

PERSPECTIVE

March 6, 2026



OKFB members discuss MAHA, legislative outlook at annual leadership conference

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members made the trek to Oklahoma City for the organization’s annual leadership conference on Tuesday, Feb. 17.

More than 150 members had the opportunity to learn from industry leaders and fellowship with other Farm Bureau members and state legislators during the one-day event as they honed their leadership skills and received updates on several top issues facing agriculture.

The conference kicked off with an update on the Make America Healthy Again initiative with Corteva’s Warren Mayberry and John Campbell of the Southern Crop Production Association. Mayberry and Campbell explained the details of the 2025 MAHA report and the implications of the agricultural pesticides, including glyphosate, under attack by the movement.

Johnna Miller from the American

Farm Bureau Federation continued the MAHA discussion with simple, practical tools that farmers and ranchers can use to come alongside the MAHA initiative and tell the agriculture story through social media and more. Miller emphasized the importance of building trust in farmers as individuals and neighbors.

During lunch, Sen. Casey Murdock and Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky gave a legislative update, and Rep. David Hardin gave members a briefing on the ongoing poultry lawsuit in eastern Oklahoma.

Megan Langley, a poultry producer and Adair County Farm Bureau member, also shared her story about the legal challenges against Oklahoma’s poultry industry. Langley grows for Simmons Foods, a named defendant in the decades-old *State of Oklahoma v. Tyson Foods, Inc., et al.*, lawsuit, and stands

to lose her contract with the poultry integrator if the issue is not resolved.

Kylee Deniz of the Oklahoma Pork Council presented on a new coalition to provide accurate agriculture information to consumers, and OKFB’s Dustin Mielke conducted a communications training on how to effectively share the agriculture story and how to handle calls from the news media.

OKFB members also had the chance to hear from a panel of Oklahoma’s legislative leaders, including Oklahoma Senate President Pro Tempore Lonnie Paxton, House Speaker Kyle Hilbert, Senate democratic leader Julia Kirt, and House minority leader Cyndi Munson.

Members rounded out an action-packed day with a legislative reception to visit one-on-one with state lawmakers and thank them for their work at the state Capitol to support agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

Legislative update: Ad valorem taxes take center stage as the first month of legislative session comes to a close

With the first month of the 2026 legislative session in the rearview mirror, lawmakers are making progress on the thousands of bills filed at the beginning of the year.

The first set of deadlines have come and gone, and Oklahoma Farm Bureau has kept an eye on several bills of note, including two bills relating to personal property tax.

HB 3433 by Rep. Jonathan Wilk would set a depreciation schedule for agricultural equipment and set a \$15-per-year in-lieu tax once the equipment reaches a low value. HB 3178 by Rep. Nick Archer, a similar bill under consideration, would not require an in-lieu tax at all once the equipment reaches a low depreciation value.

While OKFB does not believe both bills will pass, either proposed tax break would be a welcome change to farmers and ranchers who often keep equipment for decades or even generations.

Across the rotunda in the Senate, a few bills seek to modify the state's homestead ad valorem tax exemption.

Senate President Pro Tempore Lonnie Paxton has authored two homestead

exemption bills in an attempt to find beneficial tax cuts for landowners, including SB 2146. This measure would allow the homestead exemption to include any land classified as agricultural land, changing the 160-acre cap that is currently in place.

SB 1809, Paxton's second homestead bill, would increase the homestead exemption from \$1,000 to \$5,000. This would increase landowner savings from \$50 per year to \$350 per year, but it would come with a cost of millions of dollars in lost county tax revenue. OKFB will continue to monitor the legislation, advocating for landowner tax relief without jeopardizing rural communities.

OKFB members are likely familiar with the Right to Repair, which has been a prevalent topic at the national level for many years, but the discussion has moved down to the state level in Oklahoma with Rep. Mark Lawson's HB 3617. The bill would require equipment manufacturers to make parts and diagnostic materials available to independent repair providers, giving farmers and ranchers more options when it comes to repairing high-tech

agricultural equipment.

OKFB is keeping an eye on the measure at the state level but is unsure of the implications of varying rules from state to state and prefers to manage the issue on a national level.

Finally, OKFB is monitoring HB 3270 by Rep. Nick Archer, which has taken an interesting direction in the first month of work at the state Capitol. What started as a bill seeking to limit the transportation of feral hogs has become a bill regarding chronic wasting disease in deer. The bill, which now seeks to move disease management and oversight from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife to the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, is no longer as relevant to Farm Bureau members and is a good reminder to keep a watchful eye on a bill's language as it moves throughout the legislative process.

OKFB's weekly legislative updates provide the latest legislative action each Friday at noon via Zoom. Contact your field representative for information on how to connect.

OKFB hosts first YF&R Leadership Conference in OKC

More than 30 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers and Collegiate Farm Bureau members met in Oklahoma City on Feb. 16 for OKFB's first YF&R Leadership Conference.

Members had the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through the event's multiple breakout sessions and guest speakers.

Attendees began the day participating in ice breaker games to learn more about each other and develop communication skills. They also heard from OKFB's Amarie Bartel on how to construct their own Farm Bureau elevator pitch.

