

AFR

News & Views

"The Voice of Family Agriculture"

Vol. XCV No. 2
Spring 2014



Photo by Jo Dean Orrell, Carnegie

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By Terry Detrick, President

INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE—INVEST IN YOUTH

change to our “County Match Scholarship” program. The AFR/OFU Board of Directors recently took a giant step toward improving that program—one that is forward thinking, benefits agent marketing efforts and strengthens our organization.

What was a \$250 match scholarship to an AFR/OFU college freshman is now a \$1000 match opportunity. County organizations have first priority to have their AFR/OFU scholarship efforts matched, using all or a portion of the \$1000 state office match dollars. Any unused portion of the \$1000 match dollars may now be picked up by AFR/OFU local organizations within that county to use for their own AFR/OFU scholarship opportunities. With the new opportunity for locals to use match dollars, the program has been renamed the “County/Local Match Scholarship.” What a deal!

The intent of the County/Local Match Scholarship program is to give each county/local/agency a tremendous marketing tool—one that increases visibility and clout in their respective communities. To further these publicity opportunities, a small requirement has been added for all participating organizations. A picture of the scholarship presentation must now be sent to the AFR/OFU home office. The presentation picture will be sent with a press release to your hometown paper, providing an additional push for your efforts.

As a previous school administrator, I can tell you if you will notify the local school administration that you have a scholarship presentation to make at the end-of-year awards assembly or graduation, they will be VERY happy to accommodate you! I also suggest the presen-

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE EXTENDED

Following staff changes at the AFR/OFU home office, the deadline for both the State and County/Local Match scholarships has been extended to

May 1, 2014

For more State and County/Local Match Scholarship information, see page 18.

Spring—what a wonderful time of the year! Winter’s cold blasts are behind us, flowers are blooming, the grass is greening and the sweet smell of spring puts a “spring” in our step.

At AFR/OFU, our real boost this time of year is watching, encouraging and rewarding a new crop of youth. In March, on behalf of you, the membership, we distributed more than \$30,000 to our AFR/OFU youth for their accomplishments with their various projects at Oklahoma Youth Expo (OYE). Later this spring, we will award up to a total of \$25,000 in scholarships to AFR/OFU youth who have succeeded in accomplishing required activities and achieving predetermined goals.

In regard to AFR/OFU scholarship efforts, I am excited to announce a BIG

tation be given by that student’s local agent, county officer, a home office staff member or any combination of these. Please, help us help you by supporting outstanding young AFR/OFU members in your area!

In addition to scholarships and contest sponsorships, our speech and poster contests rank with the best in the state and our summer leadership summit (camp) is an opportunity for young people to receive leadership training and motivation by industry professionals while having fun and making life-long friendships.

As we discuss youth, this is a good time to welcome Ms. Blaire Boyer, the new AFR/OFU Youth & Education Coordinator. Blaire will assume full-time duties in mid-May. (See her biography on page 18.) For more information on the County/Local Match Scholarship changes or other AFR/OFU Youth Program events, contact Blaire at (405)218-5561 or bboyer@afmic.com.

If you’re not already supportive of our Youth Program, please look around your communities, identify the best and brightest, and inform and encourage them to get involved with our youth activities. Help us market what we are all blessed to be a part of! It’s one of the most rewarding things we get to do as an organization and

I want to be able to share the joy with you—our members, our local/county officers and our agents!

The bottom line is this: We can all be proud to be a small part of AFR/OFU’s great and noble effort to invest in Your Future, which is our outstanding Oklahoma youth.

Thank You -Terry

Oklahoma State Union of the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America

OUR PRIVACY POLICY

- We do not sell our membership information.
- We do not provide our members’ personal information to persons or organizations outside of our affiliate companies.
- We afford prospective and former members the same protections as existing members with respect to personal information.

INFORMATION WE MAY COLLECT

We only collect the member’s name, address, e-mail address and phone number.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

We do not share any of our members’ personal information with outside entities. Your personal information is used to mail our monthly publication or advise you of information pertinent to your membership in the organization. It may be used to offer you any of our membership benefits. If you are a policy holder of one of our affiliate insurance companies, your information may be shared to verify correct contact information.

Vol. XCVI, No. 2 SPRING 2014
www.americanfarmersandranchers.com

News & Views is published by
American Farmers & Ranchers
Oklahoma Farmers Union
 800 N. Harvey, Oklahoma City, Okla., 73102
 (405) 218-5400 - (800) 324-7771
 Fax: (405) 218-5581 - Email: news@afmic.com
First Published in 1920

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
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AFR/OFU ELECTS NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AFR/OFU elected a new board of directors at the organization's 109th annual state convention at the Embassy Suites & Conference Center – Norman Feb. 21-22.

This year, the membership voted on three contested seats on the AFR/OFU Board of Directors—Northwest District Seat #1, Southeast District Seat #4 and At-large Seat #2. In addition, AFR/OFU Secretary Paul Jackson, Ringling, ran unopposed and will retain his current position for a three-year term.



In the race for the northwest district, Terry Peach, Woodward/Mutual defeated incumbent Eric Bilderback, El Reno. Peach will begin his first three-year term as an AFR/OFU director.

Peach is a third-generation agricultural producer. In his diverse career, he has taught agricultural education, operated a feed business for many years and started Woodward Hull, an oilfield supply company. Professionally, Peach has served as the USDA Farm Service Agency State Executive Director and as the Oklahoma Secretary and Commissioner of Agriculture from 2003 to 2011. He has been an AFR/OFU member since 1998.

"I want to thank everyone that supported me in this election and have given me the opportunity to serve on their board of directors," said Peach. "I look forward to building a strong coalition between agents, insureds and the company. I am excited to have the chance to promote our policy on water, education and leadership development of our youth which will all be very important to the future of the state of Oklahoma."

In the race for the southeast district, incumbent Bob Holley, Antlers, was challenged by Lundy Kirk Kiger, Poteau. Holley won the race and will begin his second three-year term as an AFR/OFU director.

Holley enjoyed a successful 28-year career with the USDA Farmers Home Administration and has spent his life pursuing the interests of rural development and agriculture. He has been an AFR/OFU member for 47 years.

"I feel good about the confidence the membership has placed in me as the director of AFR/OFU Dist. 4," said Holley. "My goal is to see the company grow, see our surplus grow and stabilize and improve our underwriting so agents can write policies more efficiently. We want to be the best insurance company in Oklahoma—one that is priced right with company and farm organization growth."

In the race for the at-large seat, incumbent Justin Cowan, Locust Grove, was challenged by Keith Swan, Nowata. Cowan won the at-large race and will begin his second three-year term as an AFR/OFU director.



Cowan and his wife, Linda, own and operate Cowan Insurance Agency in Locust Grove and have been AFR/OFU members for 36 years. Cowan is the president of the Mayes County Farmers Union and serves on the OFU Foundation Board of Directors. He is also a practicing certified public accountant and financial advisor.

"It is an honor to be re-elected by AFR/OFU members from across Oklahoma," said Cowan. "I appreciate the confidence they have demonstrated in me to once again

continue to help lead and direct our company."

AFR RECEIVES BLESSING FROM OKLA. INSURANCE DEPT.

During the 2014 AFR Agent Luncheon Feb. 21, directors, staff and agents learned AFR Insurance's "hazardous condition designation" will be removed by the Oklahoma Insurance Department. Insurance Commissioner John Doak personally presented the news to AFR CEO Brian Baxter with the following letter (which appears in part):

For almost 100 years, American Farmers & Ranchers Mutual Insurance Company (AFR Mutual) has provided a strong and reliable source of property and casualty insurance for farmers, ranchers and other rural Oklahomans. AFR Mutual allows policyholders to join the Oklahoma State Union of the Farmers Education and Cooperative Union of America (Oklahoma Farmers Union) and fund in part the Cooperative's activities through policyholder dues. These activities promote the needs of Oklahoma farmers and ranchers and farm families through agricultural education, promotion of the agricultural industry and also by providing a voice for agriculture and farm families in the halls of the state capitol and in Washington, D.C. Without your organization, these voices might otherwise lack the resources to be heard.

Additionally, I have been and remain a strong supporter of the Cooperative youth scholarship, academic, livestock and other programs that play such a profound role in shaping the lives and characters of our future leaders. Specifically, President Terry Detrick and his staff with their passion and commitment to the Cooperative's goals are true and underappreciated Oklahoma treasures.

Because Oklahoma needs AFR Mutual and the Cooperative to continue to be vital companies poised to continue their missions well into the future, I believe it essential that the Mutual continue to evolve and change with strong, independent and knowledgeable Board members interested in the insurance business and continually willing to add to their knowledge of it. We all have a role to play in meeting this goal—I as a regulator and the Board as fiduciaries and stewards for the members and policyholders of these organizations.

A financially strong AFR Mutual and an equally capable and strong Board are in the best interests of the state of Oklahoma going forward. As was terribly demonstrated to all of us last spring, destructive weather is a given in our state, and a robust domestic property and casualty insurer strong enough to meet its obligations and with access to world reinsurance markets—coupled with the demonstrated ability to engineer a sound reinsurance program—provides a strong bulwark and safety net for your policyholders. Placing those policyholders first and managing claims properly and quickly for Oklahoma consumers sets an example for all insurers doing business in Oklahoma and continues to raise the bar for all. I share this mutual concern and mission with your Board, management and agency force.

I have been praying that AFR Mutual succeeds in all areas. I am impressed and proud that the investment of time and effort by the Oklahoma Insurance Department has paid off to the point that our Financial and Legal Divisions recommended to me that the hazardous condition designation can be removed. I want you to know that this investment was made due to the history of AFR Mutual and Cooperative and the fundamental commitment for change demonstrated by the Board of Directors and management.

I congratulate you on your regulatory achievements and thank you for being there for Oklahoma customers during tough times. You have my hopes and best wishes for continued improvement and future success.

Sincerely,

*John D. Doak
Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner*

2014 FARM BILL IS FINALLY HERE!

The Agricultural Act of 2014, H.R. 2642, passed the U.S. House of Representatives January 29 and the U.S. Senate February 4. President Obama signed it into law February 7. A summary of commodity, conservation, crop insurance and disaster assistance is provided below, courtesy of Dr. Jody Campiche, Assistant Professor and Extension Economist with the Oklahoma State University Department of Agricultural Economics. (All information is based on initial interpretation of the bill and is subject to change as more detailed information is released.)

Commodity Revenue & Price Support

The new farm bill ends direct payments, counter-cyclical payments and ACRE payments starting with the 2014 crop year. A new revenue protection program, Average Risk Coverage (ARC), and a new price protection program, Price Loss Coverage (PLC), is included (excluding upland cotton). The ARC program is similar to the ACRE program in the 2008 Farm Bill and the PLC program is similar to the counter-cyclical payment program in previous farm bills. For both ARC and PLC, producers have the option to choose farm level or county level coverage. Similar to the 2008 Farm Bill, producers will have the option to make a one-time, irrevocable decision to enroll in ARC or PLC on a commodity-by-commodity basis for each crop on the farm. However, producers who enroll in individual-level ARC must elect individual-level ARC for all crops on the farm.

