

Kentucky

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Kentucky 

DEAR VALUED MEMBER:



As part of our ongoing effort to improve services, "Kentucky Farm Bureau News" has become our official membership publication, replacing the tabloid newspaper, "All Around Kentucky."



All Kentucky Farm Bureau members will receive this four-color magazine twice a year, in December and in June. The December issues will serve as an annual report to members, featuring news and other developments from our annual meetings. The June issues will highlight our member services with a special pull-out section.

Eight monthly issues of KFB News will be published for regular members, featuring reports about the organization's activities, policy issues and Kentucky's agriculture industry.

We hope you are pleased with this change. We welcome your comments and suggestions to editor Roger Nesbitt at rnesbitt@kyfb.com.

Merry Christmas!

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT
KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU



KFB LEADERS AND AG OFFICIALS MEET WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

TOP LEFT: Senator Ernie Harris fielded a question during the meeting with ag officials.

TOP RIGHT: KFB Public Affairs Director Laura Knoth posed a question to House Ag Committee Chairman Tom McKee as Senators Joey Pendleton and Rick Rand (far right) waited their turn.

Some prominent state legislators offered a bleak assessment of the state's budget situation - -but some encouraging predictions for agriculture interests - during the annual meeting with KFB leaders and officials from farm commodity groups.

The farm group, which also included KFB's Public Affairs staff, met with House Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom McKee, Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee Chairman Rick Rand and Vice Chairman Ernie Harris plus Senate Ag Committee member Joey Pendleton. KFB has been conducting the meeting for years in preparation for legis-

lative sessions.

The bright side for farmers is that the lawmakers predicted no tax increases nor repeal of tax exemptions that favor agriculture. They also feel something will be done to boost the struggling thoroughbred industry and to protect our animal agriculture industry from unwarranted production standards.

Harris, who formerly chaired the Senate Ag Committee and remains on that panel, drew laughter when he quipped: "We only have three minor issues to deal with - the budget, the budget, the budget."

Harris and Rand said tax increases were highly unlikely for 2010 because it's an election year. "The likelihood of us raising taxes, even tobacco, is next to zero," said Rand, a Republican from Trimble County.

Harris, a Republican from Oldham County, said revenue projections indicate it would be no earlier than 2012 before the state could get back to the budget level it had in 2008. More than \$800 million already has been trimmed, he said.

"We are in for some tough times through the next (budget) cycle," said Rand.

The two senators said that although the General Assembly was pleased with the

economic progress made through the Ag Development Fund, the amount available for state and regional projects possibly could drop in the next biennium due to the budget shortfall. The county share will remain intact, they said.

McKee, a Democrat from Harrison County; and Pendleton, a Democrat from Christian County; spoke at length about the so-called "animal welfare" issue stemming from attacks on animal agriculture by radical groups. They, as well as Harris, predicted the General Assembly would favor a proposal to establish state livestock care standards.

"Protecting the animal agriculture industry is something we need to do," said Pendleton, a former dairy farmer.

The lawmakers also expressed concerns about the economic problems facing dairy farmers and the thoroughbred industry in Kentucky.

KFB President Mark Haney, Vice President John C. Hendricks and Executive Vice President David S. Beck were on hand along with officials representing beef cattle, tobacco, equine, swine, soybeans and sheep and goats. McKee, a Harrison County farmer, complemented the group, saying: "Agriculture is well represented by you."



Our lives are marked by milestones – getting a driver’s license, voting for the first time, graduating high school/college. Similarly industries and organizations reach notable milestones that are cause for celebration.

As “The Voice of Kentucky Agriculture,” Kentucky Farm Bureau recently celebrated its 90th annual meeting. KFB’s dedication to Kentucky agriculture has endured nine decades of changing economies, changing agriculture and changing consumer preferences. KFB has grown through the decades by tackling key agriculture issues head-on and making sure that its members have access to timely information on ag-related issues, such as renewable fuels, animal care, livestock composting and labor. KFB’s longevity is a direct result of its commitment to its members, to agriculture and to Kentucky.



Similarly, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund is approaching a milestone of its own – 10 years providing financial incentives for Kentucky farmers to diversify their farm operations and transition from a tobacco dependent economy. The legislation establishing the Fund and setting in motion this historical agricultural diversification effort was introduced and adopted in the 2000 session of the Kentucky General Assembly.

Over the last decade, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund has impacted tens of thousands of Kentucky farm families through the KADF investments in agriculture and our communities. Even with these tough economic times and a tight budget situation, it is important that we hold true to our commitment to Kentucky agriculture by maintaining 50 percent of the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement funds for the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund.

