Rep. Justin Humphrey, which will prohibit any non-U.S. citizen from owning land in Oklahoma as an individual or as part of a business entity or trust.

Gov. Kevin Stitt signed SB 913 by Sen. Darcy Jech and Rep. Anthony Moore into law in late April, which will require marijuana growers to submit a \$50,000 bond when applying for a license to cover any cleanup or restoration costs incurred in the case of facility abandonment. SB 913 also allows OMMA to increase the bond amount if they believe potential costs would exceed \$50,000.

With the close of the 2023 legislative session, Farm Bureau members now turn their attention to the upcoming grassroots policy development season to prepare for 2024. County Farm Bureaus across the state will gather throughout the summer and fall to begin discussing legislative priorities and crafting resolutions that have the potential to become future OKFB policy.

## Top Legislation Monitored by OKFB

Bill Number	Author(s)	Subject	Status
HB 1456	Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky and Sen. Grant Green	Designates State Board of Agriculture as Oklahoma's official plant pest and disease control agency	Signed by governor
HB 1847	Rep. John Kane and Sen. Grant Green	Expands Emergency Drought Commission	Signed by governor
HB 1921	Rep. Lonnie Sims and Sen. Dave Rader	Hazard mitigation districts	Was not considered by House
HB 1962	Rep. Carl Newton and Sen. Darcy Jech	Allows persons ages 14-17 to apply for a Class D motor vehicle farm permit	Signed by governor
HB 2053	Rep. David Hardin and Sen. Brent Howard	Groundwater permit protests	Signed by governor
HB 2095	Rep. Jon Echols and Sen. Lonnie Paxton	Medical marijuana licensing and regulation enforcement	Signed by governor
HB 2239	Rep. Mike Dobrinski and Sen. Darcy Jech	Creates the Terry Peach North Canadian Watershed Restoration Act	Signed by governor
HB 2293	Rep. John Pfeiffer and Sen. Darcy Jech	Creates the Oklahoma Flood and Drought Management Task Force	Signed by governor
HB 2863	Rep. Kevin Wallace and Sen. Chris Kidd	Creates Oklahoma State University Veterinary Medicine Authority Act	Veto overridden
SB 212	Sen. David Bullard and Rep. Justin Humphrey	Foreign ownership of land	Signed by governor
SB 475	Sen. Lonnie Paxton and Rep. Jon Echols	Controlled dangerous substance licensing and registration protocol	Signed by governor
SB 488	Sen. Brent Howard and Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky	Removes per-bushel limitation on Oklahoma Wheat Commission fees	Signed by governor
SB 913	Sen. Darcy Jech and Rep. Anthony Moore	Medical marijuana bonds	Signed by governor

For more information about this year's legislative session or the upcoming policy development season, contact the OKFB public policy team at (405) 523-2300.



**PUBLISHED BY  
OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU**

**Postmaster:**

Send address corrections to:

*Perspective*  
P.O. Box 53332,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-3332

**STAFF DIRECTORY**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Thad Doye  
(405) 523-2438

**VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS  
AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Dustin Mielke  
(405) 530-2640

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MEDIA  
RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY  
COMMUNICATIONS**

Rachel Havens  
(405) 523-2346

**COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST**

Rebekah Nash  
(405) 523-2457

**PUBLICATIONS SPECIALIST**

Krista Carroll  
(405) 523-2343

Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
2501 N. Stiles  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3126

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 131  
Okla. City, OK.

## OKFB YF&R hosts annual youth conference



**N**ineteen high school seniors from across the state participated in Oklahoma Farm Bureau's annual Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference June 13-16 in Oklahoma City.

The OKFB Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee hosted the conference, which is designed to prepare high school students for a career in agriculture and to advance leadership skills. Participants of the conference were high school seniors selected through an application process.

The conference allowed students the opportunity to visit local agricultural enterprises including American Plant

Products, Growing Paynes, Blue and Gold Sausage, Restore OKC and Whitmore Farms. Students volunteered at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, learned how to share the story of agriculture with the media and completed a team-building ropes course.

Students heard from Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Vice Chancellor for Government Relations Jarrett Jobe and various agriculture industry groups including the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, the Oklahoma Pork Council, Radio Network Oklahoma, and Oklahoma

Ag in the Classroom.

The conference also allowed students to gain more knowledge about Farm Bureau by hearing from OKFB President Rodd Moesel, OKFB Director of Membership and Foundation for Agriculture Holly Carroll, OKFB Women's Leadership Committee district five representative Cindy Mackey and American Farm Bureau YF&R committee member Alisen Anderson.

The students selected were Cora Sullivan, Comanche County; Ashlee Purvine, Dewey County; Jaci Gholson, Jefferson County; Patience Green, Johnston County; Rhianna Ross, Johnston County; Rylan Harris, Kiowa County; Berklee Gossen, Lincoln County; Cooper Kline, Lincoln County; Presley Strickland, McClain County; Courtney Blagg, Rogers County; Kelsey Smith, Okfuskee County; Erin Stevenson, Payne County; Jake Odom, Payne County; Ryne Crosthwait, Payne County; Blake Weeks, Pottawatomie County; Trenton Briley, Rogers County; Kendall Guinn, Wagoner County; Madison Church, Washita County and Meliah Sutton, Washita County.