Marketing Loans

Marketing assistance loans are continued under the same provisions as the 2008 Farm Bill, with some changes in how the cotton loan rate is determined. The minimum loan rate for cotton is set at \$0.45/lb and the maximum rate is \$0.52/lb.

Dairy

The bill ends the dairy product support program and the MILC program after June 30, 2014 (MILC is continued at

a 45% payment rate until June 30). New dairy provisions include the Dairy Operation Margin Program, the Dairy Market Stabilization Program and the Margin Protection Insurance Program.

Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Livestock Forage Program (LFP) are continued for 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, which means that eligible producers will receive LIP and LFP payments for losses that occurred in 2012 and 2013 (since the 2008 Farm Bill only authorized these programs through October 2011). The minimum risk management purchase requirement for disaster assistance that was included in the 2008 Farm Bill is omitted for these programs.

Payment Limitations

Payments per person for covered commodities are limited to \$125,000 (including Price Loss Coverage, Agriculture Risk Coverage, Marketing Loan Gains (MLG) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP)). In the 2008 Farm Bill, separate payment limits were established for CCP/ACRE and direct payments. A separate payment limit for peanuts is maintained. New regulations will be in place to further define a person as "actively engaged" and eligible for payments.

Adjusted Gross Income Limitation

The farm and non-income limits are replaced with one AGI limitation of \$900,000 for commodity and conservation programs.

Conservation

For the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), maximum enrollment acreage is reduced over the next 4 years and grasslands can now be enrolled. While the acreage cap is reduced, CRP is still intended to be the primary conservation program. The bill encourages USDA to update CRP rental rates to reflect local prevailing rental rates. The acreage cap for the Farmable Wetland Program is reduced to 750,000 acres. The bill permits certain activities due to drought or

other natural disasters to occur without a reduction in the CRP rental rate.

For the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), an enrollment cap of 10,000,000 acres is included with a rate of \$18/acre through 2022. Pasture land is added to the list of eligible land and expands other agricultural areas to land suitable for livestock production.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is continued with a few changes including a payment limit of \$450,000 for EQIP contracts entered through 2018.

A new Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is included to protect natural resources and the agriculture nature of the land. ACEP includes contracts under other discontinued programs, such as the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and the Farmland Protection and Farm Viability Program (FVP).

Conservation compliance is now required to be eligible for crop insurance premium assistance on highly erodible lands and wetlands.

Crop Insurance

New supplemental coverage insurance programs (SCO and STAX) are included to cover a portion of the deductible of the producer's individual insurance coverage. SCO is subsidized at 65%, so producers pay 35% of the premium. A similar program called the Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX) is available to cotton produc-

ers and is subsidized at 80%. These programs will not be available until the 2015 crop year.

A new margin insurance coverage program is included for the 2015 crop year. The CAT premium will be reduced. Producers will have the option to exclude certain yield history from their APH database. Producers can select a different coverage level for each production practice (irrigated and non-irrigated) starting with the 2015 crop year.

With the exception of CAT coverage, beginning farmers/ranchers will receive premium assistance that is 10 percentage points higher than premium assistance otherwise provided. In addition, a beginning farmer/rancher previously involved in a farming or ranching operation will be assigned a yield that is the higher of the APH of the previous producer of the crop or livestock on the acreage or the yield of the producer. Beginning farmers/ranchers will also receive a higher yield plug of 80 percent of the applicable transitional yield. A revenue insurance product will be available for peanut producers.

Producers may continue to purchase NAP for crops and grasses used for grazing (at a coverage level equivalent to CAT coverage).

For more information on the 2014 Farm Bill or any other state or national legislative issue, contact Steve Thompson at (405)218-5563 or sthompson@afmic.com



The AFR/OFU News & Views Insider e-newsletter keeps cooperative members current on legislative happenings, from AFR/OFU grassroots membership efforts to state and national news!

If you would like to receive the AFR/OFU News & Views Insider in your inbox, send your email address to AFR/OFU Communications Coordinator Laici Wedel at lwedel@afmic.com to be added to the list!

NATIONAL NEWS UPDATE

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lists Lesser Prairie-Chicken as Threatened Species

On March 27, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced the final listing of the lesser prairie-chicken as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), as well as a final rule that will limit regulatory impacts on landowners and businesses from the listing. Under federal law, a “threatened” listing means the species is likely to become in danger of extinction within the foreseeable future; it is a step below “endangered” and allows for more flexibility in how regulations are implemented.

In recognition of the efforts of states and landowners to conserve the lesser prairie chicken, the USFWS rule will allow the five-range states—Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico—to continue to manage conservation efforts for the species and avoid further regulation of activities such as oil and gas development and utility line maintenance that are covered under a range-wide conservation plan.

This conservation plan was developed by state wildlife agency experts in 2013 with input from a wide variety of stakeholders, including AFR/OFU. The special rule also establishes that conservation practices carried out through the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative and through ongoing normal agricultural practices on existing cultivated land are all in compliance with the ESA and not subject to further regulation.

Copies of the final rule may be found at the USFWS website at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest>.

Reauthorized Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs Available

LIVESTOCK FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM

The 2014 Farm Bill made the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) a permanent program and will provide retroactive authority to cover eligible losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. LFP will provide compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire. LFP payments for drought are equal to 60 percent of the monthly feed cost for up to five months. LFP payments for fire on federally-managed rangeland are equal to 50 percent of the monthly feed cost for the number of days the producer is prohibited from grazing the managed rangeland, not to exceed 180 calendar days. The grazing losses must have occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM

The 2014 Farm Bill also made the Livestock Indemnity Payments (LIP) a permanent program and will provide retroactive authority to cover eligible livestock losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. LIP will provide compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP payments are equal to 75 percent of the market value of the applicable livestock on the day before the date of death of the livestock as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Sign-up information is available at any local Farm Service Agency (FSA) service center. Please consult your local FSA office for details if you think you might be eligible for either of these valuable programs.

OKLAHOMA #2 IN WATERWAY POLLUTION REDUCTION

A recent comparison of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Grants Reporting and Tracking System database shows that Oklahoma ranks number two in the nation for reducing harmful nutrients in our streams and rivers. This is the fifth year in a row Oklahoma has ranked in the top ten among states in reported nonpoint source pollutant reductions.

Water quality numbers recently reported by states to the EPA show that in 2013 Oklahoma’s Nonpoint Source Program led the nation in phosphorus reduction for the third year in a row due to voluntary best management practices by landowners across the state. In addition, Oklahoma ranked second among the states in reported nitrogen load reduction to streams. This is the fifth year in a row Oklahoma has ranked in the top ten among states in reported reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus loads.

NRCS SOIL HEALTH CAMPAIGN GAINS MOMENTUM

Contributed by Tom Lucas, USDA-NRCS

STILLWATER—The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Health Campaign, “Unlock the Secrets of the Soil,” is gaining momentum in Oklahoma. Ray Archuleta, Conservation Agronomist at the NRCS East National Technology Center in Greensboro, N.C., recently made presentations at the Okla. Organic Conference and No-Till Conference. He has said by using soil health principles to increase soil function, every one percent increase in organic matter results in land being able to hold 17,000 to 25,000 more gallons of water per acre.



Gary O’Neill, State Conservationist for NRCS, who brought Archuleta to Oklahoma for the meetings, is also passionate about soil health. At a recent speech before the AFR/OFU Convention, O’Neill said, “Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish. As world population and food production demands rise, keeping our soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance. We believe improving the health of our Nation’s soil is one of the most important endeavors of our time.”

Oklahoma NRCS recently released a long-term Soil Health Strategic Plan. It calls for the appointment of a State Soil Health Technical Committee of producers and conservation partners, utilizing on-farm demonstrations and providing training to staff and partners. NRCS has identified soil health teams for each quadrant of the state to help identify training and technical needs of employees, partner employees and farmers.

O’Neill added, “Soil has always been the foundation of NRCS’s mission. It is my vision to have Oklahoma become a leader in the Southern Plains region on how to best protect this resource while increasing production for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers. To truly achieve long-term sustainability of all natural resources and ensure all of Oklahoma’s working agricultural lands are reaching maximum productivity, soil health management systems must become a reality. Oklahoma farmers and ranchers have a rich history of being good conservation stewards. This campaign will provide an opportunity to advance and integrate soil health systems into our everyday conservation strategies.”

Four key principles of the soil health management approach include using plant diversity to increase diversity in the soil, managing soils more by disturbing them less, growing a living root throughout the year and keeping soil covered as much as possible.

Producers interested in participating in NRCS programs may contact their local field office or visit <http://www.ok.nrcs.usda.gov> for program and office contract information.

STATE CAPITOL UPDATE

Contributed by Tommy Thomas, AFR/OFU Lobbyist

We are at the point in the 2014 legislative session when House bills that have survived the committee process and floor consideration are beginning the same process in the Senate. Likewise, Senate bills are beginning the same process in the House. This session began with more than 2,200 bills and resolutions. Listed are a few items we are actively involved in or we are watching closely for amendments that may be a concern for us.



Agriculture-related items:

H.B. 2566 eliminates the Oklahoma Wheat Commission and the Oklahoma Peanut Commission as state agencies and privatizes both entities.

H.B. 2807 prohibits the state or any political subdivision from encroaching on an individual's private property rights.

H.B. 2900 incentivizes land owners with an eastern red cedar infestation to eradicate the trees. The bill is a work in progress; some tax implications have yet to be resolved.

H.B. 3348 requires anemometer towers located outside the boundaries of municipalities to be marked, painted or flagged so that aerial applicators can clearly see them.

S.B. 1265 exempts feed mill trucks from load and weight requirements.

S.B. 1369 adds vehicles transporting various other agricultural commodities and products from certain weight limitations.

S.B. 1430 creates the Drought Proof Communities Act, which ensures reliability for state water users and assists small communities in implementing conservation strategies.

S.B. 1440 establishes a moratorium on new development, construction, or installation of any wind energy facility east of I-35 until Jan. 1, 2017.

Insurance-related items:

S.B. 0991 deals with "stacking of uninsured motorists." We believe AFR policies are written in a way that protects us from that issue, but we are watching this bill closely.

S.B. 1476 intends to reduce the motor vehicle reports cost to insurance companies.

S.B. 1686 adds additional court costs in lawsuits by allowing judges to appoint discovery masters. A court may, at its discretion, appoint a discovery master to perform duties and address pre-trial and post-trial discovery matters.

S.B. 1703 amends the Oklahoma Ridesharing Act. The bill defines a ridesharing network as a company that enables passengers to request a vehicle or service through a digital platform.