While much has been done to help increase net farm income through the agricultural diversification efforts of the KADF, there is still much to be done. With renewable energy alternatives coming to the forefront and a need to maintain a safe and secure food supply, the need for these funds to provide incentives and infrastructure is just as critical as it was 10 years ago.

Kentucky Farm Bureau and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund share, as part of their missions, the desire to “improve/increase net farm income” and in the same respect improve our rural economies. One way that we can both achieve our missions is to share with others the importance of the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund to all Kentuckians. I remain committed to Kentucky agriculture and to maintaining agriculture’s 50 percent of the MSA. I am counting on you to make your support of the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund known.

Congratulations Kentucky Farm Bureau on your 90th Annual Meeting and thank you for all that you do to serve Kentucky agriculture.

Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all.

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Farm economy declined this year

The global recession and the bursting of 2008's commodity price bubble resulted in a one-two punch to Kentucky's agricultural sector in 2009.

Agricultural economists with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture estimate Kentucky farm cash receipts to be \$4.29 billion this year, down about \$550 million from 2008's record high. However, if global economic recovery proceeds as predicted, overall cash receipts for 2010 should remain at approximately the same level, or slightly higher.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts that net farm income to American agriculture will be down 34 percent this year as compared to 2008 and \$6.5 billion below the one-year average of \$64 billion. Net farm income is estimated to be \$1.07 billion for this year.

"We can expect Kentucky agriculture to follow the same trend of sharply lower gross receipts for this year," said Craig Infanger, extension professor in the UK Department of Agricultural Economics.

However, Infanger said, there is a general consensus that the U.S. economy is in recovery mode; third quarter growth was positive.

Infanger, fellow UK agricultural economists Kenny Burdine, Will Snell, Cory Walters, Tim Woods and Lee Meyer and Kentucky Farm Business Management Program Coordinator Jerry Pierce presented an overview and outlook of the Kentucky farm economy as part of KFB's annual meeting.

Estimated livestock receipts of \$2.46 billion show a decline of \$450 million from 2008. The reduction was driven by a decline in equine receipts, which come primarily from Thoroughbred sales and stud fees.

Beef cattle numbers are as low as they were in the 1960s, but weak demand has kept prices soft. Calf prices rallied from late 2008 levels, but plummeted in the fall, resulting in a price decline of more than \$20 per hundredweight from spring to fall. If demand strengthens in the coming year, calf prices should rally into the spring of 2010, Burdine said.

The dairy sector also experienced hardships brought on by the weak economy. Kentucky mailbox prices will likely average around \$6 per hundredweight below 2008 levels. The USDA accounted for 86,000 dairy cows in Kentucky at the start of 2009, but the expectation is that number will be lower at the start of 2010. Burdine expects that the lower herd numbers coupled with improvement in dairy stocks should result in mailbox prices above 2009 levels by \$2 to \$4 per hundredweight.

Hog production declined slightly in 2009, but that couldn't keep hog prices from plummeting due to weak demand. Poultry was the largest component of livestock income in 2009, continuing three years of increased sales.

Prices were down substantially in the crop sector from the 2008 highs. Cash receipts declined for corn, wheat, hay, fruits and greenhouse products. Total cash receipts for crop marketing are estimated to be \$1.83 billion, 43 percent of total farm cash receipts in Kentucky, compared to 40 percent in 2008.

Tobacco farmers grew a relatively large crop in 2009, despite the wet growing season. The USDA predicts Kentucky's tobacco production will total 207.4 million pounds, which is slightly more than the 2008 crop and the highest production level since the 2004 buyout.

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ANNUAL | MEETING

SERVICE

NATIONAL ISSUES LOOM LARGE

Pressing national issues such as health care reform, climate change legislation and immigration reform are prominent on KFB's policy agenda for 2010. The organization concluded its 90th annual meeting on December 5 with voting delegates adopting policy for 2010 and the Board of Directors approving condensed lists of priority issues.

KFB opposes the cap-and-trade legislation under consideration in Congress because its mandates would adversely impact the farm economy by driving up the cost of energy and inputs. The approved policy states "climate change mandates, such as carbon taxes and cap-and-trade policies must not adversely affect agriculture."

Kentucky's largest farm organization continues to advocate health care reform

that will stabilize the market, encourage competition and increase consumer choice. The organization supports policies that allow association health plans and contain costs through tort reform.

