

# PERSPECTIVE

March 11, 2022



## ATV safety training facility featured on Sunup TV

Oklahoma State University's Sunup TV show recently featured the OKFB/Oklahoma 4-H ATV Training Facility. View the show clip on YouTube at [okfb.news/SunupATV](https://okfb.news/SunupATV).

## Legislative update: County zoning bills fall away as committee deadline passes

**T**his week marked the first major committee deadline of the 2022 legislative session. All bills that passed their respective committees will continue to advance through the legislative process, while those that didn't pass or failed to be heard are now dormant for the remainder of the session.

Next week both the House and Senate chambers will shift their focus from committee work to floor work where bills will be available for consideration by the full chamber until March 24. While the Legislature typically only has two weeks of scheduled floor work between the committee and floor deadlines, both chambers moved the floor deadline back a full week to avoid placing a deadline on Oklahoma's spring break week. The additional week will provide some breathing room for both the House and Senate, but spring break week – which historically has seen lighter agendas and shortened work weeks – will likely have a full schedule.

Throughout the first few weeks of session, Oklahoma Farm Bureau closely followed two bills to expand county governing authority. OKFB members were concerned with the potential ramifications of the bills,

including implementation of county zoning and increased regulatory burden across unincorporated, rural areas in Oklahoma. OKFB is pleased to report that both HB 2990 by Rep. Carol Bush and SB 1182 by Sen. Dave Rader did not receive approval by either of their assigned committees ahead of Thursday's deadline. While both bills are dormant and not available for further consideration this session, OKFB will continue to closely monitor remaining legislation to ensure similar language is not placed in any measures considered by either chamber.

HB 2991 by Rep. Rick West would allow students who miss school to participate in a 4-H activity to have their absence marked as an excused absence. While many schools currently do record absences for 4-H activities as an excused absence, HB 2991 would ensure that students across the state are not adversely affected when missing class to participate in 4-H programs that provide students with various educational opportunities outside of the classroom.

HB 2991 received approval from the House Common Education committee and is now available for consideration by the full House.

*Continued on next page ...*

## Save the date: OKFB WLC conference April 22-23

The OKFB Women's Leadership Committee will host their annual state conference April 22-23 in Norman.

The conference will feature breakout sessions, speakers and a community service project.

Registration information and a schedule will be posted to the OKFB website as it becomes available.

For more information, contact OKFB WLC Coordinator Marcia Irvin at (405) 523-2300.

## OKFB to host Youth Legislative Experience

Oklahoma 4-H and FFA juniors and seniors are invited to participate July 12-13 in the first-ever Oklahoma Farm Bureau Youth Legislative Experience.

A hands-on and interactive opportunity to learn more about the legislative process, this unique experience is a chance to network with fellow members and industry professionals.

Students interested in learning more about the Youth Legislative Experience or interested in registering should contact their ag teacher or Extension educator.

## Legislative update

*Continued from front page*

Additionally, a package of bills targeting issues related to ad valorem protests passed out of the House Utilities committee this week. HB 4413 by Rep. Dick Lowe seeks to remove third-party assessors from ad valorem protest negotiations. Currently, third-party assessors have incentive to avoid settlements and prolong negotiations, which is believed to be fueling the increase in protests and lengthy disputes. This creates growing financial burdens and uncertainty for the school systems that rely on ad valorem revenue for their operating budgets.

HB 3901 by Rep. John Pfeiffer would move ad valorem valuation appeals from District Courts to the Court of Tax Review in hopes of speeding up the court process. Current valuation protests often drag on for several years, causing a budget hole for recipients of those funds.

With the committee deadline in the rearview mirror, OKFB will dig deeper into the remaining bills over the course of the legislative session.

***For an update on weekly happenings at the Capitol, be sure to tune in to OKFB's weekly public policy update each Friday at noon via Zoom. Contact your field representative for details.***

## OKFB Collegiate Day at the Capitol set for March 24

**C**ollegiate Farm Bureau members are invited to attend the 2022 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Collegiate Day at the Capitol March 24.