S.B. 2098 allows wrecker operators to keep wrecked vehicles in storage longer because of personal property that may be in the vehicle. The bill removes language that would require a wrecker operator to release the vehicle to the insurance company who has accepted liability for the vehicle.

This is a sampling of the bills AFR/OFU is monitoring. If you have questions about an issue before the Okla. Legislature, please contact Tommy Thomas at (580) 889-0937.

SENATE APPROVES RURAL TOURISM PROTECTION ACT

The Oklahoma Senate recently voted 40-0 in favor of S.B. 1959. The measure, authored by Sen. Sean Burrage, D-Claremore, and co-authored by Jerry Ellis, D-Valliant, would require the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department to notify local governments before closing any state park, parkland or public recreation facility within the state agency's jurisdiction.

"In 2013, the Oklahoma Tourism Commission voted to take away the status of Hugo State Park. That would have been devastating to our local economy," Ellis said. "Hugo State Park survived the axe, but the year before, seven other state parks were not so lucky, and all of them were located in rural Oklahoma. People need to remember 'as goes rural Oklahoma, so goes Oklahoma.' Simply shutting down these parks with no warning and without giving our rural areas adequate opportunity to make their case will ultimately hurt the whole state."

The legislation would require the Tourism Commission to provide 60 days' notice to the governing authority of each municipality and county that was home to a state park or similar facility that was slated for closure or to have operating hours slashed by 50 percent or more. The notice must be made in writing and sent to the chairperson of the county commissioners and the mayor of the municipality.

"The Department of Tourism is about promoting and helping support destinations and activities that can boost our economy, but I am here to tell you that rural Oklahoma is just as important to that mission as our metropolitan areas," Ellis said. "The dollars spent by tourists in our rural communities are vital to their ability to grow, prosper and attract and keep jobs and workers."

S.B. 1959 now moves to the Oklahoma House of Representatives for further consideration.

RIGHT TO FARM

"To protect agriculture as a vital sector of Oklahoma's economy, which provides food, energy, health benefits and security and is the foundation and stabilizing force of Oklahoma's economy, the rights of farmers and ranchers to engage in modern farming and ranching practices shall be forever guaranteed in this state. The Legislature shall pass no law which abridges the right of farmers and ranchers to employ agricultural technology and modern livestock production and ranching practices."

The above language is taken from House Joint Resolution 1006, authored by State Rep. Scott Biggs (R-Chickasha), an AFR/OFU member. This legislation would place a state question on the November 2014 ballot to amend the constitution. Biggs, a member of the House Agriculture and Wildlife Committee, who grew up on a farm in Indiana and studied agriculture economics at Oklahoma State University, said the amendment is necessary to protect the industry from outside special interest and activist groups.

"Whether it is eco-terrorist groups that complain about the way we use our land or the animal-rights groups that claim we mistreat our livestock, our rural way of life is under attack," said Biggs. "Farmers and ranchers are environmentalists by necessity. We have sweat and blood invested in our land, and we care for it deeply. By imbedding this natural right into our state constitution, we can protect our land and our way of life for generations to come."

In November 2013, voters in North Dakota overwhelmingly approved a similar measure that amended that state's constitution.

ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS AGAINST NAT'L ANIMAL GROUPS



OKLAHOMA CITY—Attorney General Scott Pruitt on March 12 issued a warning to Oklahomans regarding solicitations and fundraising advertisements by national animal welfare organizations.

Pruitt is concerned such groups are giving Oklahomans the impression their donations are assisting state animal shelters, when in fact Oklahomans' donations may go toward unrelated efforts like lobbying in other states or at the federal level. The Attorney General's Office has consulted with central Oklahoma animal shelters most impacted by the May 2013 storms.

"Oklahomans are caring people and gave generously to assist our friends and neighbors devastated by the deadly May 2013 tornadoes," Pruitt said. "In the wake of the storm, there are concerns some national animal welfare organizations may

have misled Oklahomans by giving the impression their donations would help displaced animals and animal shelters in Oklahoma.

"Our review has found the Oklahoma shelters have not received assistance from national groups. Our concern is that Oklahomans' donations may instead have gone toward lobbying activities in other states or at the national level.

"We all want the best for displaced animals and appreciate the work animal welfare organizations do to provide care for dogs, cats and other animals. But it's important to ensure Oklahomans are not being deceived, and that the donations they made to help Oklahoma-based animal shelters are doing just that."

To ensure donations go to help local animal welfare organizations, Pruitt encouraged Oklahomans to give directly to state-based causes and organizations.

"The best way to ensure your donation is assisting the charity or organization you intended is to give directly to that organization," Pruitt said. "If anyone suspects they have been the victim of false or misleading fundraising efforts by national animal welfare groups, they should contact the Attorney General's Office. As the state's top consumer advocate, I will continue to review these concerns to ensure no one is taking advantage of the generosity of Oklahomans."

The Attorney General's Public Protection Unit provides the following tips to avoid charity fraud:

- Do not give credit card numbers over the telephone or via e-mail;
- Write checks payable only to the charity;
- Never be pressured into giving;
- Be leery of "free gifts" or "prizes" in return for donations;
- Ask for information in writing;
- Be leery of charities with names similar to well-known organizations;
- Beware of appeals that are long on emotion, but short on facts;
- Never be afraid to ask questions or request information;
- Find out if a charity is registered in Oklahoma by contacting the Secretary of State at (405) 521-4211 or visit www.sos.ok.gov.

To report suspected fraud, contact the AG's Public Protection Unit at (405)521-2029, (918)581-2885 or [public.protection\(at\)oaag.ok.gov](mailto:public.protection(at)oaag.ok.gov).

"FARMLAND" DOCUMENTARY HITS OKLAHOMA THEATERS



LOS ANGELES—Academy Award-winning filmmaker James Moll's new documentary feature "Farmland" has been confirmed for a theatrical run. The film will be released to more than 60 major markets nationwide beginning May 1. In Oklahoma, there will be three public showings on the night of premier in the locations listed below.

Farmland offers viewers an intimate and first-hand glimpse into the lives of six young farmers and ranchers across the U.S., chronicling their high-risk/high-reward jobs and their passion for a way of life that has been passed down from generation to generation, yet continues to evolve.

"In Farmland, audiences will hear thoughts and opinions about agriculture, but not from me, and not from a narrator," Moll says about his film. "They're from the mouths of the farmers and ranchers themselves."

Farmland was produced by Allentown Productions, with generous support from the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA). USFRA consists of nearly 80 farmer- and rancher-led organizations and their agricultural partners representing virtually all aspects of agriculture. It works to engage in dialogues with consumers who have questions about how today's food is grown and raised. USFRA is committed to supporting farmers and ranchers efforts to increase consumer confidence and trust in today's agriculture.

The film provides a glimpse into agriculture, as told by producers themselves. Please support the endeavor by attending one of the following showings on May 1, 2014:

Tulsa - Regal Promenade Palace Stadium 12, 7 p.m.

El Reno - B&B Reno Cinemas, 7 p.m.

Claremore - B&B Claremore Cinema 8, 7 p.m.

Visit www.FarmlandFilm.com to locate a theatre near you where Farmland will be screening, as well as additional information about the film and to watch the trailer.

AFR/OFU INSTRUMENTAL IN OKLAHOMA LIVESTOCK RELIEF COALITION

In response to ongoing drought and hay shortages, AFR/OFU, with several other state partners, formed the Oklahoma Livestock Relief Coalition to provide an opportunity for concerned citizens to donate funds to be used for immediate needs of law enforcement in Oklahoma when dealing with livestock neglect, abuse and abandonment cases. Funds will be used to provide feed and reasonable emergency care for seized animals during the thirty-day initial phase of these cases.

The Oklahoma Livestock Relief Coalition will only make payments to Oklahoma law enforcement entities. These funds may be used for feed, hay and reasonable emergency care (including euthanasia) to prevent animal suffering as determined by onsite veterinarians. Monetary donations may be made through the Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Foundation, a 501(c)3, at www.okvma.org or sent to OVME, PO Box 14521, Oklahoma City, OK 73113.

POLICY POSITION HIGHLIGHTS

During the business session of the 109th AFR/OFU Convention, delegates adopted a new policy document that will serve as a guide for lobbying efforts on state and federal issues through February 2015 when a new policy document will be adopted. Highlights from the newly-adopted policy book are listed here. Current significant policy issues are indicated with bold print. *For the complete 2014 AFR/OFU adopted policy book, visit the AFR/OFU website at <http://www.americanfarmersandranchers.com/membership-politics>.*

We support the removal of the drop-down liability clause on AFR auto policies.

We support provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program be included in the next farm bill effective retroactive to the Oct. 1, 2013 extension.

To protect U.S. food safety standards and the availability of domestically-produced agricultural products, we oppose lowering any U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) standard to accommodate any foreign country's food and fiber import products.

We support the proposal to move the school nutrition program from the Oklahoma State Dept. of Education (SDE) to the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF).

We support further investigation by the Oklahoma Attorney General into the legalities of series bonds for schools.

We strongly support leaving all agricultural education and FFA programs in comprehensive high schools only, not in CareerTech centers.

We strongly support the implementation of school security protection initiatives with state funding, including, but not limited to, safe rooms.

We support privatizing the Oklahoma Wheat Commission and the Oklahoma Peanut Commission.

We commend the state and federal agricultural agencies for their continuing efforts to support Oklahoma agriculture.

We support all public education-designated revenue from ad valorem taxation remain in the public school system and not be used for private school funding.

We support public education.

We support the continued use of beef in school lunch programs.

We oppose any new legislative or State Department of Education mandates without full funding for such mandates.

We recognize the need for a closer active relationship between AFR and early childhood agricultural education in Oklahoma. We recommend the establishment of a part-time AFR position with the sole purpose of assisting early childhood teachers with agricultural curriculum development and programs that will instill the importance of the relationship between agriculture and food.

We oppose further closure and/or consolidation of existing Oklahoma Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices, support adequate staffing commensurate with work load levels evaluated annually, and support updated technology for expediting delivery of programs.

We encourage Oklahoma Bankers Association members to get involved with farm organizations on issues related to the farm bill.

We support increasing the funding commensurate with the increased number of inspectors needed to adequately inspect intrastate, interstate and international food.

We support advocacy initiatives and communication efforts to promote agriculture for to the non-agriculture audience and to educate uninformed consumers.

We support the continued availability of the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for dual-purpose crop and grazing winter crops.

We support Congressional action mandating the implementation of conservation practices of municipal water consumption prior to draw-down from U.S. Army Corps of Engineer reservoirs.

We call for an accounting to the people of Oklahoma by the Oklahoma Tax Commission and/or State Auditor of all tax revenue generated by liquor by the drink, pari-mutual betting, Indian compacts and lottery tickets.