KFB also continues to place a high priority on reforming the H-2A program for migrant workers.

At the state level, the list of priorities includes maintaining the funding level for Kentucky's historic agricultural development initiative that utilizes tobacco settlement funds, ongoing implementation of energy policy that encourages the use of renewable fuels plus the creation of a Livestock Care Standards Board which would establish livestock care guidelines. The latter issue is to assure consumers that livestock and poultry producers continue to operate under approved practices.

Animal care, in fact, was a prominent topic of discussion both during the business session and during a special conference conducted by KFB's Animal Care Issues Task Force. This movement is in response to continuing attacks on the animal agriculture industry from radical animal rights organizations.

Other state legislative priorities include:

- Funding for Murray State University's Breathitt Veterinary Center.
- Continued funding of the Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost-Share Program.
- Ensure that steep increases in property taxes are subject to voter referendum.
- Protect the rights of landowners when dealing with regional planning issues, eminent domain laws or smart growth initiatives.

- Support the rural secondary and county road aid programs and continuation of the 22.2 percent allocation of the state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads.

KFB President Mark Haney noted the enormity of some of the tasks at hand.

"We have some very crucial issues on our plate as we move into the new year," he said. "Some issues focus on protecting our farm economy; others relate to strengthening the farm economy. These are issues at the very core of our organization."

NOTICE ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

The annual meeting of the stockholders of Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Agency, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 3:00 p.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of electing directors of the company and to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

NOTICE ANNUAL POLICYHOLDERS' MEETING OF KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

The annual meeting of the policyholders of Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 10:00 a.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of (1) electing directors of the company, (2) to receive the annual report of its officers, and (3) to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

NOTICE ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF THE FB INSURANCE COMPANY

The annual meeting of the stockholders of The FB Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 2:00 p.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of electing directors of the company and to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

MARK HANEY RE-ELECTED KFB PRESIDENT

KFB's top leaders were re-elected at the 90th annual meeting with Pulaski County's Mark Haney continuing as president and Clark County's John C. Hendricks and Webster County's Eddie Melton selected for First and Second Vice-President, respectively. They comprise the Executive Committee along with Executive Vice President David S. Beck.

Haney has served on the Executive Committee for 11 years and has been a state director since 1993. For years he chaired the State Resolutions Committee. He is a past president of the Kentucky Center for Cooperative Development and the Kentucky Horticultural Society.

A former President of the Pulaski County FB, Haney and his brother Don, produce apples and peaches near Nancy, where they also raise beef cattle. They sell fresh produce from their orchards – as well as cider, jellies and other products – at a KFB Certified Roadside Market located on the farm.

He and his wife, Marlene, have two sons and a daughter.

Hendricks, a KFB director since 1998, is a past president of Clark County FB. He is chairman of Resolutions Committee and the Health Care Issues Task Force. He formerly chaired the beef cattle advisory committee. On the national level, Hendricks has been appointed as a member of the AFBF Federal Deficit Task Force to help look for ways to bring the budget back into balance. He produces beef cattle, hay and vegetables on his family farm near Winchester. He and his wife, Mary Beth, have two sons.

Melton is chairman of KFB's Political Education Advisory Committee and is a former President of Webster County FB. He also was chairman of KFB's Farm Bill Task Force, which conducted statewide forums and sought input from Kentucky farmers on provisions of the 2008 farm bill.

Melton also serves in leadership positions with the Corn Growers Promotion Board and Southern States Cooperative. He and his wife, Regina, have a daughter.

One new member was elected to the board as a result of a District 5 membership gain which qualified it for another representative. Joe Paul Mattingly of Marion County was elected to that slot. Joining him as new directors are Marshall County Agency Manager Mickey Sirls, State FFA Advisor Curt Lucas and Chris Ragan, who was elected chairman of the Young Farmers Advisory Committee. Sirls replaces Hardin County Agency Manager Terry Patterson and Lucas replaces Deborah Anderson.

Other board members are: Randall

David Chappell of Owen County, Terry Rowlett of Henry County, Danny Wilkinson of Adair County, Kim McCoy of Cumberland County, Terry R. Gilbert of Boyle County, David L. Campbell of Lincoln County, Alex Barnett of Harrison County, David McGlone of Carter County, Charlie Benge of Laurel County, Carroll Amyx of Wolfe County, Bige Hensley of Clay County, Marshall Coyle of Bath County, Frieda Heath of Graves County, Kevin Lyons of Monroe County and Dr. Scott Smith, who is Dean of the UK College of Agriculture.



