

# PERSPECTIVE

May 20, 2022



## OKFB and OCA oppose cattle market legislation in joint letter to Congress

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau recently partnered with the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association to send a letter to Congress in opposition of the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act and the Meat and Poultry Special Investigator Act.

The letter – sent to United States Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow and Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member John Boozman – urged the recipients to oppose and prevent further action on both measures.

OKFB and OCA support portions of the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act, but do not support the legislation in its entirety.

In the letter, OKFB and OCA stated: “The American Farm Bureau Federation’s (OKFB’s national affiliate) and National Cattlemen’s Beef Association’s (OCA’s national affiliate) policies generally support certain provisions of S. 4030 which benefit U.S. cattle producers, including the 14-day cattle slaughter report, expedited carcass weights reporting, and the cattle contract library. OKFB and OCA appreciate the inclusion of these provisions.

“However, our organizations remain strongly opposed to the provisions in S. 4030 in Sections 2 and 7 which are specific to the establishment of federal mandatory minimum thresholds under which certain percentages of cattle must be purchased. There is no economic

evidence to show regional mandated purchases will increase prices for cow-calf and stocker operators.”

OKFB and OCA also expressed concerns with the Meat and Poultry Special Investigator Act, which would create an Office of the Special Investigator for Competition Matters as part of the United States Department of Agriculture. The two organizations felt establishing this office would be unnecessary as the USDA and Department of Justice already have the jurisdiction required to investigate suspicious actions.

Throughout the letter, OKFB and OCA emphasized the importance of gathering producer input during legislation development to avoid unintended consequences to the beef industry.

## Oklahoma Leopold Conservation Award seeks nominees

**N**ominations are now open for the 2022 Oklahoma Leopold Conservation Award.

The Sand County Foundation, along with Oklahoma agriculture organizations, presents the award in honor of renowned

conservationist Aldo Leopold. The award recognizes those who inspire others with their dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat management on private, working land.

Nominations may be submitted on

behalf of a landowner, or landowners may apply themselves. Find the form at [sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA](https://sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA), which must be submitted by email no later than August 15, 2022, to [award@sandcountyfoundation.org](mailto:award@sandcountyfoundation.org).

## OKFB members visit east central Oklahoma on Ag Tour

**M**ore than 50 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members traveled to east central Oklahoma during the 2022 OKFB Ag Tour May 4-6.

Members from across the state had the opportunity to learn about production agriculture at Crow Farm Markets, a vegetable and fruit producer near Shawnee; Leaning Oak Ranch, a commercial beef ranch near Okemah; Watson Farms Meat Processing, a state-inspected and custom meat processor in Council Hill; Livesay Orchard, a peach, watermelon, and apple producer near Porter; and P&C Cattle Pens, a cattle pen manufacturer near Stillwell.

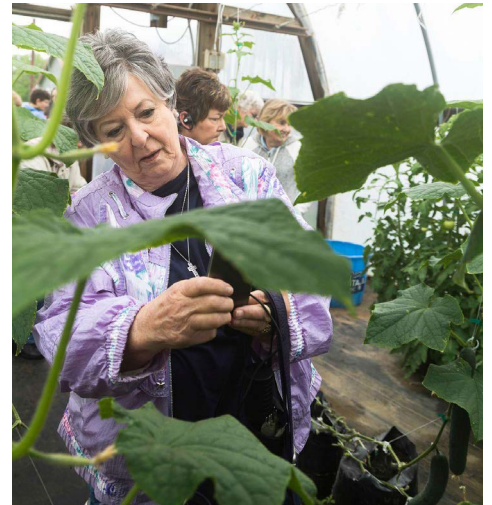
Tour stops also included G&H Decoy, the oldest decoy manufacturer in America located in Henryetta; and

Hunter's Home, Oklahoma's only remaining plantation home dating to 1845 in Park Hill.

The first-ever OKFB cattle handling safety program was presented to Ag Tour participants to remind the seasoned cattle producers proper handling and safety procedures on the ranch. The program will be available for all county Farm Bureaus at a later date.

Meals for the three-day tour were sponsored by Adair County Farm Bureau, Cherokee County Farm Bureau, Muskogee County Farm Bureau, Rogers County Farm Bureau and Wagoner County Farm Bureau.

To view, download or share photos from the tour, view the Ag Tour Flickr album at [okfb.news/AgTourPhotos22](https://okfb.news/AgTourPhotos22).



OKFB members learned about vegetable and produce production at Crow Farm Markets near Shawnee.



OKFB members visited Watson Farms Meat Processing in Council Hill during the 2022 Ag Tour. Watson Farms is a state-inspected facility that also handles custom meat processing.



Farm Bureau members toured G&H Decoys in Henryetta during the 2022 Ag Tour. G&H decoys is the oldest decoy manufacturer in the United States.

## OKFB YF&R to host summer conference July 29-31 in Enid

**F**arm Bureau members ages 18-35 are invited to attend the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Summer Conference July 29-31 in Enid.

The conference will offer YF&R members the chance to meet farmers and ranchers from across the state, tour local agricultural facilities and learn more about YF&R leadership opportunities and programs.

Attendees will enjoy an evening of fellowship and networking on Friday at Schnaithman Farms. On Saturday, YF&R

members will tour local farms, ranches and agricultural facilities before dinner and musical guest Johnny Cooper at the Stride Bank Center.

Sunday will feature a worship service and a discussion meet featuring a \$500 cash prize for the winner. Participation is not required to qualify for the American Farm Bureau YF&R Discussion Meet.