We support the removal of the straight party voting option on election ballots in the state of Oklahoma.

We favor a requirement that towers 50-200 feet tall be visibly identified.

We support reinstatement of federal disaster programs for livestock and crop production.

We oppose any proposal now or in the future of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water Act move to expand jurisdiction of a federal takeover of all waters in the U.S.

We support a stabilized supply of milk and milk products, at levels which will adequately meet the needs of consumers. We further support improving the level of income for dairy farmers to better meet their increased cost of production, in order to maintain a productive capacity to meet anticipated future needs. Therefore, we support the Dairy Security Act in its entirety.

Due to expanding canola production in Oklahoma, we support the creation of actuarial rates that are put in place without prior written agreement requirements.

We support hunter safety education courses take place in a classroom setting with instruction by a qualified instructor.

We urge immediate action to adequately fund a program to eradicate noxious plants including, but not limited to, all species of mesquite and cedars from Oklahoma. Such a program should include spraying of right-of-ways by federal, state and county agencies where needed.

We believe licenses should not be required for activities not related to hunting/fishing on Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) land.

We recommend that an unlimited number of deer, either sex, be taken in overpopulated areas. Also, we support control of other wildlife species including geese, ducks, cattle egrets, feral hogs, and elk on depredation of farmers' crops. We support the enforcement of legislation prohibiting the deliberate release of swine to become feral hogs and agricultural producers' right to protect crops, livestock and fences from elk in all Oklahoma counties.

We encourage implementation of an approved burn plan when doing prescribed burns and if followed precisely, landowners should be provided some degree of liability protection. We encourage educational programs to inform landowners of the proper way to develop and implement a prescribed burn plan.

We support funding of a prescribed burn indemnity fund to be administered at the ODAFF.

We support a joint effort between OSU and ODAFF in requesting additional state and federal funds for the control and eradication of ticks, fire ants, killer bees and parasitic mites in domestic bees in Oklahoma.

We call for a minimum of one agricultural educator and one family and consumer science educator in each county for continuing adult education for farmers, ranchers and homemakers. We also encourage a strong 4-H club program in each county.

For more information on these policy positions or other legislative issues, contact Steve Thompson at (405)218-5563.

OKLAHOMA DELEGATES INFLUENCE NFU POLICY

Contributed by Paul Jackson, AFR/OFU State Secretary



AFR/OFU was well represented at the 112th National Farmers Union Convention in Santa Fe, N.M., March 8-11. The four-day event drew nearly 600 family farmers, ranchers and fishermen from across the country and featured a number of high-profile speakers, including U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

Policy consideration always takes priority at the convention and Oklahoma delegates were active debating, amending and voting. AFR/OFU members spent time defending and moderating or supporting those of like

mind throughout consideration. Brett Morris, Ninnekah, filled in for Harvey Schroeder, Frederick, who was ill, as the state designee to the NFU Policy Committee.

- Oklahoma initiated and was successful in passing amended language relating to genetically modified organisms (GMOs): “The use of genetically modified organisms

has raised ethical, environmental, food safety, legal, market and structural issues that impact everyone in the food chain. At the same time, many of our producers are incorporating GMO varieties in their farming operations. The rights of both GMO and non-GMO producers should be respected as appropriate regulatory agencies continue to research and evaluate these concerns, including but not limited to consumer and producer concerns.”

- AFR/OFU was successful in defeating language that would have mandated a federal law to harmonize state laws relating to production of eggs and poultry methods. The issue was defeated because it is considered a states’ rights issue.

- The most intense moment in the convention came with the consideration of a special order on the beef check-off. Both Detrick and Morris, members of the check-off board (Cattlemen’s Beef Board (CBB)), and Paul Jackson spoke in opposition. The issue deals with the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) contractor relationship with the CBB. AFR/OFU was not successful and the special order passed.

- Core elements of the Oklahoma policy were used in defining a family farm in policy and a special order.

- Special orders were adopted on the farm bill implementation, family farming, immigration reform, trade policy, animal disease protection and research and federal budget sequestration.

Other involvement included Jackson chairing the NFU Rules, Credentials and Elections Committee. The Committee presided over the election of the national vice president, which required a second ballot before candidate Donna Teske, Kansas, was elected.

During a state delegation dinner, Radio Oklahoma Network farm broadcaster Ron Hays and AFR/OFU member and 2013 state convention speaker Bart Fischer, Chief Economist, House Agriculture Committee joined the group.

Oklahoma’s contribution of a state food products basket and historical farmers union books contributed almost \$500 to the NFU Youth Fund.



Top: Joe Hise addresses national delegates during policy discussion of the 2014 NFU Convention.

Bottom: Brett Morris (middle) listens to policy discussion with members of the 2014 NFU National Policy Committee.

NFU CELEBRATES INTERNAT’L YEAR OF FAMILY FARMING

SANTA FE, N.M.—National Farmers Union (NFU) members kicked off the organization’s annual policy debate with a special order of business celebrating 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming, as recognized by the United Nations.

“The International Year of Family Farming recognizes the important contributions that family farming can make to improving food security and eradicating poverty around the world. Family farming is the predominant form of agriculture in both developing and developed countries,” the special order states.

Globally, 870 million people are suffering from chronic undernourishment and a disproportionate number of them are farmers. Forty-five percent of the global population makes its living directly from farming, and the majority of the world’s farmers are women that produce up to 80 percent of the world’s food. In the United States, family farms still constitute 96 percent of all farms. The agriculture sector contributes more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy, employs approximately 14 percent of the total workforce and accounts for nearly 5 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product.

The special order recognizes “the importance of raising the profile of family farming by focusing the world’s attention on its significant role in alleviating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development in rural areas.”

“NFU is focused firmly on family farming and ranching’s promising future, while remaining anchored in the organization’s rich 112-year heritage,” NFU President Roger Johnson told NFU convention attendees.

For more information about the NFU convention, visit www.nfu.org/convention.



Oklahoma attendees to the convention were comprised of board members and officers, elected delegates from the state convention, policy committee members and spouses. Attendees were Pres. Terry Detrick, Ames; Vice Pres. John Porter, Edmond; Sec. Paul Jackson and wife Kim, Ringling; CEO Brian Baxter and wife Amy; Dir. Joe Ed Kinder and wife JoAnn, Frederick; Dir. Roy Perryman and wife Judy, Stigler; Dir. Bob Holley and wife Norma, Antlers; Dir. Terry Peach, Mutual; Melody and Charlie Cummings, Elk City; Brett and Jackie Morris, Ninnekah; Jim Jobndrow, Ponca City; Doug and Michelle Scherler, Walters; Joe and Trish Hise, Cleo Springs; Roy and Martha Bryant, Tahlequah; Debi and Robert Thompson, Carney; James and Darlene Kuhn, Glencoe; Wayne Ludwig, Okarche; J. Carl Richeson, Eldorado; Ken Rowlett, Sand Springs; Bill and Caroline McCarley, Marlow; and Jeremy and Joey Scherler, Walters. Staff and youth included Policy & Membership Coordinator Steve Thompson, Yukon; Youth & Education Coordinator Blaire Boyer, Stillwater; and 2014 AFR/OFU Star Youth Trent Boles, Asher; Chance Imhoff, Prague; Lindsey Underwood, Tecumseh; and Whitney Wilkinson, Cement.

MORRIS CELEBRITY FARMER FOR DAIRYMAX EVENT



Brett Morris (right) with fellow Oklahoma dairy farmer Tom Woods, Gage, and former Dallas Cowboy Larry Brown.

When the Dallas Cowboys, an Oklahoma City metro school, Oklahoma Action for Healthy Kids and Dairy MAX get together they create an exciting and effective school breakfast event. Oklahoma dairy producer and AFR/OFU member Brett Morris, Ninnekah, helped lead the early-morning cheers for milk and breakfast as a “celebrity dairy farmer” at the DairyMAX “It Starts with School Breakfast” event at Oklahoma City’s Oakridge Elementary School March 27.

This event and others like it across the country are making a big push for kids eating school breakfast just like the kids at Oakridge Elementary. School breakfast benefits kids by providing nutrients they need to get them prepared to learn. Statistics say only about one third of kids in the U.S. eat breakfast at school. Some kids eat at home, but many (up to 60% depending on the age group) eat nothing at all in the morning. The event also empowered students and families to lead change in their own schools through Fuel Up to Play 60.

Joining Morris in inspiring the students at Oakridge was former Dallas Cowboy Cornerback Larry Brown, who continues to be a part of the Cowboy organization through their game day broadcast team. Brown said he is a big believer in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program that has been embraced by the NFL and the nation’s dairy farmers.

AFR/OFU membership dues increase!

AFR/OFU membership dues will increase from \$25 to \$35 dollars/year effective May 1, 2014, per a bylaw change at the 2013 AFR/OFU State Convention.

LOCAL 515 SUPPORTS POTEAU FIRE DEPARTMENT



Alexander Insurance Agency and AFR/OFU Local 515 recently showed support for the local Poteau Fire Department at an appreciation cookout for the firefighters.

AFR/OFU HOSTS MINERAL RIGHTS TOWN HALL



AFR/OFU hosted a mineral rights town hall meeting in Marietta March 27 in an effort to educate Love and Marshall County residents in the basics of mineral leasing. Spurred by activity in that area, the meeting was co-sponsored by the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Association of Royalty Owners (NARO) and Love County AFR/OFU.

“This meeting will provide a chance for everyone to obtain the basics of mineral leasing and also ask questions,” said Mason Mungle, President of Farmers Royalty Company in Oklahoma City and current Oklahoma NARO chapter President.

In addition to Mungle, speakers included Oklahoma NARO Board Members Dub Peace, a geologist who spoke about the geology of the area, and David Sikes, a mineral manager from Chickasha who discussed leases. Sikes is also Oklahoma NARO Past President and NARO Past National President. AFR/OFU State Secretary Paul Jackson also spoke on the opportunities associated with AFR/OFU membership.

Welcome to beautiful... Costa Rica!

November
16 - 23
2014

Discover Costa Rica with AFR/OFU!

Costa Ricans have a lot to smile about—palm-lined beaches, lush rainforests, lava-shooting volcanoes, an abundance of wildlife, fine coffee and a peaceful society. Join us to discover the natural wonders of Costa Rica and the pure life!

DAY 1 - ARRIVE in SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

Bienvenido a San Jose! Arrive at San Jose Internat'l Airport, meet our local guide for the week and settle in to luxurious Marriott San Jose for a two-night stay. Voted one of the best, this beautiful colonial hacienda is set on a 30-acre coffee plantation.

DAY 2 - DOKA ESTATE COFFEE - SIBU CHOCOLATE

Buenos Dias! Thriving for more than 70 years and three generations, Doka Estate is a working coffee plantation that will take you from "seed to cup." While there, enjoy butterfly gardens, bonsai trees and orchid gardens. Later, get to know a bean of a different kind at Sibú Chocolate, home to Costa Rica's best artisan chocolate makers. At Sibú, learn about the country's chocolate history and experience some of its most delicious specialties.