Heath of Graves County, Tripp Furches of Calloway County, Kelly Thurman of McLean County, Steve Bolinger of Christian County; J. Fritz Giesecke of Hart County, Larry Thomas of Hardin County, Patrick M. Henderson of Breckinridge County, Russell Poore of Logan County, Jay Coleman of Barren County, Scott Travis of Spencer County, Randy Chrisman of Anderson County,

KFB's Executive Committee is comprised of (from left) Second VP Eddie Melton, President Mark Haney, First VP John C. Hendricks and Executive VP David S. Beck.

LINCOLN COUNTY IS TOPS



Joined by KFB President Mark Haney (far left), the contingent from Lincoln County FB assembled for a photo to celebrate their award as top county.

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Lincoln County Farm Bureau was named top county for 2009, marking the 14th time it has captured the prestigious award since the program's inception in 1963.

The top county award headlined more than 100 membership program and insurance awards presented during an awards breakfast at the annual meeting. Lincoln County, which has 5,259 members and a variety of successful service programs, also was named top county in the largest membership classification (more than 4,200 members). Butler County was named best among small counties (up to 2,600 members) while Calloway County won the honor for counties with 2,601 to 4,200 members.

In other award presentations:

- Clay, Boone and Kenton counties received top growth awards for having the largest percentage of membership

gain from 2008.

- Outstanding county Farm Bureaus were designated in each of 11 districts. The recipients were Calloway, Christian, Hardin, Logan, Fayette, Scott, Pulaski, Lincoln, Clark, Carter and Letcher counties.

- Kenton County was recognized as the most improved county Farm Bureau.

- Pacesetter awards were given to counties in the three membership classifications that were first to achieve a membership gain during the year. The large county award went to Kenton County, followed by Boone and Clay counties.

- Allen and Taylor counties were honored for having 47 consecutive years of membership growth.

- Three awards were given for most effective county Farm Bureau information programs. Union County won first place, Barren County was second and Calloway County was third.

WOMEN, YOUNG FARMERS SELECT LEADERS

Chris Ragan of Warren County was elected chairman of the Young Farmers Advisory Committee while Frieda Heath of Graves County remains chair of the Women's Advisory Committee.

Vice chair of the young farmers group is Stephen DeBord of Pulaski County and the secretary is Elizabeth Mattingly of Marion County.

Phyllis Amyx of Wolfe County was re-elected first vice chair and Michelle Armstrong of Spencer County was re-elected second vice chair of the women's committee.

There are 12 members comprising both singles and married couples of the young farmers committee. Those members for 2009, including the officers, are:

Scott Bridges, Trigg County; Jay and Jenny McElwain, Muhlenberg County; Fred C. Sipes, Meade County; Chris and Heather Ragan, Warren County; Brad and Elizabeth Mattingly, Marion County; John Russell and Kristal New, Owen County; Stephen DeBord, Pulaski County; Greg and Contessa Harris, Madison County; Terry and Deborah Ishmael, Fleming County; Steven and Richelle Bach, Bath County.

Members of the Women's Advisory Committee, in addition to the three officers are: Bettie Wallace, Caldwell County; Betty Farris, Butler County; Vickie Bryant, Monroe County; Pam Chappell, Owen County; Carol Sullivan, Taylor County; Jeanne Ellis, Robertson County; Margaret Hensley, Clay County; Cathy Pleasants, Lincoln County; and Terry Gilbert, Boyle County.



Flanked by Second Vice Chair Michelle Armstrong, Women's Advisory Committee Chairperson Frieda Heath presided over the group's annual business meeting. Both were re-elected to their posts, along with First Vice Chair Phyllis Amyx. That's women's program coordinator Scott Christmas to the right of Mrs. Heath.

OYFF AWARDS

A LaRue County couple are the winners of KFB's Outstanding Young Farm Family contest.

Aaron and Ashley Reding of Howardstown won a Case IH Scout courtesy of KFB Insurance and Case IH, \$1,000 cash from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$1,500 voucher from Pioneer Seed, a \$500 voucher from Southern States Cooperative, a \$600 voucher from Miles Seed, \$500 from Dodge and a portable safe from Misty Morn Safe Company. They also get an expense-paid trip to compete in American Farm Bureau's national young farmer finals next month in Seattle, Washington.