Registration for the conference is \$20 to be paid at the conference, which includes meals and lodging. Members will stay in the GLo Best Western in

Enid, which will be booked by YF&R Coordinator Zac Swartz.

To attend, please register by filling out the online form available at [okfb.news/YFRConf22](https://okfb.news/YFRConf22) by July 13.

For more information, please contact YF&R Coordinator Zac Swartz at (405) 523-2300.

More information about the event will be shared when available.

Register for the YF&R conference online at  
**[okfb.news/YFRConf22](https://okfb.news/YFRConf22)**



# Legislative Update: medical marijuana, third-party assessors, drought relief, veterinarian incentives

**A**s the 2022 legislative session enters its last several days, the pace at the state Capitol has slowed significantly. According to the state Constitution, the legislative session must end no later than Friday, May 27; however, early chatter indicates both chambers are aiming to finish sooner in hopes of hitting the campaign trail before the June 28 primary election.

In addition to the usual budget negotiations, this period of session consists of the two chambers hammering out final negotiations and agreements on bills that have been amended multiple times throughout the legislative process. Several bills related to medical marijuana are in such negotiations.

This session began with 20-30 marijuana bills of high interest to Oklahoma Farm Bureau members. While several bills have passed, multiple bills failed to meet previous deadlines. Currently, OKFB is working with a coalition focused on six medical

marijuana bills that will hopefully make it through to Gov. Kevin Stitt's desk.

Additionally, legislation targeting issues within the ad valorem assessment dispute process are being refined by legislators and stakeholders before pursuing final approval from the legislature and the governor. While discussions and negotiations on these bills have occurred throughout the session, final details must be agreed upon before the two bodies adjourn for the 2022 session.

In anticipation of a budget agreement announcement expected in the coming days, Farm Bureau has engaged with appropriators to encourage and request funding for drought relief and issues related to veterinary medicine.

While recent rain across much of the state has reduced some drought concerns, other parts of the state are still experiencing dangerous drought conditions. Oklahoma legislators created the Emergency Drought Relief

Fund in 2013; however, it has gone unfunded since then. OKFB has worked with stakeholders and legislators to prioritize dollars for the fund to mitigate drought implications and to provide relief for areas of the state currently experiencing drought.

Farm Bureau members are well aware that the shortage of large-animal veterinarians is reaching concerning levels across the state. OKFB is hopeful that this year's budget will include incentives for large-animal veterinarians practicing in rural Oklahoma. Additionally, OKFB supports increased funding to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Oklahoma State University to ensure that OSU remains a top university for students pursuing veterinary medicine.

For an update on weekly happenings at the Capitol and an outlook on what is ahead, be sure to tune in to Oklahoma Farm Bureau's weekly public policy update each Friday at noon via Zoom.

## Farm Bureau members give grassroots political input as 2022 OKFB Ag PAC process begins

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau members from around the state gathered May 9-17 for the 2022 OKFB Ag PAC district meetings to discuss support for candidates in the upcoming state and federal elections.

The district meetings gather input from county Farm Bureaus on potential candidate support by the political action committee. Prior to the district meetings, the OKFB public policy team sent candidate information to each county Farm Bureau for discussion ahead of the districtwide gatherings.

Farm Bureau members in attendance of the district meetings were chosen by their respective counties, with each county organization having the opportunity to send a single

representative. Together, members presented the ideas and opinions of their county organizations to fellow Farm Bureau members from around their district. The county representatives compared and discussed ideas and came to a consensus as individual districts on candidates they believe value agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

The district meetings serve as the first step in the grassroots PAC process, bridging county meetings and the state PAC meeting on May 25. During the district meetings, each group elected one district representative who will attend the state OKFB Ag PAC meeting. There, the district representatives will engage in final discussions and vote on candidates to support.



Learn more about the grassroots OKFB Ag PAC process by watching our video at [okfb.news/AgPACVideo](https://okfb.news/AgPACVideo)

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## More than \$8,000 and 300 hogs donated to Pork for Packs program through FFA Hunger Challenge

A total of \$8,370.84 and 322 hogs were donated by 142 FFA chapters to the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's Pork for Packs program as part of the 2021-2022 Oklahoma FFA Hunger Challenge.

Pork for Packs – a collaboration between the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture, the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma – provides protein sticks for chronically hungry children in Oklahoma. The protein sticks are included in food-filled backpacks given to students to eat during weekends and holidays, when meals at school are not available.

"We are thankful for the students who donated animals and helped their chapters raise money for the Pork for Packs program," said David VonTungeln, OKFB Foundation for Agriculture president. "These donations help ensure Oklahoma children have access to a nutritious protein source when school is not in session."



Cade Enlow (center) of Kellyville FFA receives his chapter's 2021-2022 FFA Hunger Challenge recognition as the highest monetary contributors to the program for the year during the 2022 Oklahoma FFA Convention in Tulsa May 4. Enlow received the recognition from OKFB Foundation for Agriculture Director Holly Carroll (left) and Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma Chief Operating Officer Caleb Dixon.

The FFA Hunger Challenge encourages students to donate their animals to the program during the Tulsa State Fair and the Oklahoma Youth Expo. Chapters can also make cash contributions through adding a quarter

to the price of each fundraising product sold throughout the year.

Kellyville FFA was recognized as the FFA chapter with the highest monetary contribution, donating \$1,500 to the program.