DAY 3 - POAS VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK - LA PAZ WATERFALL - ARENAL

Pura Vida! Spend a day discovering Costa Rica's natural beauty. See a landscape of fertile farms and forests on the way to Poas Volcano National Park, home to Poas' crater, the second largest in the world. Then experience waterfalls, hummingbirds, butterflies, monkeys, sloths, frogs, jaguars, snakes and much more at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, the country's most popular nature park and wildlife refuge. Finally, arrive at Arenal Springs Resort & Spa for a two-night stay filled with fabulous views of the Arenal Volcano and relaxation in the resort's private mineral hot springs.

DAY 4 - RANCHO MARGOT - GOLDEN FRUIT PINEAPPLE FARM

Hospitalidad! Explore Rancho Margot, a self-sufficient 400-acre organic farm featured on CNN's "The Next List." A fascinating slice of ecological heaven overlooking Lake Arenal, Rancho Margot grows its own food, crafts its own furniture, makes its own soap and derives its own electricity from on-site hydro-power generators. Next, discover the privately-owned Golden Fruit Pineapple Farm and learn how Costa Rica grows the "hospitality fruit."

DAY 5 - GUANACASTE - HACIENDA LA PACIFICA - FISH FARM

Costa Dorada! Spend the day exploring the Guanacaste region, often referred to as the "Gold Coast." Following lunch at Hacienda La Pacifica, experience the agro-industrial side of Guanacaste, including the only organic rice plantation in Central America, a tilapia fish farm and a lesson in Costa Rican aquaculture. Later, arrive at the lovely beach-front J.W. Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa for a three-night stay.

DAY 6 - HACIENDA EL VIEJO - PALO VERDE NATIONAL PARK

Hola! A working sugar cane hacienda, Hacienda El Viejo is an ox-operated sugar mill with its own private national refuge. After discovering El Viejo, be transported back in time for lunch at the Sabanero House. Then take a boat ride to explore Palo Verde National Park, one of Costa Rica's best bird-watching parks.

DAY 7 - DAY AT LEISURE - FAREWELL DINNER

Hola! Enjoy free time for adventure or relaxation. Canopy tours, ATV rides, catamaran sailing and horseback riding are all waiting for adventure-seekers. Relaxation-lovers can take the shuttle into Tamarindo for souvenir shopping, get a spa treatment, walk on the beach or just lay by the pool (the largest in Central America). In the evening, join new-found friends for a farewell dinner!

DAY 8 - LIBERIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DEPART FOR HOME

Adios! Say goodbye to Costa Rica as we leave for home. Muchas Gracias!



Go! Gather! Grow!

AFR / OFU Convention!

109th AFR/OFU Convention - An Event to Remember!

American Farmers & Ranchers/Oklahoma Farmers Union hosted its 109th annual state convention at the Embassy Suites & Conference Center – Norman Feb. 21-22. The event featured educational speakers and entertainment, the annual business meeting of Oklahoma Farmers Union and AFR Mutual Insurance Company, discussion and adoption of AFR/OFU legislative policy and officer elections.

It has been said this year's convention was the best in decades with its choice in education and entertainment. Convention attendees learned about controversial legislative issues, environmental topics, consumer challenges for agriculture and much more. The convention also entertained with former Blazers coach Doug Sauter at the PAC auction and comedian and inspirationalist Lyndy Phillips at the convention banquet.

Thank you to everyone who celebrated another great year with us! We look forward to the future with you as we GO, GATHER, GROW!

Thrasher Begins Tenure as AFR/OFU Chaplain

This is the first year Randel Thrasher led members as state chaplain. As chaplain, Thrasher will serve at state events throughout the year and plays a pivotal role at convention. He opened each general session and led a memorial service for members who passed away in the last calendar year. He also facilitated other smaller gatherings and will assist in planning new activities for next year's event.

Thrasher is a second-generation AFR agent and owns Thrasher Insurance Agency in Laverne. He pastors Sure Foundation Fellowship, ministers around the world and pursues several agricultural and business endeavors.



AFR/OFU PAC Auction



PAC auction was a lively event! Former Blazers

Hockey Coach Doug Sauter entertained the crowd. AFR/OFU field reps helped with items, while AFR Agents Willie Ratterman and Dustin Tackett auctioned them off to raise funds for AFR/OFU causes at the capitol. Afterward, attendees danced to the Sammy Mitchell Band.

Women's Luncheon

Entrepreneur and American National CattleWomen Past President Tammi Didlot addressed Women's Luncheon attendees.





AFR/OFU Board of Directors Recognized by OID

At the 109th AFR/OFU Convention Agent Luncheon, the Oklahoma Insurance Department (OID) and Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner John Doak recognized members of the AFR/OFU Board of Directors for their leadership as he announced AFR's hazardous listing removal (*see page 3*).

TOP LIFE AGENTS RECOGNIZED



AFR Life Company recognized the top-producing life agents at the 2014 Agent Recognition Luncheon Feb. 21. The 2013 top agents were Leda Canada (center) of the Gilbert Agency in Tecumseh, first place; Debi Thompson (left) of the Thompson Agency in Chandler, second place; and Keith Miller (right) of the Clements Agency in Lindsay, third place.

WHEN SEVERE WEATHER STRIKES

Courtesy of the Oklahoma Insurance Department

1. Protect yourself and your home with some form of homeowner or renters insurance. This insurance policy is your protection against a devastating loss. It is important to weigh all options and choose the coverage best suited to your needs. Remember to review your insurance coverage each year with your agent to ensure you have adequate coverage.
 2. Prepare a detailed inventory of your household furnishings with a photograph of each room. Include any valuables and equipment you own. The Oklahoma Insurance Department has a publication ("Building a Home Inventory") available at <http://oid.ok.gov> that can assist you in creating a home inventory.

When creating your home inventory, remember:

 - List every item of value in your house.
 - Include serial numbers of all items that have them.
 - Continue to update your inventory as you acquire new items.
 - Keep all receipts with a description of the item.
 - Keep records of antiques, jewelry, major appliances & collector's items.

When taking pictures for your home inventory, remember:

 - Use a high-quality color camera and a video camera when possible.
 - Take both wide-angle and close-up shots.
 - Include a family member in pictures to verify ownership.
 - Make sure videotapes and pictures are dated.
 - Take pictures with closet doors and drawers open to show content.
 - When taking pictures of a reflective surface, hold your camera at a 45° angle.
 3. Include your insurance agent's contact information in any list of important or emergency phone numbers. While they may not be your first call, it will be a number you need and may not be able to find after a disaster strikes.
 4. If your home or property is damaged during severe weather, survey the damage and take pictures if possible. Make a list of all personal property destroyed or damaged. Note approximate date, price and place of purchase and attach any sales receipts you may have. If temporary repair is required, keep receipts for all related materials and labor.
 5. Contact your agent and/or insurance company. Keep a record of the time, date and name of the person you talk to every time you call. When an adjuster arrives to assess damage, make sure he/she has identification. Remember adjusters are paid by insurance companies; you should not be asked for payment.
 6. In the event your dwelling is uninhabitable, additional living expenses may be provided by your policy. Your insurance agent or company will tell you if your policy covers these additional expenses. Some policies provide for lodging, food, clothing and toiletries until repairs are made.
- The Oklahoma Insurance Department (OID) is responsible for enforcing the insurance-related laws of the state. OID protects consumers by providing accurate, timely and informative insurance information, promotes a competitive marketplace and ensures solvency of the entities it regulates, including insurance producers and adjusters, funeral directors, bail bondsmen and real estate appraisers.

TOP AFR AGENTS FOR 2013 ANNOUNCED

AFR Insurance announced the top 2013 AFR agents at the 2014 Agent Recognition Luncheon Feb. 21.

The 2013 AFR Super-Stars are:

Jason Nutt, Jason Nutt Ins., Paden
 John Porter, Porter Ins., Edmond
 Dustin Tackett, Tackett Ins., Ft. Cobb
 Crystal Shebester, Taylor-Shbster, Chksha
 Eddie Whitworth, McMns-Wtwrth, Frdrk
 Joni Oller, Oller Ins., Elmore City
 Nancy Workman, Workman Ins., Valliant
 Kermit Maynard, Mynrd Ins., Wapanucka
 James Carson, Peoples Comm., Stilwell
 Sydnee Jordan, 5-Star Ins., Ada
 Lanna Harris, Harris Ins., Duncan
 Toni Pierce, Toni Pierce Ins., Boswell
 Lisa Blubaugh, Blubaugh Ins., Tonkawa
 Brad Pollard, Brad Pollard Ins., Crescent
 Shannon Ball, Ball Ins., Vici
 Becky Graham, Graham Ins., Marlow
 John Patton, John Patton Ins., Cherokee

Dawn Gay Brooks, Brooks Ins., Alva
 Suzanne Gilbert, Gilbert Ins., Tecumseh
 Johnie Brown, Brown Ins., Sapulpa
 Steve Stinnett, Teel Ins., Grove
 Rowdy McBee, Thurman-Wilson, Hooker
 Roy Bryant, Celeste Looney, Tahlequah
 Terry Detrick, Terry Detrick Ins., Lahoma
 Keith Swan, Swan Ins., Bartlesville
 Darcy Jech, Delvin Jech Ins., Kingfisher
 Burke Covey, Covey Ins., Arapaho
 Charles Porter, Porter Ins., Stillwater
 Keri Dennis, Cross Timbers Ins., Okemah
 Keith Miller, Clements Ins., Lindsay
 Jeremy Scherler, Scherler Ins., Walters
 Ruth Richardson, Rchrdsn Ins., Eldorado
 LaMoynne Hardin, Hardin Ins., Guthrie
 Robert Taylor, Robert Taylor, Holdenville
 Royce Meek, Underwood Ins., Atoka
 Janet Lively, Lively Ins., Woodward
 EJ Tolbert, Tolbert Ins., Tishomingo
 Scarlett Wheeler, Firey Ins., Bristow

The 2013 AFR All-Stars are:

John Millikan, Secondine Ins. Vinita
 Paul Fields, Minks Ins., Panama
 Rodney Wright, Wrights Ins., Talihina
 Pat Lane, Lane Ins., Konawa
 Mary Andrews, Mary Andrews Ins., Heavener
 Vickie Allbritten, Allbritten Ins., Sulphur
 John Ogden, Ogden Ins. Muskogee
 Franklin Nault, Franklin Nault, Okeene
 Ryan Plemmons, Plmmns Ins., Broken Bow
 Ronnie Burns, Colclazier & Burns, Durant
 Melissa Robinson, Clayton Ins., Clayton
 Linda Foreman, Foreman Ins., Shattuck
 Shelli Hembree, Haskell Ins., Haskell
 Kerri Newman, Your Hometown, Wewoka
 Oma Gay Nichols, Nichols Ins., Ringwood
 Neil Bolenbaugh, Bolenbaugh Ins., Enid
 David Alexander, Alexander Ins., Poteau
 Marlo Barnes, Campbell's Ins., Pryor
 Jo Nell York, Jo Nell York Ins., Durham
 Donna Ramsey, Ramsey Ins., Checotah
 Randel Thrasher, Thrasher Ins., Laverne