Second place went to Shane and Stephanie Wiseman of Clark County. They received 300 hours free use of a Kubota tractor, \$750 from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$1,000 voucher from Pioneer Seed, a \$300 voucher from Southern States Cooperative and a \$400 voucher from Miles Seed. Third place winners were Chris and Misty Thorn of Calloway County. They won 100 hours free use of a New Holland tractor, \$500 from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$500 voucher from Pioneer Seed, a \$200 voucher from Southern States Cooperative and a \$200 voucher from Miles Seed.

Judging for the contest is based primarily on farm management skills, financial growth plus Farm Bureau and community involvement. Couples and single persons up to 35 years old are eligible.

Following are brief profiles of the award winners:

"The overall culture of our operation has changed ... to being business-minded, goal-oriented and technologically savvy."



REDING

Aaron and Ashley Reding

The Redings have a large-scale row crop operation. This year they had 1,500 acres of both corn and soybeans, along with 450 acres of wheat. They rent all but 250 acres.

Aaron's family moved to LaRue County from Iowa in 1988 and started a small farrow-to-finish swine operation. After earning a college degree in Animal Science, he returned home to farm. He helped the family transition from livestock to crops by finding land to rent. He bought two farms in the early 2000s and in 2003 was given ownership of the family farm.

"I feel very fortunate that my parents trusted me enough to relinquish control of the business to me at such a young age," he said. "I am directly responsible for nearly every area of management on our farm. I

make seed, fertilizer, chemical and equipment decisions, as well as the land leasing deals. I put together the budgets, obtain financing and oversee crop insurance. My father researches some sales strategies but I am responsible for the final decision on grain sales."

Ashley, who holds degrees in Business Management plus Decision Science and Information, taught at a private school for years but quit to help manage the farm business and be with their three children, ages 9, 4 and 1. She takes care of human resources duties and various other projects as needed.

"We are fortunate to be able to add her business and technology experience to our operation," said Aaron. "She is in charge of our office technology and will be looking to see if there are additional ways to improve our business practices. She is now working to develop our website."

Equipment purchases and the use of modern technologies have played a key role in the expansion to thousands of acres of cropland. The advances included a sprayer, GPS equipment for several implements, auto-steer and variable seeding rate controllers for the planter and new drying and handling systems. Much of their corn is sold directly to area distill-

ers at premium prices that are determined by the corn's quality grade.

They have a storage capacity of 300,000 bushels.

"Also, our ability to handle many of our inputs in bulk has helped reduce costs," Aaron explained. "We installed a 10,000-gallon diesel tank and 18,000-gallon propane tank. We also have bulk liquid fertilizer storage tanks in a remodeled farrowing house."

The Redings recognize the value of marketing and promotion.

"We have made great progress is marketing our business," he said. We have hosted school tours and our county leadership group. We have worked with the local newspaper on an informative story about GPS and with chemical and seed companies on research plots. The overall culture of our operation has changed from being simply work-oriented to being business-minded, goal-oriented and technologically savvy."

The couple are directors for LaRue County FB. Aaron currently is Vice-President and chairman of the policy development committee. Ashley is on the women's committee.

Aaron is president of the Kentucky Soybean Association, a member of the county extension council and a regional officer for the State Young Farmer Association. Both are members of the American Soybean Association.

Shane and Stephanie Wiseman

The Wisemans are the fourth generation to farm on family land. They own, manage and rent over 3,400 acres where they produce beef cattle, hay, corn, soybeans, wheat and tobacco. In addition, Shane is a high school agriculture teacher.

Shane was raised on a 500-acre farm and took over the reins in 1992 after his father took an off-farm job. He expanded the farming operation by renting farmland and raising cattle on shares with two landlords. He purchased their house and the first 38 acres in 1997.

They are large-scale tobacco and feeder cattle producers, with 42 acres of tobacco and more than 600 head of feeder steers. They have built greenhouses to grow 35 acres of tobacco plants. Three years ago

they purchased a combine to reduce harvesting costs.

Shane wants to add facilities for a small feedlot that would handle up to 800 head a year.

Shane and Stephanie work together to do all the purchasing and maintenance of their equipment. They also work to constantly improve their pasture and hay fields and



review the entire operation annually.

The Wisemans have worked to perfect their operation by making sure their cattle receive the best treatment. They wrap hay to improve forage quality in the winter, which increased milk production and daily weight gain on the yearlings. They also take annual soil samples to ensure the highest quality crop can be produced.

"One of our most important responsibilities is staying abreast on all innovations in agriculture or special programs like the state's cost-share program that will help our overall production," he said.