The event provides a chance for collegiate members to meet their state legislators while connecting with other students from across the state and learning more about the grassroots organization.

A tour of the Oklahoma National Stockyards and a packing event at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma will be offered the afternoon March 23 for those interested.

For more information, visit [okfb.news/CollegeDay22](http://okfb.news/CollegeDay22).

## OKFB YF&R awards ten \$1,000 scholarships

**T**he Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers committee recently awarded nine \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors and one \$1,000 to a Collegiate Farm Bureau member.

Each recipient is pursuing a degree at an institution of higher learning with hopes to contribute to agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

"The YF&R scholarship program is an exciting way to invest in the newest generation of agriculturalists in our industry," said Brittany Hukill, OKFB YF&R chair. "Our committee looks forward to seeing how each of these students uses this investment to grow in agriculture and represent our state well in their careers."

Woods County Farm Bureau member Josey Myers received the Collegiate Farm Bureau scholarship. She is attending Northwestern Oklahoma State University where she is studying agricultural education.

The nine high school scholarships were awarded to:

- Michael Wakefield, Beaver County
- Haley Combs, Garfield County
- Blake Janssen, Grady County
- Bailee Black, Hughes County
- Autumn Bolen, McCurtain County
- Gage Watson, Murray County
- Brooke Costello, Rogers County
- Kara Kitch, Tulsa County
- McKenna Wedel, Washita County

The nine scholarship recipients, one from each OKFB district, have a wide variety of career aspirations and have chosen degrees across the agriculture industry including agricultural business, education, animal sciences, agricultural engineering and agricultural communications.

Students plan to study at higher-education institutions including Northern Oklahoma College, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma State University, Redlands Community College and Southwest Oklahoma State University.



**OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU**

# Ag Tour

May 4-6, 2022

## OKFB to host Ag Tour May 4-6 in east central Oklahoma

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau will host its 2022 OKFB Ag Tour May 4-6 in the Muskogee area.

The three-day tour will feature history, the way of life, the industry and commodities of the east central region.

Tour stops will include a meat processing facility, the Port of Muskogee, an orchard and many more.

Buses will depart for the tour from the OKFB home office in Oklahoma City,

and tour attendees will stay two nights in a Muskogee-area hotel. Meals will be provided during the tour.

The cost is \$300 for an individual or \$350 for two people sharing a room. Space will be limited to 50 members only. The registration form can be found online at [okfb.news/AgTour22](http://okfb.news/AgTour22) and must be mailed to Marcia Irvin with the payment to hold the reservation due to the popularity of the event.

**Find the Ag Tour registration form on OKFB's website at [okfb.news/AgTour22](http://okfb.news/AgTour22)**



**Scott Neufeld of Major County (right) listens to a fellow Farm Bureau member's perspective in the farm policy committee meeting.**



**Caddo County Farm Bureau member Karen Dodson (right) takes notes during a presentation in the budget and economy committee meeting.**

## OKFB members bring perspectives to Washington, D.C.

**S**even Farm Bureau members represented Oklahoma at the American Farm Bureau Federation's Issue Advisory Committee meetings February 17-18 in Arlington, VA.

The IAC meetings bring together Farm Bureau members from across the country to discuss pertinent issues facing agriculture including energy, environmental regulations, ag labor, organic and direct marketing, technology, animal care, farm policy, water, budget and economy, federal land, food safety and market structures.

Karen Dodson of Caddo County served on the budget and economy committee. A longtime farmer and certified public accountant, Dodson brought a wealth of knowledge to her committee.

Top areas of discussion in Dodson's committee were income taxes, interest rates and the upcoming farm bill.

"These committees – other than the grassroots – are the only input to changing current policy and what we stand for and support," she said.

Josh Anderson of Johnston County served on the environmental regulations committee, which discussed the effects of regulations handed down from the Environmental Protection Agency. Restrictions on Enlist Duo, a commonly used herbicide, was a major topic of conversation.

Anderson said he enjoyed serving on the committee and knows he can bring what he learned back home to help the grassroots policymaking process.