Jarrod Stewart, AIM Ins., Keys
 Norma Reed, Reed Ins., Wilburton
 Aaron Mitchell, Mitchell Ins., Ralston
 Veva Daugherty, Daugherty Ins., Watonga
 Steve Sockey, Sockey Ins., Stigler
 Linda Cowan, Coweta Ins., Coweta
 Pat Oberste, Oberste Ins., Sallisaw
 Terry Kirkland, Terry L. Krklnd, Waurika
 Linda Harper, Harper Ins., Marietta
 Pete Vinzetta, Vinzetta Ins., Haileyville
 Rob Swanda, Swanda Ins., Apache
 Paul Maly, Paul Maly Ins., Garber
 Jeff Mize, All County Ins., Earlsboro
 Ernie Taylor, R E McGuire Ins., Hugo
 Rebecca Ricks, Ricks & James, McAlester
 Justin Cowan, Cowan Ins., Locust Grove
 Sharron Barnes, Pryor Ins., Mannsville
 Nick Hofschulte, Cook Ins., Miami
 Robert Acre, Acre Ins., Canton
 Janet Robinson, Robinson Ins., Hollis
 Ida Kilburn, Kilburn Ins., West Siloam

ARE YOU READY TO RIDE?

Contributed by AFR Insurance Property Claims Supervisor Brad Bryant

Spring has finally arrived! Here's hoping that Spring 2014 will provide plenty of rainfall, without damaging wind and hail storms.

When spring weather arrives, we expect to see many more motorcyclists on the road. Are you one of them? If so, now is a good time to give your bike a "once-over" to ensure it is mechanically sound for the riding season.

Specific items that should be checked include:

- **Lights, brakes and turn signals;**
- **Oil and fuel levels;**
- **Tire treads and air pressure;**
- **Chain**
- **Helmet and all other riding gear.**

Now is also the time to review your auto insurance to ensure your motorcycle is covered. It is critical to understand your motorcycle is not covered under your insurance policy for cars or trucks. To insure your motorcycle, you will typically need a separate motorcycle policy. These policies



are similar to auto policies—you will have state required liability insurance with possible optional coverage such as comprehensive and collision and uninsured motorists.

Many motorcycle owners consider themselves "weekend riders" and question the need for motorcycle insurance. Remember, whether you ride occasionally or daily, state law requires at least liability insurance.

Without this coverage, you would be in violation of state law and would also be personally responsible for any bodily injury or property damage claim that might arise out of an accident for which you are at fault.

Additionally, failure to carry liability insurance could cost you even when the other driver is at fault. Oklahoma has legislation known as "no pay/no play," which prohibits drivers of uninsured vehicles from receiving certain portions of insurance settlements resulting from an accident for which they were at fault.

These issues could make an already tragic accident even more devastating to the rider and his/her family. Motorcycle insurance is typically affordable, but not having it can cost you dearly. Evaluate your motorcycle, your safety gear and your policy today!

AFR WELCOMES NEW AGENCY OWNERS

SPERLES PURCHASE CORDELL AGENCY



Terry & Katrina Sperle have purchased the Hometown Agency in Cordell. Former owner Mike Perkins has retired.

The Sperles are life-time Cordell residents. They are active in their AFLAC insurance business and farming operation, have two children, Ryan, 16, and Mariah, 13, and are involved in their kids' school activities and cattle-showing.

Terry earned an agricultural education and animal science degree from OSU. He is fully licensed for property, casualty, life, accident and health insurance. Katrina is currently licensed for life, accident and health, but will be obtaining her property and casualty license.

The Sperles have changed the agency name to Sperle Agency, LLC, and have moved to 115 1/2

W. Main St. in Cordell, just east of the OSU Extension Office. The phone number will remain the same (580)832-5522 with an additional phone number - (580)832-3700.

HIGGINS PURCHASES TISHOMINGO AND FILLMORE AGENCIES



Brandon and Delaina Higgins are the new owner-agents of the E.J. Tolbert Agency in Tishomingo and the Terry Ragan Agency in the Fillmore area. The agencies will be combined into one agency at the Tolbert Agency location in Tishomingo.

The Higgins are long-time residents of Tishomingo after a nine-year stay in Texas. Brandon was a school teacher, coach and award-winning agent with Texas Farm Bureau. Delaina has been a school teacher for 13 years. She currently teaches at Tishomingo High School. When they moved back to Tishomingo two years ago, Brandon

started an independent agency, Higgins Insurance Group, LLC. The Higgins have a daughter, Peyton, 8, and a son, Boston, 4. They are involved in their children's activities and enjoy involvement with local school and church activities.

Jackie Price will continue to work for the Tishomingo agency; Shauna Dunn previously worked in the Fillmore Agency and will begin working in Tishomingo. The agency will remain at the same location, 610 W. Main St., Tishomingo, and will keep the same phone number (580)371-3459.

BROOKS BROTHERS PURCHASE CHEROKEE AGENCY



Bryan and Troy Brooks, with their mother, Dawn Gay Brooks, have purchased the Patton Agency in Cherokee from John Patton. Patton has retired from the insurance business after 29 years with AFR/OFU.

The Brooks family has been involved in the insurance business in Alva for 30 years. Dawn Gay has been a licensed agent and worked in property and casualty, life & health since 1992. The Brooks Agency has represented AFR/OFU for the last 14 years.

Bryan Brooks worked in the Dallas, Texas, area in medical product research testing for 14 years, before moving back to Alva to work at the Brooks Agency. Troy Brooks and his wife, Lily, have two children, KO, 22, and Torin, 9. Troy was director of the Alva Ambulance Service for 10 years before joining the Brooks Agency. He is the Woods County Farmers Union President.

Troy Brooks will manage the Cherokee office. Newly-hired Debie Highfill will also be there as a full-time agent as soon as she is licensed. The agency will remain in the same location, 203 S. Grand, with the same phone number - (580)596-3321.

CHARTIER RETIRES FROM AFR/OFU



Nita Chartier, Coweta, became an AFR/OFU agent in May of 1982 and has served as the local and county secretary in Wagoner County.

"We bought the Shield-night Agency in 1982," said Chartier. "Now, after 31 years, I am enjoying more time with my husband and family. I enjoy piecing quilts and am blessed to be part of a quilt guild with my daughters, sisters and cousins. I feel the agency is in good hands with Justin Richards and my two faithful agents for many years, Beverly Hall and Vickie Perkins."

AFR BENEFITS

**This is what you get
with your AFR/OFU dues:**

GENERAL BENEFITS

- Access to Quality Farm, Home, Auto and Life Insurance
- Family Values, Agriculture and Rural Area Promotion
- Media Response, Promotion and Public Relations Services
- Legislative Representation at National, State and Local Levels
- Policy Development and Education
- Youth and Education Programs
- Exclusive Travel Opportunities
- Cooperative Development
- County and Local Organization Meetings
- AFR Caps, Coats and Other Memorabilia Sales
- \$5,000 Reward for Arson, Theft or Vandalism of Insured Property

MEDIA BENEFITS

- Subscription to the Quarterly *AFR News & Views*
- Subscription to the *News & Views Insider* E-Newsletter
- Subscription to the NFU E-Newsletter
- Free Classified Advertising in Quarterly Publication

DISCOUNT BENEFITS

- Discount Medical Flight Membership Program
- Discounts on Rental Cars and Hotels
- Discount Prescription Card
- Discounts on LifeLock Identity Theft Protection
- Dental and Vision Plan
- Discounts on LifeLine Cardiovascular Screenings
- Discounts on VPI Pet Insurance for your Cat or Dog
- Discounts on Constant Contact Direct E-mail Marketing
- Discounts on Office Supplies from Office Depot
- Free Hearing Screening and Discount on Beltone Instruments

YOUTH BENEFITS

- Speech and Poster Contests
- State and County Educational Scholarships
- Youth Leadership Summit
- Agricultural Contests
- Leadership Opportunities
- Youth Sponsorships

For a full list of benefits and how to access them, visit iafr.com/benefits.

IT'S CALENDAR TIME!



We're already planning next year's calendar and we need your help to fill it with pictures of beautiful Oklahoma!



We want to celebrate the unique places, people and events across Oklahoma. If you have a knack for photography and already have some great shots, we'd love to see them! If you know of any interesting place or event in your home area, we want to know about that, too!



For more information, or to request a disclaimer and release form, please contact AFR/OFU Communications Coordinator Laici Wedel at (405)218-5557 or lwedel@afrmic.com.

AFR/OFU Rewards program



Do you recognize this fence posted with the AFR/OFU reward sign? Call (405)218-5559 with the correct owner or family name to claim a \$50 reward for spotting it! Watch the next edition of the *News & Views* to see if you recognize the next sign!

These aluminum signs are available for purchase through your local agent or the AFR/OFU Cooperative Store. More information can be found on the AFR/OFU website.

AFR/OFU INTRODUCES NEW YOUTH COORDINATOR



AFR/OFU welcomed new Youth & Education Coordinator Blaire Boyer in March. Originally from Kempton, Ind., Boyer joins AFR/OFU with impressive experience combining youth leadership, agricultural communications and event planning. She is currently completing a bachelor's in agricultural communications.

Boyer has direct experience advising youth and a strong knowledge of the agricultural industry. She has interned with the American Shorthorn Association where she worked national cattle shows, leadership conferences and fundraising events. She gained additional experience with youth as an Indiana FFA State Officer where she gained useful insight into the world of agricultural education in the public school system.

In addition to her background in youth leadership and communications, Boyer has planned events through her work with the OSU Alumni Association, Indiana Farm Bureau and OSU's CASNR, including VIP receptions for state executives and legislators, college career fairs, leadership workshops for youth and a state FFA convention.

Boyer understands the importance of the youth age group to the agricultural industry and is eager to lead the tenured program that AFR/OFU offers youth across the state. She will graduate from Oklahoma State University in May and will assume a full-time role with the organization. She is currently a part-time staff member until her degree requirements are fulfilled.

STATE SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

AFR/OFU's state scholarships are available to qualified students in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Students are eligible to apply for the Incoming Freshman Scholarship during their senior year of high school. Students may then apply for the Continuing Education Scholarship throughout their undergraduate career. Both previous and first-time applicants are eligible for the Continuing Education Scholarship.