Shane has been on the Clark County FB board of directors since 1995, is chair-

W

WISEMAN

"One of our most important responsibilities is staying abreast on all innovations in agriculture"

man of the county's Ag Development Council, Vice President of the Soil Conservation Board and Vice Chairman of the Farmer's Market Board. He and Stephanie are also members of their county's Cattleman's Association. They hold Bachelor of Science Degrees from Eastern Kentucky University. Shane also earned a Master's Degree in Agriculture from UK.

They have two sons, ages 8 and 6, and a three-year-old daughter.

also has completed computer training.

"Our farming operation is basically traditional in format but unique in that we hire no outside labor," Chris explained. "We hire no service work on our equipment and we also provide maintenance and repair services to neighboring farmers. We have very little debt for an operation our size but have intentionally planned for upcoming land purchases that join our current operation."

Chris started farming fulltime upon his high school graduation. He formed a

"We hire no service work on our equipment and we also provide maintenance and repair services to neighboring farmers."

partnership with his younger brother in 2000; the arrangement applies to renting land and buying equipment. They also utilize storage facilities and forward contracting to capture higher prices for their grain.

"With the use of the internet we are able to research market updates and information as well as find the best pricing on repair parts and crop inputs," Chris said.

Chris and Misty have been active with Farm Bureau for several years. He is the current president of Calloway County FB and she serves on the women's committee. Calloway County won the 2008 award for top county Farm Bureau in Kentucky.

Chris also is a supervisor with the County Conservation District, is Vice President of the Calloway County Cattleman's Association and is on the county agricultural development council. Misty works part-time and is active with school and church functions.

Misty says the couple want to be community leaders.

"Our goals have always included community involvement," she said. "We hope to support local agricultural, civic and school organizations with our time and leadership."

The Thorns have two children, ages 4 and 9 months.



T THORN

Chris and Misty Thorn

The Thorns have a row crop operation in Calloway County with more than 1,000 acres of corn and soybeans. They also grow hay plus Chris and his brother manage a small beef cattle herd owned by their mother. Chris also has an excavating business and a fully-equipped machine shop.

"I like the challenge to fix anything that is broken," said Chris, who has completed welding classes to improve his ability to maintain his farm equipment. He also likes to build high-performance racing vehicles.

Chris was raised on the family farm and assumed the farm from his father and the excavating business from his grandfather. Misty is a registered dental assistant and

OUTSTANDING YOUTH ARE SELECTED

Janna Imel of Greenup County and Luke King of Cumberland County were selected winners of the Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth contest. They won \$2,000 college scholarships and trips to Washington, D.C. on the 2010 KFB Congressional Tour in February.

Runners-up in the contest were Kendall Mallory of Scott County and Eli Mann of Pendleton County. They each received \$200 cash awards and digital cameras. Congeniality awards, which were voted by their fellow contestants, were won by Ms. Mallory and James Hawkins of Bath County.

The award winners were selected from 21 district finalists out of more than 175 young people who competed in county and district contests over the past several months. Judging for the contests was done in personal interviews conducted during afternoon annual meeting sessions. Points were awarded for contestants' leadership record, conversational ability and scholastic achievement.

Other contestants among the finalists were: Hillary Page of McCracken County, Jay Middleton of Ballard County, Madison White of Union County, Brandon Ferguson of Muhlenberg County, Hannah England of Hart County, Joshua Dennis of LaRue County, Gabrielle Burgess of Monroe County, Brandon Gabbard of Warren County, Angela Lyvers of Marion County, Derek Slucher of Shelby County, Emily Glidewell of Cumberland County, Kathleen Wray and Logan Goggin of Boyle County, Miranda Sargent of Fleming County, Jessica Gambrel of Laurel County and Jacob Roberts of Clay County.



Luke King and Janna Imel are the 2009 winners of the outstanding youth contest.

KRISTIE GUFFEY WINS DISCUSSION MEET

Kristie Broadbent Guffey of Barren County took first place in the Discussion Meet, a competitive event for young farmers. She is an Agriculture Instructor at Western Kentucky University.

Guffey bested 18 other entrants in the event, winning the choice of a Kawasaki 4x4 ATV or a Kawasaki Mule donated by Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company. She also won a trip to the national finals next month, as well as \$500 from Dodge Division of DaimlerChrysler. In addition, Jacobi Sales, Inc. awarded her a voucher for Kawasaki accessories.

Runner-up in the meet was Curt Divine of Union County, who received \$1,000 cash sponsored by KFB. Two other finalists in the state-level contest were Cameron Edwards of Webster County and John M. Hendricks of Clark County. They received \$200 cash awards.