The afternoon introduced members on how to use parliamentary procedure in their county Farm Bureaus with Alisen Anderson, how to navigate difficult conversation in agriculture with Oklahoma State University's Lauren Cline and walked through media training exercises with the Oklahoma Ag Network's Ron Hays.



OKFB, ag coalition seek to file friend-of-the-court brief for stay on Oklahoma poultry case judgment



Oklahoma Farm Bureau, along with a coalition of fellow agricultural organizations, individual poultry producers and numerous Oklahoma state legislators have filed a motion seeking leave to file a friend-of-the-court brief asking for a stay of the judgment issued by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma in the decades-long *State of Oklahoma v. Tyson Foods, Inc., et al.*, lawsuit.

The motion and corresponding amicus curiae brief were filed Monday, Feb. 16, in the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, and were signed by a coalition including Oklahoma Farm Bureau, the Oklahoma Pork Council, the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, seven eastern Oklahoma poultry growers and 30 Oklahoma legislators.

The brief asks the appeals court to place a stay, or hold, on the judgment of the U.S. District Court's Dec. 19, 2025, ruling, which included fines for poultry companies operating in the Illinois River Watershed and requires poultry growers to relinquish control of their poultry litter until a judicially immune Special Master is appointed to oversee remediation efforts.

"The U.S. District Court's judgment in the state's poultry case unfairly penalizes family poultry farmers who followed all the applicable state of Oklahoma laws and regulations they were asked to comply with," said OKFB President Stacy Simunek. "This stay will allow these farmers to continue to follow their state-approved nutrient management plans while the state secures settlements with the poultry companies that will need to be approved by the district court."

The brief asks that poultry producers in the Illinois River Watershed be allowed to continue to follow their state-

approved nutrient management plans to provide near-term certainty until either the case is fully settled or potential appeals are resolved.

The judgment's requirement that poultry companies be responsible for removing litter from the watershed combined with a reduction in allowable litter application would not only reduce the application of the natural fertilizer and increase dependence on commercial fertilizer, but it would also take away certain poultry growers' ability to sell the fertilizer, removing an economic driver from the region.

Oklahoma agriculture groups and producers have also called into question the judicially immune actions of the proposed Special Master, which the groups argue creates a regulatory bureaucracy outside of state laws and regulations.

The groups assert that even with three proposed settlements being reached between some of the poultry companies involved in the case and the State of Oklahoma, the court will need to review and take action on the agreements, creating uncertainty as poultry producers continue to wait for a path forward.

"Our state's farmers are committed to caring for the environment and our shared natural resources," Simunek said. "In the 20-plus years since the case was originally filed, poultry producers in the watershed have taken voluntary measures to improve water quality for their communities and fellow Oklahomans.

"Oklahoma agriculture wants to ensure that family agriculturalists are not unfairly penalized for not only doing what is asked of them, but also for implementing proactive environmental stewardship practices."



OKFB Foundation for Ag collecting donations for 2026 Oklahoma wildfire relief

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is collecting donations to assist with recovery efforts for rural Oklahomans affected by devastating wildfires that swept across parts of Oklahoma in early 2026.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members know the road to recovery after wildfires is a long, ongoing process stretching from initial response by emergency crews to replacing lost fencing and structures. The foundation takes a long-term view of wildfire relief, making sure that farmers and ranchers affected by wildland fires have the relief resources needed to make a full recovery.

Donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar with the foundation, Oklahoma Farm Bureau and Oklahoma Farm Bureau Insurance each matching up to \$10,000 for a total donation match of up to \$30,000.

Learn how to donate today by scanning this QR code to visit the website listed below



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Perspective
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STAFF DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thad Doye
(405) 523-2438

**VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND
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Dustin Mielke
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Rachel Havens
(405) 523-2346

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Mickinzi Ferguson
(405) 523-2343

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

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OKFB hosts Ag Defense Fundraiser featuring Gov. Stitt

More than 100 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members and guests gathered at Innovation Hall in Oklahoma City for the organization's third-annual Ag Defense Fundraiser held Monday, Feb. 16.

Part of Farm Bureau's 2026 Leadership Week, the annual event raises funds for OKFB's agricultural advocacy work to protect family farmers, ranchers and our state's agricultural industry from challenges and attacks that seek to add unnecessary

restrictions or burdens to the way farmers and ranchers grow or raise food.

The evening was highlighted by a Q&A with Gov. Kevin Stitt, moderated by OKFB President Stacy Simunek. During the Q&A, Stitt spoke about his time in office and answered questions about challenges facing the agriculture industry, notable wins from his administration, legal challenges in the state and his vision for the future of Oklahoma after he wraps up his final year in office.

Stitt shared his optimism about Oklahoma's future, emphasizing the state's family-centric atmosphere and reasonable cost of living, but he also expressed his concern for statewide challenges like the ongoing poultry lawsuit in eastern Oklahoma and the McGirt Supreme Court decision.

Members also enjoyed a cocktail hour and dinner earlier in the evening to fellowship with other Farm Bureau members and industry leaders from across the state.