Recipients are selected based on knowledge of and involvement in AFR/OFU, leadership activities, scholastic achievement and financial need. Eligible applicants must have attended two years of AFR/OFU Senior Leadership Summit, have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and be an AFR Insurance policyholder.

For more information on scholarship opportunities or other AFR/OFU Youth Program projects, contact AFR/OFU Youth & Education Coordinator Blaire Boyer at (405)218-5561 or bboyer@afmic.com.

****Applications due by MAY 1, 2014****

Applications available on the AFR/OFU website:
<http://www.iafr.com/youth-education>

Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Submit applications to:
Blaire Boyer
AFR/OFU Youth & Education Coordinator
P.O. Box 24000
Oklahoma City, OK 73124

KAY COUNTY AFR/OFU HOSTS FIRST SPEECH CONTEST



Kay County AFR/OFU hosted the first Kay County AFR/OFU Speech Contest Feb. 26. The contest was held in conjunction with the county's spring livestock show in Blackwell. Fifteen students in three age divisions participated in the contest.

To participate, students must have exhibited an animal at the show. Each speech must answer the contest theme question "What is your favorite part of your livestock project?" Because of this, the new speech contest is an excellent way for those children who might not otherwise participate to become involved in speech competitions.

"We are delighted to be able to sponsor this speech contest at our county livestock show with county and local funds," said Kay County President Scott Blubaugh. "There was overwhelming support from the Kay County membership. Terry Detrick was also very supportive of the contest and helped us by sending judges from the home office. We believe speech competitions are an excellent way to build young people's confidence and help develop future leaders in agriculture and rural communities."

The top three individuals in each division were given an award or prize money. First place winners were awarded a belt buckle and plaque; second place winners took home a jacket and plaque; and third place winners were awarded \$50 and a plaque.

Pictured: Kay County AFR/OFU Secretary Lisa Blubaugh (right) with 2014 Kay County AFR/OFU Speech Contest second-place winners and their award jackets.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE EXTENDED

Following staff changes at the AFR/OFU home office, the deadline for AFR/OFU State Scholarships has been extended to

May 1, 2014

For more State Scholarship information see the feature on this page; for more County/Local Match Scholarship information including 2014 changes, see page 2.

AFR/OFU HOSTS AG ACHIEVEMENT CONTEST

AFR/OFU has announced the top ten finalists in the 2014 AFR/OFU Agricultural Achievement Contest. This year's contest was held at State Fair Park in Oklahoma City March 17-20, with an awards presentation March 20.

The annual contest recognizes outstanding youth in Oklahoma who display exceptional showmanship skills and possess extensive knowledge of the livestock industry, including production, management, processing and end product utilization. Each year, AFR/OFU presents \$5,000 in prizes to contest winners.

The 2014 AFR/OFU Youth Agricultural Achievement Award winners were Gatlin Squires, Kingfisher FFA, first place; John Nelson, Chickasha FFA, second place; Hallie Barnes, Porter FFA, third place; Amber Cox, Morrison FFA, fourth place; Abbey Chrz, Morrison FFA, fifth place; Lane Spradlin, Fairview FFA, sixth place; Kolby Coday, Coweta FFA, seventh place; Grace Flusche, Oktaha FFA, eighth place; Hailey Stottlemyre,



Luther FFA, ninth place; and Amber Wright, Lindsay FFA, tenth place.

"We take pride in the opportunities AFR/OFU provides the youth of Oklahoma," said AFR/OFU President Terry Detrick. "Our annual agricultural achievement contest is another way we help young people showcase and develop their talents."

Competitors in the AFR/OFU Ag Achievement Contest are judged on showmanship ability and test scores from a written examination on all phases of the livestock industry, including current

events. Contestants' combined test and showmanship scores determine the top ten individuals. The top ten are then interviewed regarding their individual livestock project and the livestock industry as a whole. Participation in the AFR/OFU Agricultural Achievement Contest is limited to Oklahoma junior and senior high school students who exhibit an animal at Oklahoma Youth Expo.

AFR/OFU SPONSORS OKLAHOMA YOUTH AT OKLAHOMA YOUTH EXPO



AFR/OFU News & Views

Trading Post Ads

P. O. Box 24000

Oklahoma City, Okla., 73124

Fax: 405-218-5589

E-mail: tradingpostads@afmic.com

AFR/OFU reserves the right to not print any ad deemed inappropriate.



TRADING POST

Classified advertising in the Trading Post is available free of charge to all paid-up members of American Farmers & Ranchers/Oklahoma Farmers Union. Ads must be of a personal nature and strictly non-commercial. Commercial ads and ads for non-members can be purchased at the rate of \$1 per word, paid in advance. Member ads must be 30 words or less, unless the member pays in advance for additional words. Each member is limited to one advertisement per issue.

ADS ARE DUE TO
THE HOME OFFICE
BY JUNE 1

FOR PUBLICATION IN THE
SUMMER ISSUE.

Advertising will not be accepted for services or products in direct competition with those offered by AFR/OFU or affiliates.



REAL ESTATE

For Sale—Commercially-zoned property, 109 S. Mississippi, Atoka. 3000 sq.ft., 2-story, business/living space. 580/889-5530.

For Sale—3 commercial poultry houses. Good Income. House and 120 acres with 150-head steer capacity. Commodity barn, farrowing house. Beautiful southeast Okla. \$700,000, price negotiable. Quinton, OK. 918/469-2155.

Wanted—A little land about 8-10 miles east of Norman to put small trailer, etc., for medical reason. 405/615-9009.

I buy mineral rights, oil, gas and brine royalties anywhere like North Dakota or Oklahoma. If you're thinking about selling part of your mineral rights, call me before you sell. 580/227-2456.

MOBILE HOMES

For Sale—2012 double-wide mobile home in Indianola. Must be moved. 3-4BR/2BT, fireplace, utility, central H/A. Includes skirting, two 4x4 decks, some appliances and privacy fence. Call 580/574-9123, leave message.

AUTOS, TRUCKS & CYCLES

For Sale—2000 Ford F150 pickup. 5 speed, one owner. \$3495 OBO. 405/273-3881.

For Sale—1997 F350 dually, extended cab. 7.3 diesel motor, 5-speed manual. New tires. \$7000. Call 580/286-5056. If no answer, leave message.

BOATS, RVs & CAMPERS

Wanted—Travel trailer, bumper-pull, twin axle. 17', 18' or 19' footer. 70s, 80s, 90s in fair shape. If it needs some repairs it's still okay. Foss, OK. Call 580/592-4625 or 580/660-1668.

FARM EQUIPMENT & LAWN MOWERS

For Sale—NH116 swather. 14' header w/ bolted sections. Excellent condition. \$4250. Call 405/222-0792 or 405/320-2436.

For Sale—8 hang horse feeders, nice, \$50 each. Stainless steel bird cage and perch, \$400. Call 405/414-4134.

For Sale—Hay trailer, 5-bale cradle dump, \$2150. Bale spears, 3pt or front loader mount, \$175. Stone's come-along calf puller, \$100. All excellent condition. Call 405/222-0792 or 405/320-2436.

For Sale—1940 CAT D8 Series 1H, complete or for parts. Beautiful radiator, heads, Letaurneau (Longview) cable control, undercarriage, etc. Original CAT service manual, one for tractor, one for engine for 1H, 8R, 2U, 13A series. 580/286-6315 or 580/212-9787.

For Sale—Priefert calf creep feeder w/calf pass panel kit. Length 55", width 41", height 56". Constructed from galvanized steel with powder-coat finish. 750 lb capacity. \$685. Norman. Call John at 405/292-6299.

For Sale—John Deere tractor, 2240, good condition. 3600 hours. \$8500 or trade for flat-bed dump truck. 580/889-5530.

For Sale—Propane tank, 250 gallon. \$200. Peggs, OK. 918/598-3517.

Wanted—Good feed truck, 4-wheel drive, ¾ or 1 ton, prefer Ford. 580/889-5530.

LIVESTOCK

For Sale—Performance-tested, purebred yearling plus Gelbvieh bulls. Red, black and double-polled. Low birth weights, docile, fertility tested. Beef, butts and guts. Inda Gelbvieh. 405/282-4134 or 405/650-3481.

For Sale—Reg. polled Hereford bulls. 8 mos. - 1 yr. old. Remitall Online 122L & PW Victor Boomer P606 genetics. Also a few weaned reg. heifers. 580/332-2468.

For Sale—Reg. Beefmasters. Bulls, cows, heifers (bred and opens), show heifers. Red, black and dunn. Polled and horned. www.doubledeucebeefmasters.com. 918/253-8680 or 918/557-6923.

For Sale—Brangus bulls and fancy replacement heifers. Top quality genetics, gentle dispositions. Delivery available. Horsehead Ranch. 918/695-2357.

For Sale—Reg. polled Dexter cattle. Docile nature and smaller stature. Make great show animals. Also, reg. spotted, colored, traditional Boer goats. View them on our website. Qualityboer goats.com. 918/642-5063.

Reg. Limousin bulls and heifers. Open and bred, black, polled, calving ease, gentle and homozygous top genetics that work. Limflex angus bull. Wildhorse Valley. Call 405/517-3824 or 405/474-2018.

For Sale—Brangus bulls. Gentle disposition. 18-20 mos. Reasonable price for quality bulls. 405/273-3881.

Purebred Brangus bulls, 2 yrs old. Excellent quality. DJM Brangus Farms. Byars, OK. 405/833-6232.

HAY/FEED

For Sale—Small square bales of first-cutting alfalfa, \$9/bale. Small square bales of Bermuda & crabgrass mixed, \$6/bale. 405/459-6543 or 405/574-5571.

SEA MINERALS

"Let's Do It Nature's Way"

Pasture Crops Free Choice to Cattle
\$4/acre \$12/year \$50/50# bag \$1600/ton
Free shipping - Ton lots
www.OSM100.com
918/698-5308 918/367-5146

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

For Sale—Whirlpool W/D, \$200. Side-by-side refrigerator, \$100. Glass-top electric range, \$200. LP gas range, \$100. 405/275-3419.

American Farmers & Ranchers Good Eats!



April is Made in Oklahoma month!

The Made in Oklahoma (MIO) Coalition promotes Oklahoma food and agricultural products, including this month's feature product - HONEY! See more about MIO at:

<http://miocoalition.com/>
www.facebook.com/MadeinOklahomaCoalition
https://twitter.com/MIO_Coalition

Honey Macaroons

2 ¼ c. shredded coconut (unsweetened)
 2 egg whites
 ½ tsp. vanilla extract

¼ c. honey
 Pinch of salt

For glaze:

¼ c. dark chocolate chips
 1 tsp. honey

1 Tbsp. coconut oil



1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Mix together egg whites, honey, vanilla, and salt. Set aside.
3. In food processor, grind coconut until fine. Mix coconut into honey mixture.
4. Scoop 2 Tbsp. of dough at a time; place on parchment-lined baking sheet.
5. Place pan on middle rack and bake for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool on a wire rack.
6. Melt chocolate in microwave-safe bowl in 20 second intervals, stirring between.
7. Mix in coconut oil and honey until combined and drizzle over cookies.
8. Allow glaze to harden, either a few hours at room temperature or a few minutes chilled.