The Discussion Meet tests entrants on their basic knowledge of critical farm issues and their ability to respond in a panel setting to differing points of view. The topic debated by the four finalists asked "How can agricultural producers reach out to the public to gain their support on important issues impacting agriculture?"

Kristie Guffey received the prestigious award from KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck and Second Vice President Eddie Melton.



BILL TOLLE WINS SERVICE TO AG AWARD



Bill Tolle and his wife, Ruth, accept the award from KFB President Mark Haney and Executive Vice President David S. Beck.

William B. Tolle, a Mason County farmer instrumental in the development of major agricultural shows and events, was named winner of KFB's award for distinguished service to agriculture.

Tolle, 79, has served on the State Fair Board for 20 years and currently is chairman of the board's in-house committee. He has held numerous positions with the board to plan and administer not only the agricultural events at the Kentucky State Fair, but major national events at the Kentucky Exposition Center, including the North American International

Livestock Exposition and the Farm Machinery Show. NAILE is the world's largest purebred livestock show and the Farm Machinery Show is one of the nation's largest agriculture events.

Tolle is most acclaimed for his tireless work with youth livestock shows. He helped spearhead the "Sale of Champions" at the State Fair which annually generates more than \$100,000 in premiums to FFA and 4-H participants. In the past 15 years the sale has grossed \$1.5 million, with 1,200 young people receiving benefits from the sale.

"Bill's greatest contribution to agriculture has been securing the future of agriculture through youth development," said Mason County FB President Walter Rosser, who submitted the nomination for the prestigious award. "He has provided countless opportunities for both urban and farm youth to experience and develop a passion for agriculture endeavors. He works tirelessly to promote youth and opportunities for youth scholarships."

Tolle was raised on a farm in the Lewisburg community of Mason County

and began a cattle and tobacco farm as a young adult. He also was in the automobile business for 40 years before retiring from that endeavor in 1998. He continues to manage a purebred cattle operation that includes 4-H and FFA club calves.

His keen interest in livestock production and young people sparked a long record of exemplary service to shows throughout the state. He helped develop the Germantown Youth Livestock Shows in Mason County into one of the premier events of its kind in the state. This year the show featured more than 500 animals from around 200 youth exhibitors from five counties. Tolle continues to be a stockholder in the Germantown Fair Board.

He's a member of the Kentucky 4-H Club Hall-of-Fame and was awarded an honorary membership to the State FFA Organization. He has served in numerous leadership positions for both groups and has actively supported Kentucky Farm Bureau's youth development programs.

"Bill's passion for livestock and farming spread to the youth with whom he associated," said Rosser. "Young people he touched have gone on to successful careers in many areas of agriculture. He has a genuine interest in young people and their development."

Tolle has been involved with 4-H for more than 40 years and has provided leadership to the Youth Livestock Improvement Association. He not only serves as a volunteer worker at countless youth livestock shows, but "on many a day you can find Bill driving down a country road picking up 4-Hers to ensure their participation."

Tolle also has a long record of community service. He was a Rotary Club leader for many years and served in leadership positions of the Mason County Chamber of Commerce and Planning and Zoning Board. He currently is president of the Extension District Board.

He and his wife Ruth have two sons, Brent and Rodney.

JANE ELAM HONORED FOR SERVICE TO KFB

Fayette County farmer Jane Elam is the winner of the annual award for Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau.

Mrs. Elam and her husband, Bob, have been active in Farm Bureau for more than 30 years. She became the women's committee chairperson in 1985 and in the following years served in every capacity at the county board level. During her first year as president (2005) Fayette County Farm Bureau was named the top county Farm Bureau in the state for the third consecutive year.

The Elams have farmed in Fayette County for 50 years with dairy, tobacco, grain and beef cattle production. They have reduced their operation to 160 acres in their retirement years.

Mrs. Elam is a tireless volunteer worker, not only with Farm Bureau but with civic and church activities. She was instrumental in the formation of a college scholarship program for Fayette County Farm Bureau that currently offers \$20,000 annually. The program is fully funded through private donations plus a highly popular farm machinery auction that attracts buyers from several states.

She is perhaps best known for her work with women's agricultural groups. She is a past chairperson of KFB's Women's Committee and was involved with establishing the "Women in Agriculture" group, of which she serves as a director.

"In each volunteer opportunity Jane ties in her love of agriculture and Farm Bureau, whether it is a simple discussion, providing information to groups or enlisting new members or volunteers," said Fayette County FB President John Mahan. "She always makes sure that issues pertaining to the farm community are heard."