"It's a good way to see the issues that are happening in the country as

a whole, and it gives us some good insight looking forward in how we can protect Oklahomans," he said.

For Cody Goodknight of Comanche County, serving on the technology committee hit close to home, especially when discussing rural broadband. As a farmer in rural southwest Oklahoma, broadband access is a necessity as machinery gets more advanced and often needs a wireless data connection.

"It's not just (needed) where people live," he said. "We are operating machinery and doing a lot of work in the field. We don't want to have to go back to the house to hook up to a cable connection."

Goodknight said serving on the committee helps him stay up to date with current issues in the agriculture industry.

"I like being part of a solution to a problem," he said. "These are issues that we face on a day-to-day basis, and if I can gather that information from across the nation with other Farm Bureau members and figure out a solution to a common problem, it's interesting, challenging and rewarding to me."

Scott Neufeld of Major County said the new Farm Bill was the primary conversation in the farm policy committee, with climate-smart practices at the forefront.

"I've heard of climate change and climate implications, but climate-smart is the new buzzword," he said. "What will we be doing in the new Farm Bill that will be climate-smart?"

Chad Budy of Woods County said solar energy was the primary topic for the energy committee, unlike years

past when wind energy discussion was the focus.

Budy formerly leased out some of his land for wind energy, but the endeavor was short-lived when he found out his property was in a military flight zone. He now thinks that land might be a good candidate for solar energy.

"The (solar) industry has come a long way," Budy said. "I think it could be a potential asset for us."

Jordan Cook, a seedstock producer in Washita County, served on the animal care committee. She said major topics in her committee were animal diseases, gene editing and California's Proposition 12.

"It's very interesting to see what's going on in different states, and especially with the animal care committee, just all the different things out there that living in Oklahoma we're not really aware of," she said.

Chad Selman of Tulsa County joined the agricultural labor committee virtually this year. He said his committee focused heavily on H2A labor, discussing what works well and what does not. They also discussed overtime pay, housing for agricultural workers and the ability for workers' spouses to join them while in the United States.

Each OKFB member was nominated to their respective committee by OKFB president Rodd Moesel. They serve a two-year term with a maximum of four years total. In addition to the annual in-person meeting, committees meet regularly via conference call or Zoom to continue their discussion and make recommendations to the AFBF Board of Directors.



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## OKFB YF&R members attend AFBF Leadership Conference

**N**early 20 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers attended the American Farm Bureau YF&R Leadership Conference Feb. 25-28 in Louisville, Kentucky.

YF&R members from all 50 states and Puerto Rico gathered to build their leadership skills, connect with like-minded agriculturalists, grow their knowledge of agriculture and learn about the agriculture industry in Kentucky.

Ottawa County Farm Bureau member Alisen Anderson was appointed to serve a two-year term on the AFBF YF&R committee, where she will assist in the coordination of YF&R events, competitive events and the Harvest for All program. She started her two years of service at the conference.

Members at the conference heard from various keynote speakers, including Dr. Delatorro McNeal, who shared how members can be better leaders in their counties and state organizations; Braxton Nielson, who encouraged attendees by telling his

story and how he overcame hardships; and AFBF President Zippy Duvall, who reminded the young producers the impact Farm Bureau has on all levels.

The AFBF Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet was held during the conference, where Payne County Farm Bureau member Roy Stovall participated in the panel-style discussion exchanging ideas and information on pre-determined topics. Stovall advanced to the Sweet Sixteen round of competition after two preliminary rounds.

Breakout session topics featured economic outlooks, retirement planning, membership engagement, cattle profitability, seed technology, agriculture literacy and much more. YF&R members toured local farms, ranches and businesses to gain perspective on agriculture in Kentucky.

The 2023 Farm Bureau FUSION Conference will be held March 3-6, 2023, in Jacksonville, Florida, where members of the Promotion & Education, Women's Leadership and Young Farmers & Ranchers programs will gather.



**Roy Stovall (left) competes in the 2022 AFBF YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet in Louisville, Kentucky.**



**OKFB YF&R members attended the 2022 AFBF YF&R conference Feb. 25-28 in Louisville, Kentucky.**