American Farmers & Ranchers/Oklahoma Farmers Union Spring 2014 Featured Recipe
 Feature Organization: Made in Oklahoma Coalition
<http://miocoalition.com/> | www.facebook.com/MadeinOklahomaCoalition

IN MEMORIAM...

Nancy Ann Jech

Nancy Ann Jech, 81, Kingfisher, died Jan. 24, 2014. Funeral services were Jan. 27, at First Christian Church - Kingfisher; burial followed at Kingfisher Cemetery. Jech was the wife of former OFU Director Delvin Jech and mother of AFR Agent Darcy Jech.

Jech was born June 8, 1932, to Ed and Clemith Stolz, on a farm northwest of Kingfisher. After first and second grade at Lincoln School, where she was the only student in those classes, Jech transferred to Big Four School for third grade and met her future husband Delvin Jech the same year. She graduated from Big Four and later married Delvin on Nov. 2, 1952. They raised three children on a farm east of town.

She worked at Cimarron Electric Cooperative for 19 years, retiring as the billing department supervisor in 1985. In her free time, she enjoyed many sports, dance club, card club, Kingfisher Study Club, Happy Homemakers HCE, Kingfisher County Republican Women, sewing, quilting, painting, cooking and entertaining.

Jech served on the Kingfisher County Election Board and Kingfisher Regional Hospital Board of Directors. She sang in the choir and served as deaconess, elder and elder emeritus at the First Christian Church. She was known for the chocolate chip cookies she made regularly for the Kingfisher High School basketball teams.

Survivors include daughter Debbie Daugherty and husband Darrell, son Doug Jech and wife Kim, and son Darcy Jech and wife Vicky, all of Kingfisher; brother Bill Stolz and wife Anna Mae, and sister Gerry Plummer and husband Mac, all of Kingfisher; grandchildren Derek Daugherty and wife Micah, Kingfisher, Devin Provine and husband Wes, Moore, Sarah Aholt and husband Michael, Edmond, Lindsey Schroder and husband Tyler, Enid, Ryan Jech and Britni Schwarz, Broken Arrow, Vanessa Wilczek and husband Trevor, Okla. City and Kyle Jech of Rochester, N.Y..

Velma Pauline Kastl

Velma Pauline Kastl, 91, died April 1, 2014, in Stillwater. A vigil for the deceased was held April 3 and mass of Christian burial April 4, both at St. Francis Xavier Church in Stillwater. Burial followed in Glenwood Cemetery, Perkins.

Pauline was born Aug. 11, 1922, in Perkins to Bernice Beatrice Beemer Johnson and William Harry Johnson. She attended grade school at High Prairie and graduated Stillwater High School in 1940. She then attended Oklahoma A&M for two years and taught in the one-room school at High Prairie for several years.

During the war, Pauline moved to Wichita to work as a "Rosie Riveter" in the aircraft industry. She married Emil Kastl of Stillwater on Oct. 21, 1944, at St. Francis Xavier Church. Emil started a custom seed business and purchased their farm.

The Kastls moved to Okla. City in 1958 when Emil was elected OFU State Secretary/Treasurer. Pauline volunteered at St. James Catholic Church and assisted Emil with trips he led to Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, New York City, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and the northwest U.S.

When Emil retired in 1986, they moved back to the farm, where Pauline was happiest. She loved to garden, mow, check on her cows and feed the birds. She was known for her hearty meals she cooked for the harvest crews. She was a talented artist who painted oil paintings. She was a member of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church for 71 years.

Pauline is survived by children Mike Kastl and wife Elizabeth, Edmond, Connie Brashears and husband Bart, Blackwell, and Dennis Kastl and wife Judi, Stillwater; grandchildren Jill Cobb and husband Jason, Edmond, Andrea McCoy and husband Jared, Edmond, Angela Studnek and husband Jon, Charlotte, N.C., Christopher Brashears, Vatican City, Rome, and Amanda Jones and husband Kyle, Spring, Texas.



Oklahoma Beef Checkoff UPDATE

Farmers and Ranchers- Don't forget to sign up for the Oklahoma Beef Checkoff Update, a monthly e-newsletter providing the latest in checkoff information and news at www.oklabef.org/e-newsletter.aspx



Support for the Beef Checkoff at All Time High

Support for the beef checkoff, at 78 percent, is the highest recorded in the past 21 years, according to a recent survey of 1,225 beef and dairy producers nationwide.

The random survey conducted by the independent firm Aspen Media & Market Research in late December 2013 and early January 2014 found an overwhelming majority of beef and dairy producers continue to say their beef checkoff has value for them in many ways:

- Eight out of 10 producers say the beef checkoff has helped to contribute to a positive trend in beef demand.
- 71 percent of producers say the beef checkoff contributes to the profitability of their operations.
- 77 percent say the checkoff is there for them in a crisis.
- 79 percent say the checkoff represents their interests.

Oklahoma Beef Checkoff Dollars at Work in the Japanese Market



In 2013, the Oklahoma Beef Council made a significant commitment to assisting with efforts to regain market share in the high-valued Japanese market with the announcement of the opening of the marketplace to beef product from cattle under 30 months of age. The following results demonstrate how we can leverage Oklahoma checkoff dollars with government and industry resources to create major impacts for US beef sales in the international arena.

With OBC funding support, USMEF conducted three U.S. beef yakiniku promotions from June through August. In total, close to 500 outlets participated in the campaigns. After the promotion period, Nippon Ham, a primary distributor for this industry, reported its total U.S. beef sales during the three months reached 3,222 mt., a 30 percent increase over the same period last year. The company attributes much of this growth to the U.S. beef promotions.

USMEF also ramped up its efforts with leading CVS chains, working to develop and promote new bento (lunch box) recipes using U.S. beef cuts such as short plate. For example, USMEF leveraged OBC support with other funding to conduct a high-visibility promotion at 9,500 outlets of Family Mart featuring 10 newly developed items using U.S. beef (e.g. bento box, rice bowl, salad, sandwich, soba noodle, sushi, soup). Family Mart reported U.S. beef short plate sales of 196 mt per month as a result, an increase of 64 percent compared to before the promotion.

It's important to remember, the international marketplace offers us the ability to maximize the value of the US beef

cattle through exporting less popular beef cuts in the US to areas of the world where cultural differences in tastes put a high value on them.

Farmland, the Film Showcases Young Farmers and Ranchers

A new feature length documentary, Farmland, from Oscar®-winning filmmaker, James Moll, follows the next generation of American farmers and ranchers, all in their 20s, in various regions across the US.

Moll spent five months meeting farmers and ranchers before he settled on the six who are featured in Farmland. In order to authentically tell the story through the eyes of this next generation, Moll extensively researched the subject and looked for individuals to profile, specifically choosing from different farming and ranching production methods, various types of crops and livestock and geographic diversity.

The film, made with generous support from the U.S.



Farmers & Ranchers Alliance® (USFRA®), funded in part by the Beef Checkoff, gives viewers a firsthand glimpse into the lives of these young farmers and ranchers, their high-risk/high-reward jobs and their passion for a way of life that, more often than not, is passed down from generation to generation. To view the trailer, visit www.farmlandfilm.com. Also, please help support this film by sharing the trailer on Facebook.

Beef Checkoff Testifies at the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Meeting

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee held their second public meeting in January to hear testimony regarding potential changes. Director of Nutrition Research at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program, Clara Lau, Ph.D, spoke to the importance of lean beef in healthy diets. The Beef Checkoff submitted written comments prior to this meeting, and will continue to be engaged as the 2015 dietary guidelines discussion continues. This participation by the Beef Checkoff is important because the guidelines form the basis of Federal nutrition policy, education, outreach, and food assistance programs used

by consumers, industry, nutrition educators, and health professionals. All Federal dietary guidance for the public is required to be consistent with the dietary guidelines which provide the scientific basis for the government to speak in a consistent and uniform manner.

Did You Know...817,000 Fans and Counting?

Did You Know...

The checkoff's successful "Beef: It's What's for Dinner" Facebook page is working to enhance, encourage and elevate consumers' passion for beef through an exciting new visual and "storytelling" approach. This refreshed focus aims to help consumers enjoy beef year-round by providing the checkoff's delicious and nutritious beef recipes, tips and techniques, family mealtime ideas and holiday food inspiration and keeping beef top-of-mind for consumers online 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The page has more than 817,000+ total likes, or fans. Let's make it 1,000,000.

Did You Know...

From June 1 to Dec. 31, 2013, the Beef Checkoff website, BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com continued to see significant traffic and consumer engagement. Nearly 907,000 people visited the site during the period, with most spending about two minutes and 45 seconds there - well ahead of the industry standard of just 10 to 20 seconds per site. Here's how they are getting to the site: 45 percent of visitors type in the website's URL to go directly to BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com; 25 percent come from Google; and 7.5 percent come from Facebook.

Did You Know...

The checkoff's journey from an extensive print and radio consumer-marketing campaign to an integrated digital campaign in 2014 has begun with a data-centered approach focused on "micro-" or "geo-targeting." This technology allows us to deliver, for example, a relevant beef solution to millennial moms in a particular geographic region who are actively looking for quick and simple weeknight meals. Promotions are taking on a variety of digital forms, including search engine optimization, Facebook advertising, display advertising and other emerging online tools. Through this process, the checkoff is working to deepen interactions and engagement with this critical consumer target - driving them to the checkoff's existing resources, like Beef: It's What's for Dinner website, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest properties to access the specific information they need at the exact moment that they need the information.



OKLAHOMA BEEF COUNCIL • 3140 W Britton Rd Ste B Oklahoma City OK 73120 • (405) 840-3777 • OklaBeef.org

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AFR News & Views

"The Voice of Family Agriculture"

Vol. XCV No. 2

SPRING 2014

Upcoming Events...

April 2014

- Good Friday, Home Office Closed April 18
- Ag & Historic Conference, Texas Hill Country April 26-30
- Governor's Conference on Wildfire Preparedness, OKC April 28
- Oklahoma FFA Convention, OKC April 29-30

May 2014

- AFR/OFU State Scholarship Deadline (Extended) May 1
- Nat'l Land, Range & Homesite Judging Contest, TBA May 1
- Memorial Day, Home Office Closed May 26

June 2014

- State 4-H Horse Show, Shawnee June 19-21

July 2014

- Independence Day, Home Office Closed July 4
- OSU Big 3 Field Days, Stillwater July 15-17
- Leadership Summit, Teen Session July 27-29
- Leadership Summit, Senior Session July 30-Aug 2

...Serving Oklahoma for more than 109 years!