Mrs. Elam was first acquainted with Farm Bureau as a teenager, when she entered a youth contest conducted by the organization. Her work with Farm Bureau over the years has involved many areas, but helping youth and promoting the agriculture industry are foremost. Her Farm Bureau colleagues give her much of the

credit for Fayette County's development into one of the top county organizations.

"Jane has had a vision for promoting and advancing our membership by recruiting promising individuals and families to compete in Farm Bureau contests," Mahan said. "Fayette County has been commended for its success with entries that regularly win at the state level in the various youth and young family activities. Over the years Jane has worked

regularly attending KFB's annual Congressional Tour and working with legislative appreciation events and "measure the candidate" programs at the local level. She's active with a county women's political club.

The Elams love to travel and regularly take extended vacations by vehicle throughout the nation. They have been volunteer workers for the famous "Iditarod" sled dog race in Alaska.



on county and state committees helping to oversee policy resolutions, safety, political education, health, member services and planning."

Mrs. Elam also is dedicated to promotional and educational activities. She often serves as a local media spokesperson for agriculture. She's been active with the "Agriculture in the Classroom" program and has played host to many groups that have toured her farm. She helped organize "Farm Bureau Night" at the Fayette County Fair, which is one of the state's biggest county fairs.

She also has a passion for politics,

Jane Elam and her husband, Bob, received the award from KFB President Mark Haney and Executive Vice President David S. Beck.

HERE'S A CHANCE TO THANK YOUR AGRICULTURE TEACHER

Kentucky FFA Foundation has a new program that honors vocational agriculture teachers while raising funds for both local chapters and the foundation.

Under the "Agriculture Teachers Change Lives" program, you can make a contribution to the FFA Foundation in the name of your vo-ag teacher with half of the contribution going back to the teacher's chapter as scholarship money. The teacher will be recognized in accordance to the size of the donation, ranging from a thank-you card in your name (\$50 to \$249) to an elaborate display at the Leadership Training Center (\$2,000 or more).

Contributions to the FFA Foundation go toward new teacher workshops, monitoring programs, professional development activities and various other teacher education programs. The goal is to ensure that agriculture teachers are better equipped and prepared to make a positive impact on the lives of students.

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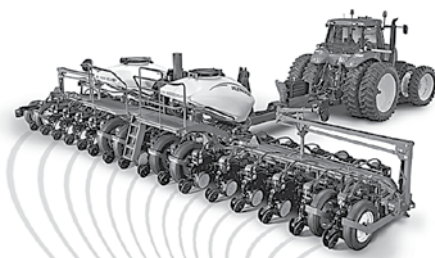


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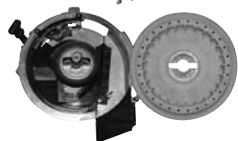
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More than 5,000 Farm Bureau members from across the nation -- including some 300 from Kentucky -- are expected to attend AFBF's 91st annual meeting January 10-13 in Seattle.

The convention begins Sunday morning, January 10, with the opening presidential address by Bob Stallman and presentation of state Farm Bureau awards. The annual Young Farmer and Rancher competitions on the first two days are a highlight of the agenda. Also on Sunday is the annual Farm Bureau Women's luncheon and business session, which is open to all women attendees, as well as delegates to the Farm Bureau Women's business session.

There will be a number of conferences developed to assist members in sharpening their understanding of a broad range of issues that affect them and their operations. This includes sessions on the turbulent global economy and how it relates to U.S. agriculture, the urgent need for livestock producers to become activists, the continuing debate over climate change, crop and livestock outlooks for 2010, financial market conditions, rural development and more. Several professional development sessions also will be presented.

The event concludes with the annual meeting of state Farm Bureau delegates discussing and voting on the positions that will guide AFBF in 2010.

KFB once again will be honored for exceeding its membership quota for 2009. Among other highlights will be the national discussion meet and a keynote address from Hall-of-Fame quarterback Terry Bradshaw.

The trade show on Sunday and Monday is a very popular attraction. KFB staff members will be there to greet members at the organization's exhibit. Idea Exchange award winners also will have exhibits at the show.



During a recent tour of county Farm Bureau offices and agribusinesses in Eastern Kentucky, KFB officers (second from left) Mark Haney, John C. Hendricks and Eddie Melton led a group that met with House Majority Leader Rocky Adkins to discuss legislative issues. The meeting took place at Adkins' office in Cannonsburg. Rep. Adkins has been a leader on energy issues that KFB advocates.



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